

Barrow Business Improvement District

Tuesday 10th November 2020

Minutes of Board of Directors

Meeting held virtually due to national lockdown.

Attendees: Sandra Collings SC, Colin Garnett CG (Manager), Allan Kerr AK, Paul Hodgson PHO (Chair), Kay Bower KB, and Phil Heath PHe.

Apologies: Rowan McClure and John Graham

- 1. Review of minutes from previous meetings** - all directors agreed that the minutes could be 'streamlined' by CG as some items were too detailed. It was unanimously agreed that due to issues raised as the result of an item in the August minutes which could be misconstrued, that an addendum should be included in these minutes acknowledging that the paragraph was badly worded and that the BID wished to apologise to anyone who was offended by this.

It needs to be made clear that any complaints relating to the BID must be made directly to the BID Manager and not to individual directors or their places of employment.

The Evening Mail contacted the BID to write an article about the misconception that the BID were seen to be discriminating against disabled drivers. CG and PHO produced a quote as requested but so far nothing has been published.

- 2. Holiday Guide** - CG and AK have both produced a potential advert. Copies of both will be e-mailed to all directors for a decision to be made on which one to use.
- 3. Christmas** – All the Christmas lights are now up. Unfortunately there were not enough left to do the top of Dalton Road.

Forum are going to do a virtual light switch on, which has been put back due to the national lockdown. It is hoped that this will take place soon after lockdown is due to end, currently 2nd December.

Christmas Shopping Guide – CG is putting this together and now has 64 pages. Although CG had contacted the local businesses about placing a free advert many had not responded, this may be due to businesses not having time to produce an advert. AK suggested in the future the BID could assist local businesses who may not have publishing skills. Due to the current COVID situation guides will need to be distributed to houses door to door. CG is making enquiries about someone to do the distribution and until this has been finalised a decision cannot be made on the quantity required.

Free Parking – Shop Barrow Day has been moved to the first Saturday after lockdown. Barrow Borough Council has agreed that the BID can pay them to use the multi storey car park to offer free parking on 12th and 19th December. If lockdown is extended over either or both of these dates the BID will not be charged.

SC to produce covers to put over the pay machines advising that parking is free due to being provided by Barrow BID.

AK to produce signs to direct people to Barrow BID free parking on 12th and 19th.

Any further Christmas plans are on hold until the end of lockdown is confirmed.

- 4. 5 Year Plan** – PHo has been advised by British BID that Barrow BID need to be working on a 5 year plan during December/January to have it ready for February/March. CG suggested that an extra meeting be held at the end of November to put together ideas.

PHo to send out invites for meeting on 24th November.

5. AOB

- St Mary's Hospice shop have asked the BID to look at their levy bill as it is based on the rateable value prior to the shop being split into retail and residential use. Barrow Borough Rates Department have passed the request back to the BID for a decision. CG has checked the BID's operating agreement terms and if a building is split this is a legitimate reason to review the amount of levy payable. It was unanimously agreed to reduce the levy for St Mary's Hospice shop in line with the rateable value reduction due to a split of the property and if a similar situation arises in the future each individual request will be discussed in a board meeting.

CG to reply St Mary's Hospice and to advise Barrow Borough Council.

- **Scarecrow Trail** – very good response. Shops thought that it was great and many families enjoyed it. The 'living scarecrows' were very popular. 100 bags of sweets were provided at the final destination and only 4 were left. There is a possibility of doing a Christmas trail.
- **In Cumbria Magazine** – in the November 2020 issue there is a 5 page article about Barrow BID.
- **Special Projects Application** – Scott Street businesses have submitted their application for Christmas trees. Due to contributions from the businesses towards the cost of trees they do not require as much money from the BID for trees as was agreed at the last meeting, but they have requested a small addition to the original amount so that they can also purchase bunting which could stay up after the lights have been removed. This was agreed by the directors provided that Cumbria Highways agree to it.

CG to contact Cumbria Highways to obtain agreement.

- **Business Premises Grant** – Atkinson Financial have now got their signage in place.

Date for next meeting: Tuesday 8th December.

Additional meeting re BID future plans: 24th November