**PO Box 108, Minehead. TA24 9DE**
Registered company number: 11532338

**Minehead BID Company Limited Board Meeting**
Minutes of meeting held on: Tuesday 20 April 2021 at 6pm

**DIRECTORS PRESENT:**Julian Abraham JA (Vice Chair)

Cllr Mandy Chilcott MC (Director)

Cllr Andy Hadley AH (Advisor)

Cllr Anne Lawton AL (Advisor)

Debbie Sawatzki DS (Director) (part of meeting)

Lisa Redston LR Somerset West & Taunton Council (Advisor)

Ray Tew Minehead Coastal Development Trust

Sharon Grant (Social Media Manager) Daffodil PR

Livvi Grant (Social Media Manager) Daffodil PR

Andrew Hopkins (BID Manager) AJH

Richard Robbins (Company Secretary) RR

Sarah Wilsher (Minutes)

JA chaired the meeting. He welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**1. Presentation on the Minehead Coastal Development Trust and Minehead Economic Plan by Ray Tew**

Ray explained that he lived locally in Watchet and had a regional interest in the arts and cultural industries. He had been instrumental in the setting up of ARTlife, the West Somerset Arts Consortium, which had been active for 14 years, played a role in Creative Somerset, a Countywide organisation, and at a more local level he had been part of Minehead Development Trust for 15 years.

Minehead Development Trust (MDT) had been formed out of The Old Hospital Group, that had plans for The Old Hospital and the Regal Theatre to form a cultural quarter within the centre of Minehead. MDT had taken on the running of the Minehead Information Centre about 10 years ago and were still looking to re-locate the Centre within the Old Hospital, as per the original plan.

Minehead Coastal Community Team (MCCT) were a group of interested people who had come together to use Government funding. During Covid they had laid dormant. More recently discussions had taken place on how to make the existing groups more active and relevant and this had led to the amalgamation of MDT and MCCT to create the Minehead Coastal Development Trust (MCDT).

MCDT encompassed the coast from North Devon and included Porlock, the South West Coast Path, England's Coast Path, the Steam Coast Trail, etc. Their coverage fitted well with future coastal funding pots and combined local organisations interested in obtaining funds. They were an incorporated Company limited by guarantee with charitable status.

The Minehead Economic Plan which had been updated in 2016 led by MDT and this now needed to be refreshed. Minehead Future: A Plan for People and Place would replace the 2016 document and would include wellbeing and the environment. MCDT acted as a bridging organisation between statutory requirements and non-statutory requirements, looking at essential and desirable elements.

They had engaged the services of the district council to fund this piece of work and Keith Thomas of PER Consulting, who had led MDT through the previous Plan, was leading MCDT through the new Plan.

It was proposed to approach a number of funding pots including the National Lottery. The new Plan sat on the edge of a range of funds which hopefully would make a difference, such as Place Space Social Action. To bid for funding it was necessary to be in a position to place an expression of interest in a timely manner.

Ray felt that success lay in collaboration and working together, as in the following motto: 'The trick is to gang up on the problem not each other'.

**Question and Answer session**

Julian asked if there were any papers that could be circulated to the Board. Ray advised that invitations had been distributed to attend focus groups from early May. These would be on Microsoft Teams and facilitated by Keith Thomas. He asked the meeting to read the 2016 Plan to learn what had been achieved and what more could be fulfilled.

**ACTION: AJH to circulate the 2016 Economic Plan to the Board and Sarah to share Ray Tew's contact details in the minutes.**

*Ray can be contacted by email: ray.tew@btinternet.com*

MC advised that consultations and conversations needed to take place before documentation was drawn up so welcomed the engagement taking place at this stage. She would be involved as a County Councillor.

AH stated that he would be involved as a District Councillor.

AL reported that Keith Thomas had approached Members of Minehead Town Council in order to set up a meeting in the near future. As a Town Councillor and a BID Advisor Anne had been asked by Ray to get involved on MCDT.

JW informed that he was a Director of MCDT and a BID representative on the MCDT Board.

**2. Minehead Enterprising Esplanade Project with Lisa Redston**

LR reported that unfortunately Nicki Maclean was unable to attend this evening's meeting, but she had been briefed by Nicki and hoped to be able to answer all the questions. She could come back to the meeting with answers if necessary.

AJH reported that the Board's concerns surrounded the planting scheme, trees, play areas, etc. In 2019 it had been very difficult to obtain answers to their concerns. The Open Spaces team had been very helpful, but the BID had not been able to contact an accountable District Council officer. With phase two of the project now being looked into how would lessons learned from phase 1 be used and incorporated into phase 2?

LR replied that she was aware of issues surrounding the trees and damage to the trees and would talk to Nicki.

AL explained that the overall quality of the planting was in question and also the quality and depth of the soil and the plants in place that were not suitable for the poor soil conditions, nor had the soil been enhanced to match the trees/shrubs planted. There was not enough depth for the pine trees. Maintenance of the plants was also lacking. It was difficult to find anyone who was looking after this project.

The area in question was also in Warren Road rather than on The Esplanade, where the Jubilee Gardens Cafe was located. Anne felt that the mile long sea front from Culvercliffe and The Harbour to the golf course needed to be maintained at the same quality standard. There were areas which were privately looked after and looked outstanding whilst other stretches were unkempt.

LR advised that public realm enhancements were being looked into, such as maintenance of the shelters, etc. £100,000 had been found by Nicki from an underspend. MCDT, as a constituted body, could propose what to do with the remaining funds. LR would find out who was responsible for what and what the proposals were for current maintenance and future enhancements.

AL suggested that monies be used to raise the beds and add soil.

Ownership of the site would come through MCDT.

MC advised that she had emailed Nicki Maclean for information as MCCT were supposed to be driving the project but a lack of meetings had led to disjointedness and poor communication. Nicki had addressed all her points. MC was not a lover of the planting scheme. The sand covered everything. She asked if the funding could be used for some structural large plants that could survive the sea and sand. The planting scheme needed to look good all year round.

Ray took responsibility for the lack of communications. Nicki had copied him into her replies to MC. He had been involved in the discussions on the use of the remaining funds and felt that refreshed collaboration would help with accountability, communications, etc.

JW advised that recognition of the environmental aspect of the economic plan led to a greater understanding of climate change impacts, land levels, drainage issues, etc. and conversations with the relevant organisations, such as drainage bodies, and landowners, such as the Golf Club, Butlins, etc. JW had raised the issue of flooding on the seafront with Nicki, as a safety issue and a visual impact matter. A high-quality well designed landscaping scheme would assist in the pursuit of a coherent image.

AH informed that the drainage plan was not fit for purpose and a new one was being looked into. The 2016 Plan had been subject to full consultation and the planting and poor soil had been down to cost. In retrospect it could be seen as a false economy.

LR explained that a limited amount of money had been secured. More money had been found by Nicki and collaborative efforts would lead to a greater leverage with financial rewards. The CIM funding had a deadline, but due to Covid it had not been possible to meet it and an extension for 12 months was being sought. Remaining monies needed to be spent by August/September 2021. Alternative sources were also being looked for.

LR reported that the drains were owned by SWT. She was talking to Chris Hall, Assistant Director for Operational Delivery at SWT, who had undertaken considerable research on drains, surveys, etc. and was revisiting the work that James Barrah had done a few years ago on the completion of phase 1 and the commissioning of phase 2.

Safe crossing points were being looked at too in the event of flooding.

MC stated that The Environment Agency acknowledged that more work needed to be done in Minehead and urged liaison with The Environment Agency.

It was agreed that JW, as the BID representative on MCDT, would provide update reports at future BID Board meetings.

**ACTION: JW to provide MCDT updates at future BID Board meetings. RR to add to future agendas.**

**3. Apologies**

Ryan Boulton RB (Director)

Jon Lee JL (Director)

Nicki Maclean SWT (Advisor)

Sam Rawle Minehead Town Council (MTC) (Advisor)

Jacqui Sherwood JS (Ambassador)

Sally Turner Minehead Information Centre (Advisor)

Cllr Terry Venner TV (Advisor)

**4. Anything to declare**

There was nothing to declare. AJH advised that he and RR were tidying up the declaration form so that it was clear who was working on what within the town.

**5. Matters arising from previous meeting held on 16 March 2021**

There were no matters arising.

**6. Adoption of minutes of the previous meeting**

AH proposed and MC seconded that the minutes of 16 March 2021 were an accurate record of the meeting. The proposal was AGREED by those present at the March meeting.

**7. Emergency Town Centre Recovery Fund (ETCRF) Update**

JA spoke to the briefing notes that had been previously circulated. MC asked about the retail mentoring scheme. JA advised that this was going ahead and that a press release went out today.

**ACTION: AJH to send a copy of the press release to the Board for their information.**

*AJH sent a copy of the press release to the Board after the meeting.*

A meeting had been held with Fran Riseley, the consultant appointed for the mentoring scheme and details of the project would be going on the BID website. Media attention for the scheme was being sought.

**8. Company Secretary update and Update on finances**

RR spoke to the accounts that had been previously circulated. There had been nothing of significance through the books since the last BID Board meeting. More and greater costs were due next month, for instance, in connection with the Visitor Guide. Any queries to please contact him.

Thirty businesses had signed up to the Minehead Gift Card. RR was taking photos of the businesses and giving out window stickers. AL asked what type of businesses had signed up and was advised that a good range of businesses were on board. As long as businesses used Mastercard there was no cost to join up. A wide variety of businesses were hoped for and with further promotion it was felt that the take up would snowball. However, it was recognised that at the current time businesses were concentrating on re-opening and thus there was likely to be a delay before they started focussing on the scheme.

Sharon and Livvi Grant asked to be sent details of the businesses that had signed up and to be notified of future businesses, so that they could publicise the gift card and participating businesses on social media.

**Outstanding BID levies**

AJH reported that 17 businesses were still to pay the BID levy for year 2 (2019/20). Reminders had been sent in September and it was proposed that all 17 outstanding accounts be passed onto the court collection stage. SWT would give the levy payers a final chance to pay, including the option to pay in instalments. Any outstanding cases would then be passed onto the Magistrates Court.

It was proposed that 108 businesses be reminded in early May of their outstanding levies for year 3 (2020/21), with the option to clear their levy in instalments.

It was proposed that the 2021/22 invoices for year 4 be issued in July, as normal practice before the pandemic.

AJH advised that businesses who were facing problems with paying the levy could approach SWT and the BID. Genuine cases would be looked at sympathetically with a view to a possible instalment scheme being set up for them.

JA proposed and MC seconded that the proposals, as outlined above, be agreed. This was AGREED.

**9. Public Realm Sub-Group Update**

AJH advised that there was nothing to update the Board on at the current time.

**10. Events Sub-Group Update**

AH reported that an update briefing was expected from Thundercats.

**11. Marketing Update**

Sharon and Livvi stated that good communication was needed and asked if anyone had photos of the local area or their businesses, special offers, details of new products, etc. to please send them to Daffodil PR by email on hello@daffodilpr.co.uk to be used for promotional activities on social media.

They had visited Minehead on 19 April and had been surprised that not all the shops were open. They were also concerned that the safety signage was looking untidy.

Printed newsletters had been distributed and would be published every two months. It was hoped to increase engagement with this format. MC and JW expressed their thanks to all those involved with the newsletter.

**(a) Visit Exmoor Membership renewal proposal**

AJH spoke to the Visit Exmoor membership proposal paper for 2021/22, which had been previously circulated. He reported that Visit Exmoor had not charged for membership last year due to Covid. The Platinum Plus Bespoke membership package cost £1,750.

MC felt that the main advantage of the membership was the ability to use the Visit Exmoor website to publicise Minehead, however, she was concerned that as District Councils also used to put funding into Visit Exmoor for Minehead there could be duplicate funding for the town. LR advised that HTAP funding had been used, whilst AH stated that HTAP used to have a funding stream for Visit Exmoor and Visit Somerset, but he was not aware if this was continuing.

AJH advised that BID had a good working relationship with Visit Exmoor who were very passionate and supportive of Minehead and keen to promote the town.

JA proposed and DS seconded that BID take up Platinum Plus Bespoke membership of Visit Exmoor for 2021/22. This was AGREED.

**12. Update on relevant meetings attended by BID Board members**

AJH reported on the weekly meetings hosted by SWT which was now looking at the new Welcome Back Fund. Safety signage within the town was to be updated and revised for when Butlins re-opened. BID was working with partners to secure finance for public realm. There were opportunities for the funding of coastal towns at the current time.

**12. Any Other Business**

**West Somerset Railway crossing**

MC reported that the proposed new railway crossing on Seaward Way would be more sophisticated with new signalling and CCTV. It would cost almost £1 million. Further information could be found on the West Somerset Railway Facebook page which was being kept up to date.

**Welcome Back**

AJH had taken SWT officers on a tour of Minehead. Mike Barter, Health and Safety Case Manager who had been impressed with the welcoming and safety signage, etc within the town.

**Date of next meeting**

The next Board meeting would be held on Tuesday, 18 May 2021 at 6pm.

**The meeting ended at 7.30pm.**