

Penrith Business Improvement District
Board Meeting Minutes

Date: 15th August 2018
Time: 5.30pm
Location: Eden Mencap, Ullswater House, Duke Street, Penrith, Cumbria, CA11 7LY

The regular board meeting of the Penrith Business Improvement District was called to order at 5:30pm on 18th August 2018 in Penrith by Darren Broad (Vice Chair).

Attendees

Darren Broad (Vice Chair)	DB	Simon Whalley (Vice Chair)	SW
Stephen Clarke	SC	David Whip	DW
Stephen Lindley	SL	Philippa Ball (recording)	PB
Heidi Marsh	HM		

1. Apologies

- Jackie Taylor (JT) – Sabbatical
- Dan Harding (DH) – joined the meeting from 8:00pm
- Tim Lorton (TL)

2. Appointment of new Chair

After a short discussion DB was voted as the new Chair of the Penrith BID board.

DB suggested there was a benefit to having two Vice Chairs. Stephen Clarke volunteered to be Vice Chair, alongside Simon Whalley

All appointments to office are for 12 months

⇒ **Action:** PB to publicise new appointments on website, Facebook and the newsletter.

⇒ **Action:** PB to publish photograph of the board onto the website

⇒ **Action:** PB to prepare an article for the Herald

3. Matters arising from Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting had been unanimously approved as distributed via email following the last meeting. A signed copy has been added to the website.

Matters arising:

- HM referred to the constitution of the BID, which states the board must have directors from a diverse range of business background, and should include:
3 x small retailers

- 2 x large retailers
- 2 x professional and financial services
- 2 x hospitality, food and drink
- 1 x charity (including non-commercial) organisations
- 1 x other sectors
- 1 x local authority

- At present the board has a shortfall from local authority, large retail, and professional services. If the board appoint new directors, they should come from these business categories.

⇒ **Action:** All to speak to individuals from professional services (solicitor/vet etc.) and large retailers about becoming board members.

⇒ **Action:** HM to confirm if voluntary levy payers can become directors.

4. Update from BID Administrator/ Manager (PB)

PB noted pertinent points raised by levy payers and areas of concern from the past month:

- PB's project plan is now a working document and is available for all directors via Dropbox. This can be used for directors to see progress on projects, and understand priorities.
- USB pen has been received with data from the previous contractor. Details are limited and work is having to be done to obtain current documents and full contact details for levy payers.
- Meetings have taken place with local journalists. BID had an article in last week's Herald. Newsquest have suggested a quarterly page to promote Penrith in their 'Cumbria Life' magazine. Costings for this will be considered for 2019/20 budget.
- Concern has been raised over the use of photography on the BID websites. SW confirmed street scenes are permissible without the explicit consent of the individuals in the image.
- Traffic wardens have been spotted working alone, as discussed at the last meeting. When approached, they have been helpful and polite.
- DB and PB met with Emily Murphy from EDC concerning Penrith car parks. She will propose a steering group for all concerned parties. In addition, EDC will be able to provide statistics for car park usage, which will inform analysis and reports following BID sponsored events. DW noted that the council are currently undertaking a parking and movement study and this would be a good opportunity for feedback.
- PB has met with Dawn Hurton to discuss next steps for the Beneath the Beacon characters, including a more permanent trail and app for visitors.

⇒ **Action:** PB to invite Dawn Hurton to attend the next board meeting to discuss plans for the characters going forward.

- Visit Eden have a meeting in September; BID has not attended these in the past however it was agreed this could be beneficial.

⇒ **Action:** SW to attend Visit Eden meeting on behalf of BID and report back on any findings.

- The next Event Strategy Meeting will take place on 20th September. The meeting discussed BID representation.

⇒ **Action:** DB and SL to attend the Event Strategy Meeting on behalf of BID.

- It has been suggested it would be beneficial to have 3 hours free parking at both ends of town. Sainsbury's already offer this at New Squares and road signage directs visitors to this area. Morrisons or Booths Supermarkets may be willing to increase their maximum stay to three hours and signage could direct visitors to park at either end of town. The meeting acknowledged there may be legal covenants restricting this action.

⇒ **Action:** PB to arrange meetings with Morrison's and Booths to discuss the feasibility of increasing their car park maximum stay to 3 hours.

- There has been very slow update on training, despite a range of marketing. Levy payers are saying they are using online training as this is easier to schedule as it can be completed during quiet times, rather than requiring the member of staff to be out of the business for a full day. The meeting agreed the Autumn training should proceed, however this need to be investigated further before the 2019 dates.

⇒ **Action:** PB to evaluate feedback from September training as well as investigate online training options for levy payers.

- Great Dockray residence have requested support in purchasing bunting for Great Dockray and ask if it could be a summer-long installation.

There has been a complaint regarding a short online survey conducted following a recent event. The meeting discussed the fact that the online survey was conducted in addition to a face to face survey, where a range of businesses were canvassed. The online survey was short, with yes/no questions and space for comments to be added. There were a good range of comments received which will be fed back to event organisers after their own report has been received by BID. It was noted that decisions concerning future funding of events will be made purely on the quality of the event.

5. Decision Making Process

DW raised concerns over the BID decision making process. To date, decisions are usually favourable and it has been relatively easy to reach a consensus. The meeting discussed how they will react when there are difficult decisions to make and questioned the robustness of the current decision making process.

It was agreed that the board should be information hungry to inform decisions. This will ensure that informed decisions can be made, and the reasons for decisions can be reported back to levy payers. Meetings should be action oriented.

The board ethos of "Discuss, decide, support" was agreed as a valuable action set for the BID board. All board members need to support all decisions made once a vote has been taken. There needs to be a consistent narrative from the BID board.

The recent debate over Penrith Pound was discussed concerning its status, given the introduction of the Lake District pound; it was agreed there was not value for the greater number of levy payers.

⇒ **Action:** HM to review Penrith Pounds stats and feed back to levy payer who raised the question.

The meeting discussed how new projects are championed. It was agreed BID there is a need for robust discussions before projects are authorised.

6. Greening update

Britain in Bloom judging was held last week. The judges were thankful for the opportunity to meet and spend time with the people behind the greening prior to the judging. The brochure produced was well received. Feedback on the day was complimentary, noting that PTC/BID are in tune with the community. Britain in Bloom judging will be in Belfast. Baskets will stay in place until they are no longer providing a great floral display. The Board congratulated all those working on the greening.

PTC has received feedback confirming people are visiting the town specifically to see the floral displays.

⇒ **Action:** DW to forward PTC feedback on the positive impact of greening to BID, to be used in next year's promotional materials.

The hose pipe ban was lifted prior to enforcement.

There is a need for some assistance with plant maintenance, including dead heading. DW will speak to Rotarians for their help with maintenance issues.

PTC are looking at the broader issue of greening Penrith. The Lions have put boxes on A6 and these are well received. There is a need for maintenance of the whole area; road sweeping, grass mowing, general maintenance. If an entrance to the town is dressed, there needs to be maintenance up to and including that area.

The meeting discussed how to increase sales next year to ensure more shops have hanging baskets.

⇒ **Action:** PB to produce marketing infographics explaining the costs in the production and maintenance of the hanging baskets to be used for 2019 sales.

⇒ **Action:** PB to conduct a feedback survey for the end of the 2018 greening project.

⇒ **Action:** HM and DW to agree greening budgets for 2019 when all invoices have been received. There is a request from some levy payers for basket prices to be reduced if possible.

7. Finance update

HM presented financial update:

- £32k in bank
- £2,600 outstanding invoices from greening project
- £4,600 bills to be paid

⇒ **Action:** HM to add in greening grant from Town Council and BID as income to greening budget.

Please refer to the published Profit and Loss for full details.

DB raised the issue of insurance for ShopWatch, which is currently being paid for by BID. This year there is £157.50 to pay. Directors approved paying the insurance for another year.

DB reported that Cumbria Police want to stop using the current radio system and replace it with an app system on mobile phones. Cumbria Constabulary are wanting to roll this out county wide. The app contains all details needed to track shop theft including mug shots, evidence gathering. The meeting discussed the known benefits and costs of the system, which requires a minimum of 150 licenses being sponsored across the town centre before it can go ahead.

⇒ **Action:** DB to ask for further statistics from the provider, to be discussed at the next meeting.

⇒ **Action:** DB to ask for information / data from Carlisle on the experience with the scheme.

SW noted there is now no need for the additional £1,500 funding approved funding for Penrith Arts Festival. The event only needs the smaller budget of £3,000. The directors thanked SW for his honesty, but stressed the Arts Festival should approach directors again if further funding is needed to ensure the event is a success.

⇒ **Action:** PB to amend invoice

⇒ **Action:** SW to email EVAN bank account details to PB for amended sponsorship grant payment.

8. Unpaid Invoices – reminder / debt chasing

The meeting agreed BID should write to businesses where the levy remains unpaid.

⇒ **Action:** PB to draft a levy debt chasing letter, HM to approve letter, EDC to send to businesses who are yet to pay the levy.

9. Recycling Scheme

Cumbria Waste have given BID businesses favourable rates for waste recycling. The meeting agreed the scheme should be promoted again to all businesses. Dodd and Co made a significant saving when they joined this buying group. In the past there has been an issue with take-up of the scheme because businesses are tied in to existing contracts.

- ⇒ **Action:** PB to update recycling scheme buying group literature, write a feature in the next newsletter; update website to include savings. Literature should emphasise that this is a buying group which will save you money.
- ⇒ **Action:** HM to provide specific figures for Dodd and Co savings since moving to the Cumbria Waste buying group.

The meeting raised the need for a welcome pack for new businesses who are joining the BID. This should include literature on all BID initiatives which are relevant to Penrith businesses.

- ⇒ **Action:** PB to design and cost Welcome Packs for new businesses. PB to report back to next meeting.

10. Penrith Events Strategy

The meeting discussed the BID's input into the September Events Strategy meeting.

Penrith BID understands the value and importance of events to town centre businesses. However, there is a need to ensure events are beneficial for BID businesses.

BID are looking after BID levy payers money and the directors need to ensure they are spending it well.

The meeting discussed how best to work in collaboration with event organisers; ensuring the event is viable for businesses. There is a need to build relationships with all stakeholders. There is a need for participation from all members. Directors questioned if the event strategy should be agreed by event organisers only, or if funders should also be included in the decision making.

It is appreciated that whilst there is not necessarily a benefit to businesses on the day, there is a benefit to the town overall. Feedback has indicated that visitors would return to Penrith on the basis of their event experience and the impression of the town.

The meeting discussed potential funding strategies and funding guarantees, including potential 3 year funding, or guarantees given to event organisers. The BID are open to all suggestions. There is a need for a clear set of criteria up-front from BID, including a set of objectives and a funding policy.

11. Letter to Road Safety Committee

DH joined the meeting at 8:00pm

DH reported back on recent road safety discussions. A meeting with Kendal Calling organisers has taken place. A further meeting has been proposed, to include representatives from Chamber, PTC, BID, Police, CCC Penrith Show and PotFest. The meeting will discuss traffic strategy and event dates.

It was noted that events have an economic impact on businesses outside the town centre, as well as those in the middle of town.

⇒ **Action:** DH to confirm date of Road Safety Committee meeting to directors.

12. Any Other Business

12.1 Christmas Sparkle

PB presented the Christmas Sparkle ideas from JT, including Christmas trees, snow globe, Santa photographs and a specific event. A £15k budget was approved by directors. All agreed for JT to spend the money appropriately to promote the town and encourage visitors. It was noted that New Squares now has a power point for a tree lights.

12.2 Penrith Arts Festival

The Arts Festival will have a market in New Squares and the organisation of the event has supported by the New Squares staff. EVAN and New Squares have been working together to organise the market. New Squares are going to have an event planning agreement; the process has been very easy.

12.3 Rotary Support of BID

SL has arranged a meeting between BID and Rotary on 11th September 2018 at 5.30pm so Rotary can better understand more about BID and discuss how Rotarians can help BID. Directors are invited to attend.

12.4 Newsletter

Directors approved the copy for the Summer Newsletter.

13. Agenda for Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place at 5.30pm on Wednesday 19th September 2018.

Meeting was adjourned at 8.20pm by Darren Broad.

Minutes submitted by: Philippa Ball, Penrith BID Administrator / Manager

Approved by: Darren Broad

Signature:

