

Barrow Business Improvement District

Tuesday 8th September 2020, 6pm

Minutes of Board of Directors Meeting at Costa Coffee Dalton Rd

Attendees: Paul Hodgson - PHo (Chair), Sandra Collings - SC, Allan Kerr - AK, Keiron Hart – KH, Drew Anderson - DA, Kay Bower - KB, and Colin Garnett - CG (Manager) remotely via video

1. Apologies: Stephen Leonard – SL, John Graham – JG & Rowan McClure - RM

2. Review of minutes from last meeting

No issues or matters arising from minutes from August 2020 meeting.

- Review of actions
- CG has received two quotes for painting the columns at the top of Portland Walk. A preferred supplier has been selected.
- KH to update board on online discounting scheme.

3. Finance Report

Finance report was not discussed as it has now been agreed to review on a quarterly basis moving forward with the input of Stephen Leonard as monthly was excessive.

4. Business Premises Grants

- Purdy's Bakehouse –The application included all the details the board needed to make a decision, including two quotes for each element of work and artists impressions. **The board agreed to fund the application via the Business Premises Grant fund.**
- Darren King / King Orthodontics – awaiting 2nd quote for sign before decision can be made, but paperwork received so far was complete and accurate.
- Bumble Bee at the Hive – work has been completed and pictures shared, awaiting final invoices
- Reaching Wellness – have had to apply for advertising planning consent, expect about an 8 week turnaround on application but don't foresee any issues as guidance has been followed. Awaiting formal approval from council.
- St Marys Hospice – CG attended official opening today, the external work have been completed and it looks really good. General feedback has been positive.
- The Brewery Inn – Work completed
- 43 Crellin St – awaiting completion before assessment of the work

SC raised a query whether awnings were included within the shop front grant scheme, this was confirmed as a yes by the board and everyone agreed that they would add character to the town and help with external queuing of customers baring in mind the current social distancing and forthcoming poor weather. CG added that planning consent may be required for the addition of awnings on properties.

5. Event Review – Dino Day

- General feedback was well received via social media comments and word of mouth with Greggs and the Owl Sanctuary reporting busy days. Issues of individuals not social distancing or wearing a mask in public areas even though Barrow BID had provided signs to remind individuals to follow the latest COVID measures to stay safe. CG informed the board that he had communicated with the police on the day and was informed that social distancing and wearing a mask in outdoor public space was not enforceable and was down to each individual. The board discussed how a PA system could benefit future events to encourage people to adhere to social distancing / masks etc but the problem remains that it is unenforceable.
- Dino Egg Trail went well with families commenting on its success and raising awareness of participating businesses. DA has some pictures to forward of consenting customers who enjoyed Dino Day.
- Awaiting video from B-Arrow Productions to promote next year's event (no rush at present as the event is not in the immediate future).
- Quote for next year's event has been received for review with additional extras. CG is working on a sponsor for this event to reduce the BIDs financial outlay.
- Following on from the success of the Dino Egg Trail it was discussed whether to hold a similar event at Halloween as well as a best dressed window competition as there is a no trick or treating allowed this year for children. AK gave feedback about an event that is held in Scotland that could be replicated and follows a similar idea with the aims of the egg hunt. It was agreed for CG to move forward with this for Halloween and work with SC & DA developing the idea of a Halloween flash mob similar to what has been performed previously in the town and the participation of local dance and drama groups.

6. Outdoor Eating and Drinking

Labour Club has applied to Barrow Council but is yet to receive feedback.

Taylors and Odd Frog – CG is working alongside the business owners for their applications

Smilers and Sweet Pepper Cafe – needing/wishing to enhance the visual aspect of their outside space, we're seeking clarification on what is permitted.

Garden Street Project – visuals have been received back and everyone is impressed with the artwork and the concept. It is a 2nd term project but consultation is to be started before to conclude if businesses would wish to proceed with it as it would require their participation. The primary focus however is to help businesses with the current external eating and drinking applications.

The visuals of the Garden Street project were produced by a local artist and were a quarter of the cost of the quote from a firm in Manchester, it has been agreed by the board if we need further visuals of projects that he is to be used.

7. Infrastructure / Regeneration

The pocket Park and Station gateway project have received some updates to the design work, awaiting the council to proceed further.

8. Visit Barrow

Promotional video is underway with a few more shots to be completed before first viewing. Wanting some Christmas footage to be added to it.

CG has been speaking to Morrisons about the possibility of coach parking to bring tourists/shoppers into the town from the Lake District, they are speaking to head office and are getting back to him.

9. Christmas

Following a discussion it has been agreed the BID needs to go all out and do all it can for Christmas following several months of cancelled events, funds are to be diverted from other projects with an emphasis on free car parking as this was a success in 2019.

Events already agreed are a joint venture with the council for an ice-rink and stall by the town hall. The stalls would be for local town centre businesses first before being offered to external applicants. The council is to create task for to facilitate this event happening and it being a success.

Alan questioned the timings of the event with it being confirmed that it would be in operation for 9 days inc 2 weekends from the 5th Dec. There would also be a focus on inclusive sessions at quieter times for schools and disadvantaged groups.

The theming of the ice rink area would be in-line with the rest of the town's decorations and a Dickensian style dress as the event in Ulverston has been cancelled this year.

Social Distancing for the event is a primary concern - limiting numbers within the designated/fenced area , specified time slots and limited marketing (as to not have large crowds at once) would all be used to ensure a safe yet enjoyable environment.

Pricing for the ice skating was discussed as it should be affordable but not so low as to devalue the activity and generate revenue for other activities. Discounts off food and drink with entrance ticket within the area and wider BID area were mentioned but it has been left for the task force to explore these further.

Santa Dash – now a virtual event

Shop Barrow Day – 28 Nov / Day after Black Friday, this proved to be a successful day for town centre retail last year and has been agreed to go ahead again in 2020. Issues stemming from last year were that even though free parking was provided some shoppers still paid as the signage was inadequate. SC & AK have volunteered to come up with a plan (possibly bags to cover parking machines) so that this is not repeated this year.

Light Switch – Bid not to actively get involved in a mass event but to enquire if Beth/Dennis were planning anything for this year. The BID would be proving street entertainment spread out throughout the town centre to enhance the festive atmosphere and a more enjoyable shopping experience.

Christmas Lights – the additional lighting is on schedule to be delivered and installed according to plan.

Brochure – CG is to proceed with a mini brochure to advertise the town centre offerings for shopping, events and hospitality.

Big Foot events – awaiting quotes for indoor Christmas scene with talking reindeer within Barrow market and large external snow globe.

KH enquired about School Choir competition that has been held in previous years and the inclusion of brass bands within the town centre entertainment. There are no plans for the choir competition this year as it is believed the schools would not be able to participate and brass bands would be asked to participate along with other town centre entertainment.

Santa's Grotto – would be left to other organisations to provide as they have done successfully in previous years although we would investigate the possibility of a walk around Santa

10. Next Meeting

Tuesday 13th October, venue TBC

11. AOB

KB enquired as to whether there was any spare Christmas lighting that could be used on trees on Cavendish St, CG confirmed that all new lighting had been allocated for 2020 but more trees and a centre pieces are planned for 2021.

A Christmas window display competition was discussed, it was agreed that this would be delayed pending feedback from the Halloween event.