

Minutes of the Board of Directors meeting

Held at Debenhams on 20th September 2017

Attendees

Paul Ellis (Chair)
Mark Billington (Observer)
Kurt Jansen
Pieter Strömbeck
Andy Stubbs
Darren Harman
Patrick Taylor
Keith Ferry (Observer)
Louise Baxter
PC John Leicester and PC Joe Nangle
Laura Lyons (*note taker*)

Representing

Skipton Building Society
Harrow Council Economic Development
McDonalds
St Anns Shopping Centre
Harrow BID Chief Executive
St George's Shopping Centre
Debenhams
Harrow Council Business Portfolio Holder
Harrow BID
Metropolitan Police
Harrow BID

Apologies

Daniel Spicer
Daniel Southgate
Russ Grayson
Tanya Sprunks
Shanta Bhagwandin
Shaun Rhodes
Jay Patel

Natwest
Brian Cox
Metropolitan Police
Metropolitan Police
Harrow BID / Pop Marketing
Harrow BID / Pop Marketing
The Chocolate Room

1. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

2. Changes to Harrow BID Company Directors

Resignation of Lee Graham noted – he's moved to a new role outside Harrow. Proposed and agreed that Nick Lord, new M&S store manager, should be invited as his replacement.

3. Chief Executive's update

AS reported that Harrow Council had informed us that BID refunds not taken into account since the inception of the BID would need to be clawed back, in the sum of £45K for the first three years. AS confirmed the BID annual accounts are professionally prepared and have been submitted to Companies House without the knowledge of this outstanding sum for previous years. Fern Silverio from the Council subsequently informed AS that the situation may not be quite so bad but reports cannot be run as the user is on holiday and we will not have a definitive answer for a couple of weeks. There is a suggestion the situation arises from credits and debits being accounted for on different computer programmes which are not linked.

AS supplied a copy of the Operating Agreement that the BID has with Harrow Council which clearly specifies what should be in the annual report, including the amount of any refunds made. The BID has previously received a table from the Council which the accountants relied

upon as the basis for preparing the accounts. The table does note that receipts are 'net of refunds', therefore the BID was not aware that further refunds were due. Additionally, if refunds are issued then either the landlord or the incoming tenant becomes liable and should be charged for the remainder of the year so an explanation is needed as why the figure is as high as £45K. DH said the Board should wait until the final figure is given by the Council before making any decisions. AS said that if the BID is voted in for a second term, the rules could theoretically be changed to specify that no refunds are made, even when a business leaves. DH reported that when Esquires moved out from St George's shopping centre he was not billed as landlord for the vacant premises. AS to update the Board when the Council finalise their clawback claim.

In the meantime, AS said it would be a good idea to prioritise the list of proposed extra services so that if the Council come back with a lesser amount we can quickly move ahead.

DH said he would like additional cleaning to be a priority as there was currently not enough weekend cleansing operatives, bins are full and litter is blown around so an extra cleaner would be very useful. PS agreed and said even though the video editing was essential, cleaning the town should be a priority. £7,000 so far spent with the video company, they have some additional footage of the summer market and summer fun days to put into the renewal video – additional cost is £2,500. It was agreed that with the busy shopping period looming an additional weekend cleaner should be employed as the cleansing team are already fully stretched and the Council does not have enough funds to keep the town clean. DH said he was happy to supply a base for the cleaner as well as equipment storage, and possibly some supplies in order to make a difference. AS said it would be possible to adjust the budget slightly for this year and possibly for next year in order to pay for a cleaner urgently, other items to be left in abeyance.

4. BID renewal programme

AS commented on the programme, reporting a good start has been made by examining data for the existing BID area, and collating a list of current and new businesses etc. Variables are being looked at regarding BID levy threshold and BID area. AS suggested more Board oversight is given to the renewal programme on a more regular basis as the Board only meets quarterly. It was suggested a new meeting takes place once every 2 months. DH said an action group was needed, meeting every 2 months, moving up to monthly closer to the ballot. MB said that with local elections happening next year, Democratic Services need to be engaged early. AS confirmed that the local authority will need to make a decision as to whether to instruct the ERS to conduct the ballot, but that BID has reserved funds to cover this. He strongly recommends ERS as they provided an excellent service in 2013.

AS reported that there have been around 300 BID ballots in the UK, of which 282 have been successful, 6 failures (2 at renewal stage), and he was therefore confident that the BID would be voted in for a second term. We need 51% of voters to vote yes, as well as over 50% of total rateable values to cast a yes vote. PT said it was important to connect with the grass roots members early, preferably before Christmas, as part of our pre-ballot engagement process.

5. Marketing Update

PS reported the Ambassador programme is an important communication channel with businesses and was good at getting feedback and should therefore continue. AS confirmed that funds to continue the ambassador programme were in place for this year and would likely feature in our marketing strategy for next year. Summer market was well received by businesses and the public, with the next market planned for 30th November. All agreed market information should go out earlier so that everyone was aware of it. DH said he liked the market and the operator was good, but would like less food offerings, as food operators in St George's suffer. He would like to see footfall figures to prove that the market does in fact increase footfall to the town.

Postscript: The figures below were reported in the BID August Newsletter:

Day	Non-Event Day Footfall	Event Day Footfall	Increase
Monday	59,276	80,783	36.30%
Tuesday	58,207	72,651	24.80%
Wednesday	58,280	70,121	20.30%
Thursday	61,396	67,778	10.40%
Friday	63,147	74,040	17.20%
Saturday	77,505	80,875	4.30%
Sunday	58,711	65,838	12.10%

Summer Fun days unfortunately did not increase the footfall significantly, but it is unclear whether this was due to the weather, or the event happening earlier in the summer.

PS confirmed the Christmas party is planned to take place on 25th November from 12pm to 6pm and it would be a good idea for businesses to stay open later to take advantage of the increased footfall in the town centre dispersing at 6pm after the firework display. DH suggested finishing the party at 5pm instead. MB said there is some merit in finishing at 5pm as families with young children are more likely to go for something to eat rather than going home. Discussion on timing and shop closures, DH said the easiest option would be to have the fireworks at 5pm to allow shoppers a further hour to go into the shops afterwards. LB said that it would be possible to move the programme forward an hour, starting at 11am instead of noon. Board agreed to move the display to 5pm, and to compare footfall and sales figures to the previous year to see if businesses do well from being open after the end of the display.

6. Operations

- Hanging baskets coming down on Friday 29th September in order to allow the festive lighting to be installed on 2nd October, to be switched on 19th October for Diwali. Lights will then remain on until January 2018.
- Trees on St Anns Road need pruning, LB has spoken to Cllr Anderson to look at some of the issues as requests for the trees to be looked after have gone unheard at the Council.
- Havelock Place has been tarmacked due to the road collapsing. This went well.
- Pest control going well, more traps to be deployed on Nat West roof. PS reported that he has a pigeon problem. LB said that there are less roosting birds in the town, those that are seen travel in, but will investigate further.

- 256 FPNs issued in August (littering, spitting, etc).
- Cleansing – LB is meeting David Robertson, head of cleansing, every two weeks, and is working on issues such as littering, fly tipping, cleansing in general.
- Litter Bins – the bins that were purchased are not fit for purpose and will all be replaced. 60 to be installed in the next 2 weeks. LB asked if the old bins can be kept and used on event days to cope with increased footfall, the council have agreed to this. PS said this was good, but the cleaning regime needs to be in place so that dirty bins are not put out. LB to work with Paul Lilley to create an action plan.

7. HBAC

- Safe Haven – This initiative was trialled from 10pm to 3am over the first three weekends in September. Staffed by police, Council, first aiders, street pastors, LB to offer assistance/information to those in need. Tea & coffee kindly donated by McDonalds. Debrief scheduled for 27th Sept. KJ said he attended on 15th Sept, the gazebo was good but a more professional stand would be an improvement and that it was a great project. JL said that the police would continue to patrol the town during the hours as if the safe haven was still in position, and that it was hoped it would be in position again around Christmas.
- HBAC - LB has discussed the use of DISC with our businesses in order to increase uptake. Improvements have been made to make it more user friendly, with pages for youths, top 10 offenders etc. A networking event is being planned towards the end of October aimed at increasing HBAC membership, with current users invited to give a talk highlighting the benefits. Venue: Trinity Bar, 5pm to 6pm, date TBC.
- Police Report – Figures for Jul/Aug - shoplifting 41; theft 18; robbery 4; burglary 8; ABH 8; GBH 5; assault 14; fraud 3; public order 2; cycle theft 6; racial harassment 5; criminal damage 1. Begging continues to be an issue. JL said that these figures are low compared to other London boroughs and that he would update LB with the status of the multiple stabbing victims. AS said he had been in contact with the Business Crime Hub and received an answer to his questions on the vehicle incursion incident and the multiple stabbing. AS said we can learn lessons from incidents such as Borough Market. JL asked if it would be helpful for him to visit businesses with some counter terror advice. PT asked if there would be an increased police presence in the town in the run up to Christmas, especially Black Friday week. LB confirmed that she had spoken to Tanya Sprunks who is planning to have extra officers on duty on Black Friday (24th Nov) and the following day for the Christmas Party Event under the 'Autumn Nights' initiative. LB also confirmed that the police had enquired whether any markets were taking place in order to avoid the situation that happened in Berlin last year.
- PT suggested Christmas Eve trading should be 10am-4pm instead of 11am-5pm to give shops time to close up and organise stock for Boxing Day sales. PS said his traders had already agreed to an 11am start, and DH added his tenants had also voted for an 11am start.

8. AOB - none

9. Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting was discussed and it was agreed an afternoon meeting was preferable. Therefore, the next meeting is scheduled for **3pm Wednesday 25th October 2017** in Debenhams' Training Room.