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

**Minehead BID Company Limited Annual General Meeting**

Minutes of meeting held on:
Date and Time: Tuesday 26 October 2021 at 6.30pm

**PRESENT:**Graham Sizer (D) (GS) Chairman

Andrew Hopkins (AJH) BID Manager

Richard Robbins (RR) BID Company Secretary

Ian Atkinson (IA) Chief Officer, Citizens Advice West

Somerset

Cllr Mandy Chilcott (D) (MC) Somerset County Council

Cllr Andy Hadley (Advisor) (AH) Somerset West and Taunton Council

Jackie Jago (Street Rep) (JJ) Threads

Cllr Anne Lawton (AL) Minehead Town Council

Jon Lee (D) (JL) Stuarts Home Furnishings

Debbie Sawatzki (D) (DS) Lovely Boutique

Sally Turner (ST) Manager, Minehead Information Centre

Cllr Terry Venner (TV) Minehead Town Council and

Somerset West and Taunton Council

Jim Whittaker (D) (JW) Channel Adventures

**Welcome**

Graham Sizer welcomed all those present to BID’s third Annual General Meeting and everyone introduced themselves.

**Apologies**

Sharon Grant and Livvi Grant (Social Media Manager’s) Daffodil PR, Alison Prior (D) Wombledon, Sam Rawle (Advisor) Minehead Town Council and Lisa Tuck (Advisor) Somerset West and Taunton Council

**1 Approve the Minutes of the AGM held on 22nd September 2020**

***JL proposed and DS seconded that the minutes of the meeting were an accurate record of the meeting. The proposal was AGREED.***

**2 Receive the report of the Directors and Accounts for the year ending 30 June 2021**

**Finance**

RR reported that our accountants, Lentells have not managed to provide us with draft accounts, as we had requested for the AGM. RR had circulated the Management Accounts prepared for the July 2021 board meeting which covered the period of the financial year, to 30th June 2021. These were for information only as the final accounts will include adjustments, for example for accruals and prepayments. It is expected that we should be in receipt of the accounts in time for them to be reviewed and circulated prior to the board meeting in November, where they could be adopted if agreed. The approved accounts will then be added to the BID website for wider viewing.

**Year Three Achievements**

The summary of Year Three Achievements prepared by AJH had been circulated prior to the meeting (this is attached at the end of the minutes).

However, he summarised:

It has been a very busy year for BID. The year had been very stop/start as a result of lockdowns and Covid-related restrictions. It had though become more settled, which we hope will continue.

In addition to BID’s themed projects, BID has also been the custodian of the £100,000 Emergency Town Centre Recovery Fund for Minehead, set up by Somerset West and Taunton Council to help towns and their businesses recover from the pandemic. The funds have been used on a variety of projects, including the Retail Mentoring scheme and the launch of the Minehead Gift Card.

BID had also secured an additional £40–50,000 of recovery funding from the Reopening High Street Safely and Welcome Back funds which had further enhanced the list of projects carried out.

The BID’s key themes in its business plan were Events, Marketing, Public Realm and Reducing Costs. A lot of effort was initially focused on events and because of the pandemic this emphasis has changed and more effort has been targeted towards marketing and public realm improvements over the last 12 months.

The payment of BID levy during year three has been at a healthy level, c. 95%, which is good considering the economic situation. Year four to date also looks encouraging.

AJH expressed thanks to all involved for their support and for attending meetings, contributing ideas and, in some cases, permitting the BID officers to get on and implement projects.

GS commented that when he saw the achievements document, he thought it was very impressive. GS has looked at other BID organisations and feels that none appear to have achieved as much as Minehead’s. He wanted to emphasise how impressive it has been.

MC spoke and thanked all who had worked through the pandemic. Thanks are due to those businesses that could open and did. It was noted that the BID levy funds were boosted by additional funding that enabled much more to be done in the town.

MC referenced Andrew’s provision of links to government information and guidance as the pandemic was unfolding and businesses were struggling to know what to do. Businesses were working hard to get through and as an outsider, a resident, MC feels that Minehead would have been in a different place now without all that support and without the presence of the BID organisation.

**3 Elect new directors for whom nomination have been received**

No nominations were received.

GS explained the process of seeking new directors to join the board. There are three vacancies on the board and he encouraged all present to look out for any who might be encouraged to get involved and become directors

**4 Re-appoint directors whose term has ended but are happy to re-stand**

GS listed the current directors and explained that the Local Authority director position changes each year. It has been MC on behalf of Somerset County Council this year and for the coming year AH, on behalf of Somerset West & Taunton Council, has agreed to take up that place.

Resignations were received from Julian Abraham (JA) of the Old Ship Aground and Ryan Boulton (RB) of The Card Factory.

GS expressed thanks for the contributions made by MC, RB and JA during the past year.

JW and DS stood down in the rota process set out in the BID’s articles and are happy to re-stand.

***JJ proposed and TV seconded that the re-elections were approved. The proposal was AGREED.***

**5 BID Chair’s report**

GS commented that last year’s report was dominated by the start of the Covid pandemic. BID’s priorities had to be switched from pre-planned projects to helping businesses to survive. As the financial year started lockdowns were starting to be eased and there was some optimism but it didn’t last with various government measures introduced and businesses closing and opening. Furloughing and government grants gave businesses valuable lifelines. By the end of the financial year, in June 2021, the vaccines were showing signs of making progress.

However, our late Summer and Autumn events in 2020 had to be postponed. The pre-Christmas period when shops could re-open for a short period gave businesses a bit of a lift but it was short-lived and January to April saw another lockdown.

The BID board were not idle during this period however. GS express thanks to all for continuing to be involved when each also had their own business to deal with.

The appointment or RR as BID Company Secretary and JA as a Director and Vice-Chair came at just the right time. Further High Street recovery projects needed implementing.

GS was pleased to report that relationships between BID and the Councils continued to flourish during the year. BID was asked to be custodian of the Emergency Town Centre Recovery Fund for Minehead, a new fund created by SWT Council. From this a new Minehead Visitor Guide was created; an external advertising campaign was launched and a retail mentoring scheme was put in place.

BID was also able to secure further funding in the form of Reopening High Streets Safely and Welcome Back funds – these have further contributed to the town’s recovery process.

Weekly meetings have been attended, hosted by LT of SWT Council and attended by representatives from Taunton and Wellington. Minehead has been seen to be leading on several fronts and this must have enhanced Minehead’s standing in the SWT area.

GS thanked retiring Directors RB, JA and MC for their hard work and support during this period. Thanks also to Ian Melhuish, BID’s bookkeeper and Sarah Wilsher our Minutes Secretary – another good year from both.

The next 12 months will see BID trying to get back to the original plans while businesses are still vulnerable from the effects of both Covid and Brexit.

**6 Q & A session**

***IA asked where the external marketing referred to in GS’s report took place.***

AJH said there are several elements to the marketing of Minehead and with the production of the new Minehead Economic Plan by Minehead and Coast Development Trust some may fall under their remit going forward.

BID appointed a company to look after social media on several platforms and there will be a new company appointed in early November to continue this. Recovery fund money was used to produce a substantial Minehead Visitor Guide, the first in print for many years. Using a distribution company 20,000 have been distributed in the day visitor catchment area and we know take up of those had been healthy. 50,000 Welcome to Minehead leaflets were also produced for distribution within Butlins to their guests to promote awareness of what Minehead and the surrounding area have to offer. There was also some joint marketing, working with Visit Exmoor, to advertise Minehead in print marketing further afield.

What is currently lacking is an overall marketing plan and the efforts are spread between BID (“Visit Minehead”) and the Minehead Information Centre (“Love Minehead” and “www.mineheadbay.co.uk”) which operates under the Minehead and Coast Development Trust (MCDT). More work is needed to draw these pieces together and agree what might be done by BID and what may fall under the MCDT.

JW, as a director of MCDT, agreed and said that once the Economic Plan has been finalised then MCDT will get partners together to move it on.

AJH added that Minehead BID are members of Visit Somerset and Visit Exmoor and Visit Exmoor in particular are strongly promoting the wider Exmoor area and have featured Minehead in some of their campaigns. AJH recently took part in a visit to the town by the Tourism Minister, hosted by Visit Exmoor and he was very complimentary about the changes he had noted since his previous visit to Minehead.

***GS reminded those present of the director vacancies.***

MC suggested when asking businesses to come forward to get involved that it was made clear that it does not necessarily involve big time commitments. AL added that perhaps more information about the achievements and activities could be made available so businesses are more aware of what BID has been doing. Sometimes people can be a bit dismissive and she feels many are not really aware enough.

AJH responded by saying that was the reason that the printed newsletter was started earlier this year – there have been 2 editions so far and another one is due out soon. Also, when BID does publicise its achievements, there can be push-back from some quarters and suggestions that BID appears to be claiming responsibility of everything being done to improve the town. This has made us more cautious about trumpeting our successes.

RR added that the BID website ([www.mineheadBID.co.uk](http://www.mineheadBID.co.uk)) contains a great deal of background information for anyone wanting to find out about the organisation and its activities.

AJH emphasised that BID is trying to be as open and transparent as possible. If anyone can suggest how to further improve this then we would welcome their input.

TV commented that he enjoys being involved with BID and feel strongly that working in partnership is the way to move things forward. He offered his thanks to everyone involved.

JJ said she feels that BID is doing a very good job and urged everyone to disregard the few “serial negative” people. She feels that they do not represent the majority of businesses.

GS concluded by thanking everyone for attending.

**The meeting finished at 7.10pm**

RR 28-10-21

**Minehead BID Year Three achievements:**

**Emergency Town Centre Recovery Fund
Reopening High Streets Safely and Welcome Back Funds**

* Minehead BID was asked to be the custodian of £100,000 of Emergency Town Centre Recovery Fund awarded by Somerset West and Taunton Council to help the town recover from the pandemic
* Steering Group chaired by Julian Abraham, made up of 4 business and 3 local authority representatives
* Funded an advertising campaign to promote Minehead to an external market
* Commissioned a report to understand how Minehead could achieve Blue Flag Status
* Commissioned 50,000 Welcome to Minehead leaflets for Butlins guests
* Provided seed-funding for new events this included the Pirate Academy
* Provided free car parking in SWT council car parks in the run up to Christmas 2020
* Introduced the Minehead Gift Card programme with funding for 3 years and up to 80 businesses to participate
* Commissioned a retail mentoring scheme, phase 1 provided dedicated 1-2-1 support to 20 businesses
* Distribution of the Minehead Shoppers Guide
* Commissioned the Minehead Visitor Guide, a 40-page showcase of the town. 20,000 copies produced and distributed through Glide Media
* Refreshed the safety signage in the town centre and banners in The Avenue
* Attendance at weekly High Street meetings convened and chaired by SWT attended by representatives of Minehead, Taunton and Wellington to discuss measures to help recovery

**Covid 19 support measures**

* Provide safety screens and signs for independent businesses in the town to enable them to reopen
* Provide a health and safety support service for businesses and events

**Events – ‘Let’s put the buzz back in to Minehead’**

The BID in year three funded the:

* Provided funding for the Christmas tree festival, Eat Minehead event, Steam Bus and Summer Street Entertainment. Other plans were postponed due to Covid-19 restrictions and lockdowns

**Marketing – ‘Let’s shout about Minehead and its wonderful assets’**

* Continued the engagement of Sharon and Livvi Grant from Daffodil PR to be a dedicated resource to produce daily content for the Visit Minehead Facebook, Instagram and Twitter pages and to promote events, retail and BID activities to a wider audience
* Continued to update and maintain the online directory of all BID members on a new dedicated Minehead shopping website
* Produced adverts to promote Minehead shops, events and the town in Exmoor magazine, Somerset Life, West Somerset Free Press, on West Somerset Radio and in Word Gets Around magazines
* Updated and completely refreshed the business noticeboards and maps in the town centre
* Updated the food and drink map with details of all establishments in the town
* Funded the footfall monitors in The Avenue and The Parade
* Participated in the Monster Hero Safari
* Provided the Summer Ambassador service provided by the staff of the Minehead Information Centre
* Membership of Visit Exmoor
* Updated the 4-page spread about Minehead in the Visit Somerset 2021 digital brochure
* Organised dedicated pages about Minehead on both the Visit Exmoor and Visit Somerset websites
* Provided copy and content on social media, in press releases and publications about Minehead
* Commissioned videos on Minehead with support from Exmoor National Park recovery funds and the Minehead and Coast Development Trust

**Public Realm – ‘Maintaining what we have and enhancing what we love’**

* Relocated benches to the junction of The Avenue and The Esplanade
* Provided bunting in Friday Street, Holloway Street, Park Street and The Parade
* Funded the annual service of the old Town Hall clock
* Provided funding towards the defibrillator at the Lifeboat station
* Provided over 140 hanging baskets in Bancks Street, Blenheim Road, Friday Street, Holloway Street, Park Street and The Avenue
* Refreshed the planters around the Queen’s Anne Statue
* Provided planters in Friday Street to showcase spring bulbs and flowers in the summer
* Purchased 4 planters to increase the floral displays in the town
* Commissioned posters to discourage visitors from feeding seagulls on the seafront

**Reducing Costs for BID levy payers** – we are currently working with Plastic Free Minehead to provide a website which will help businesses in the town become plastic free

Other facts and figures for you:

* Minehead continues to have one of the lowest shop vacancy rates in the south west
* Are members of the Minehead Town Watch and Pub Watch scheme
* Attained 95% BID levy collection rate
* Have a team of 7 street representatives to complement our team of 6 BID directors
* Produced printed newsletters on BID activities which have been hand delivered by BID directors and street representatives to each levy payer
* Provided regular updates on our [www.mineheadbid.co.uk](http://www.mineheadbid.co.uk) website to provide transparency on all BID board decisions and updates on the members Facebook and Twitter pages

Worked closely with and lobbied Minehead Town Council, Somerset West and Taunton, Somerset County Council, Heart of South West LEP and the local MP on a variety of projects