

Penrith Business Improvement District Board Meeting

Date: Tuesday 20th October 2020

Time: 5:30 pm

Location: Microsoft Teams video call

Philippa Ball, BID Administrator / Manager (recording) - PB

Stuart Bell, Accountant with Dodd and Co - SB

Darren Broad, Argos (Chair) – DB

Dan Harding, Foundry 34 and Angel Lane Chippie (Vice Chair) - DH

Sarah Mossop, Sassy Nix - SM

Charlie Shepherd, Rotary Club of Penrith - CS

Simon Whalley, Eden Valley Artistic Network – SW

David Whipp, Starfruit - DW

Minutes

1. Apologies

Celia Atkinson, M&S

Carol Grey, Penrith Town Council (PTC Representative) – CG

2. Financial Update

2.1. Stuart Bell presented the latest Financial review. Please refer to the P&L report for further details:

- Expenditure has been kept at a minimum
- Levy payments are still incoming

DB welcomed to Sarah Mossop who has joined the BID from Sassy Nix on King Street.

3. Matters Arising

Please refer to the report for matters from the last meeting.

The meeting order was amended to facilitate director's attendance.

4. AOB

4.1. ShopAppy online local shopping app

SW presented the idea of having a ShopAppy app for Penrith. This supports local businesses with online sales. This helps local businesses get online and takes a percentage cut on those online sales. At the moment there is an ongoing refresh of the app.

The meeting discussed the possibility of further investigating for this project in Penrith to see how it could benefit the businesses.

Action: SW to conduct some further research into the ShopApp offering and report back to the board.

Window Wanderland: EVAN, Penrith Town Council and Chamber are running a Window Wanderland project, creating window displays across the town. EVAN and the Chamber are also developing this idea across Eden with other towns.

SW proposed the BID become actively involved as a partner and asked for £1,000 to go towards the project.

The meeting discussed how this money would be spent and how it might benefit the businesses.
[SW left the meeting at 6.10pm].

Meeting continued the discussion about Window Wanderland:

- People participate better if things are easy and low key
- There needs to be engagement with the businesses
- Needs to be clear benefit for businesses, particularly if focus will be on residential areas
- At present, it was agreed to leave EVAN, PTC and the Chamber to led the project and propose what the money would be spent on (BID can help with administration of Christmas Windows as usual)

Action: PB to report back to the board following the Wanderland meeting on Friday.

[SW left the meeting at 6.10pm].

5. Chairman's Report

DB noted that last month was the AGM, which was a positive discussion about Penrith. It was good to have feedback from Neil Hudson about what is going on at a government level. However, it was disappointing to not have levy payer feedback.

Directors discussed how best to encourage levy payers to join in with the discussion about BID. The businesses are all so busy, BID is not necessarily a priority for businesses.

- For 2021 there needs to be more involvement with businesses across the levy area
- There is a need to approach more levy payers to improve awareness of the BID
- A number of businesses do not understand how the BID operates and what it is responsible for

Businesses are nervous about what local restrictions may be imposed. At present, DB is self-isolating because a colleague tested positive for Covid-19. DB encouraged businesses to focus on what is in their control to try and prepare and be ready should they get a call. DB was contacted by EDC Environmental Health from a business contact tracing point of view. DB commended EDC for the work they did. DB recommended the following:

- Control what is in the businesses control – for example 2m social distancing
- Keep staff contact details available so the process is easier should a call be received (including shift patterns)
- Shop floor businesses – potentially anyone could have come into contact with that person on the shop floor. Therefore, DB encouraged businesses to ensure staff keep 2m distance.
- Stress the importance of social distancing to staff
- Prepare the business for lockdown, should that come again in future – have a plan
- Don't forget there is funding available – grants and loans are available
- Environmental Health will look back 48 hours from the first day of symptoms for a positive case

DB is happy to talk about the experience of being contact traced if people need more support.

The meeting discussed Covid-19 Secure protection levels and how the general public are reacting to the procedures put in place.

6. Projects Update

6.1. Penrith Working Party

Penrith Working Party has been adjusted so the main working party is council led and there will be separate specific meetings for individual projects. BID will be invited to these project meetings.

6.2. Christmas

DH gave an update on the Christmas lights:

- Christmas lights will go ahead as normal, with the exception of the 'in town' switch on
- Trees will have icicle lights this year (rather than being wrapped)
- Lights have been consolidated into the centre of town to try and have more impact in specific area
- Mini Christmas trees have been improved to have more lights on them
- We are exploring an advert which can be streamed online and can then also be used for a TV advert
- Sponsorship for 2 of the 3 angels has been confirmed
- Calendars are being sold to raise money for the lights

Discussion of how businesses may be able to help to contribute to the lights. For example, rather than large scale sponsorship, giving smaller donations. Need to make sure businesses get recognition. Need to have advertising strategy behind the claim for sponsorship and acknowledgment of the businesses who participate.

Action: Christmas lights fund raising from businesses for 2021 to be discussed in January

6.3. Greening

DW noted the plants for 2021 have been ordered. 2021 order will have all plants, including the baskets and barriers, with the hope that the pandemic will be under control by then.

6.4. Training

Only 2 businesses responded to first aid training request. PB asked for confirmation that directors were happy for the project to be left on hold for now.

All directors agreed for training to be put on hold for 6 months.

7. Funding Requests

No funding requests have been received.

8. Any other Business (cont.)

Levy Payments

There needs to be a board decision about debt chasing levy payments. Meeting discussed options:

- All levy invoices should be paid – BID is a business.
- Suggestion that, given the pandemic, between now and the end of the year there is a payment plan to get the full levy paid (by the end of December)
- Any payment outstanding at that point, a final warning letter from BID will be issued, notifying them that EDC will begin formal proceedings following and give them the dates for EDC to contact them (potentially in February)

Directors agreed for a payment plan offer letter to be sent by BID, followed by a final reminder letter from BID. Following that EDC formal proceedings would commence. The plan was voted on and agreed by directors

Antisocial behaviour

CS – PTC had a meeting last night and the issue of antisocial behaviour was raised. There is an issue in the South West corner of town. This is being addressed.

Remembrance Sunday

DB will be laying a wreath on behalf of BID for the Remembrance Day proceedings.

Meeting adjourned at 7.20 pm

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

Approved by: Darren Broad

Signature:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.