

## **Barrow Business Improvement District**

**Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

### **Minutes of Board of Directors**

#### **Virtual meeting via Google Meet due to Covid Lockdown**

**Attendees:** Colin Garnett CG (Manager), Paul Hodgson PHo (Chair), Kay Bower KB, Phil Heath PHe. John Graham JG, Allan Kerr AK, Kieron Hart KH and Sandra Collings SC

Invited guests: Leslie McLeese – Leonard Cheshire & Furness Youth Worker Consortium

Jonny Williams – Cando FM

Keith Johnson – Assistant Director Barrow Borough Council

**1. Apologies:** Rowan McClure

**2. Review of minutes from previous meetings – agreed.**

- Wash up meeting re Christmas lights postponed due to full lockdown.
- CG managed to meet with Brian Vickers from Barrow BC about the area behind the town hall and lighting.
- BID Vision 2021-2026 put on hold due to CG having to work on a vision summary for Barrow BC which had to be done last week.
- CG not yet written to Environmental Health regarding bird feeding in the town, but it is on his list.

**3. 2nd Term Vision/Ballot**

CG has sent out a document to Board members of the 1<sup>st</sup> draft summary of the 2021-2026 vision and the projects that the BID aim to deliver. The directors were asked what they thought of it, what had been missed, priorities and who do they want to attract to the town. The outdoor area behind McDonalds was discussed as an area of concern, but the disused playground area has been earmarked for an electric vehicle charging point by Barrow BC so options are limited, although beautification of the car park, toilets and tree areas would improve the entrance to the town as it is the main town centre car park. The BID would have to work as partners with Barrow BC on this.

It is planned to use the space formerly occupied by the outdoor market for multiuse – Barrow BC is purchasing wooden huts to house market type stalls. There are also plans to install a stage and sound system to allow performances by local musicians and drama groups and to host regular events.

The Pocket Park project has been removed from the vision as requested by Barrow BC. The failure to obtain the Future High Street Funding has had an impact on the plans for the town centre.

AK asked if someone on Barrow BC could work with the BID to give approval to projects prior to all the preparation work being done. Keith Johnson said that he has been asked to be the single point of contact to closely work and communicate with CG. He wants to try to support the BID.

Barrow BC has agreed in principal the garden style street plan for the bottom end of Dalton Road and Cumbria Highways want to get on board. Businesses in that area are very interested and with the possibility that the plan could be extended to Scott Street to also include Taylors who are supportive of the idea.

CG reminded BID members that the vision document has to be kept confidential. Business plan has to be submitted to Barrow BC Executive Committee by 7<sup>th</sup> Feb. All BID members agreed that an application should be made to Barrow BC for a ballot for the BID's next term of office.

CG is to work on the final draft. He has been doing some online training with British BID who have stressed the importance of gathering data and using BID members as a campaign team to ensure that they get the support from the levy payers who wish to back them. CG/PH to seek consultants for support in interpreting the legislation and act as a consultant.

#### **4. COVID Recovery**

- The BID have been promoting businesses during the latest lockdown – those open, offering delivery, click and collect etc.
- Floor stickers and signage have been provided.
- AK suggested that the BID should plan some quick events to have when covid restrictions are lifted to try and attract people to the town centre – musicians, entertainers and funfair rides for children. He also suggested that more diverse events would attract people in the future as people would visit to see something different that they hadn't seen before.

#### **5. Station Gateway Project Update**

- Planning applications have been submitted for the two tourism totems to be located at the train station and the bottom end of Dalton Rd.
- The sign manufacturers have created 3D technical drawings of the totems which have been submitted to Barrow BC planning dept.
- CG needs to visit Dalton Rd with Barrow BC and Cumbria CC to find out exactly where they would like the totems to be located.
- There was an additional cost of planning consent and technical plans for the totem.
- CG needs to finalise the signs with the designers – hope to be in place by June.

#### **6. Christmas 2020 Review**

- **Shopping Guide** - very good feedback and it enabled us to engage with a lot of town centre businesses in particular national chain retailers. CG suggested it should be produced annually.

- **Free Parking** - Mixed feedback on the free parking, it worked on Shop Barrow Day but there was low use of the multi-storey car park when it was free all day. It was suggested that this could be due to the anti-social behaviour of the groups of young people loitering on the car park and access areas. Most of the car park covers were taken.
- **Buskers/Entertainment & Town Centre Music** - lots of positive feedback from parents regarding Santa and the Elves. The Buskers were thankful to be able to perform in the town. CG expressed his thanks to Barrow BC licencing who were able to provide a licence to allow the Salvation Army to play.

## 7. **New Year New Home Update**

12 businesses opted to promote themselves in the New Year New Home guide which was advertised on the BID website and social media. Due to National lockdown the adverts with Cando FM and were changed for a COVID support advert instead. CG said that the campaign had enabled the BID to liaise and build up a relationship with businesses they often find hard to engage with.

## 8. **Cando FM Advertising Campaign**

The BID would like to support the local radio station and Jonny Williams said that Cando FM want to support the BID. It was unanimously agreed to have an 8 month advertising campaign with Cando FM to include full adverts and blip (short) adverts.

## 9. **Furness College Virtual Work Experience Project Summary**

CG had been asked to be a mentor on this project and he has suggested 3 projects that the business study students could choose from:

1. To set up a virtual business aimed at 16-25 year olds with a business and marketing plan, as well as premises.
2. To organise a virtual event aimed at 16-25 year olds with a management plan and risk assessment. Also to look at the impact that it would have.
3. Develop a virtual town centre area of land aimed at 16-25 year olds with a plan, activities and an artist's impression.

CG will present the project to Furness College students and discuss how Barrow town centre is 'THEIR' town and the need to get input and ideas from young people to create a better town for future generations. The project is a way to engage with young people and any good plans could be backed in the future with funding from the BID.

## 10. **Town Centre Investment update**

**HAZ scheme** – start date still not known

**FHSF** – the funding for this has now been withdrawn. Barrow BC are to get feedback on the reason for this.

**Town Deal Fund** – the funding has been reduced so the planned projects are being trimmed down to fit the reduced budget. The scheme includes a university campus, cycling infrastructure and the marina village, but it hoped that the some of the town centre can be incorporated in the plans due to the withdrawal of the FHSF.

**11. AOB**

- CG has received a letter of complaint sent to Cumbria CC.  
CG and PHo will write a reply.
- Barrow BID trademark – ‘TM’ does not have to be included. It was decided that the Visit Barrow name should also be trademarked.  
AK to action.  
CG to talk to Barrow BC regarding the need for a Tourism Strategy.
- PHo thanked the guests for attending.

**Date of next meeting: 6.30 pm Tue 9th Feb - Virtual Meeting**