

Penrith Business Improvement District Board Meeting

Date: Tuesday 15th December 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

Charlie Shepherd, Rotary Club of Penrith - CS

Simon Whalley, Eden Valley Artistic Network – SW

David Whipp, Starfruit - DW

Sarah Mossop, Sassy Nix - SM

Minutes

1. Apologies

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

Celia Atkinson, M&S

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

2. ShopAppy Presentation

DB welcomed Jackie from ShopAppy to present to the board. The following points summarise the offering:

- ShopAppy began in Saltaire 4 years ago with a focus on boutique and small businesses
- ‘Death of the High Street’ focus in the media is based on larger nationals; smaller independents traditionally survive
- High Street shoppers are traditionally older, with younger shoppers focusing online
- 18 to 20% drop in high street footfall reported for initial survey conducted by ShopAppy
- As a result of the pandemic two thirds of shoppers now shopping online (previously two thirds browsed online)
- Young shoppers interested in supporting local, know provenance. However, pre Covid-19 they tended not to shop local. ShopAppy researched into the reasons behind this. These included shoppers not knowing what stores sold and shops being closed after work hours.
- ShopAppy enables customers to have a local choice and support local. The connection is with the town, not just with the specific shops within it. Book, buy and home delivery are available via the website. It offers one consolidated checkout for multiple purchases across shops.
- Focus on online sales to generate footfall into the town. Showing shoppers what the town has to offer and encourage them to visit. As well as a platform for sales it is also a campaign to change behaviour. Marketing materials from Saatchi & Saatchi and links with Visa give incredible reach. NatWest also partner with ShopAppy.
- New site design is in development available Jan 2021.
- The site is geographically based, rather than being product based.
- Any type of business can join. Services and hospitality are also included – eg booking appointments, bookings rooms. Popups and market stalls can join, as can business professionals. Online events can also be promoted on the site.

- Products are linked to the business – when you click on a product tells the shopper about the shop they are supporting
- Visa help to showcase stories. Merchant stories are promoted nationally.
- Pre Covid-19 there are a number of people who could not access the high street and could not access events. Having an online place and online events reaches these audiences.
- Work with local suppliers for deliveries etc
- Quantifiable increase in footfall in shops selling on the website
- Community support is available on the website, e.g. offering soup kitchen donations to add to your shopping basket
- 91% of customers are encouraged to shop locally
- ShopAppy lobby to support local businesses
- Increased digital engagement, providing a marketplace for people to shop local online, rather than having to use multiple websites
- 40% of users are over 50
- Virtual tourism is an increasing positive side effect of the pandemic, with people buying from places they would have visited
- Focus for ShopAppy is that they want to drive footfall into the town and get shoppers to realise what is on offer from their local shops
- Mobile optimised website, not an app. This means people don't have to download anything
- Now in 150 towns across the country
- Just under half a million users for the website
- ShopAppy, ShopHappy!

Cost: working with place partners only (not direct to shops for the first year). BID would pay annual fee of £12,000 per annum for unlimited businesses, products, services and events. This includes all marketing materials. Community support team, business recruitment team support, virtual events support are included in this price.

After 12 months businesses will be invited to join ShopAppy in their own right. This is £5 per week for a business. Popups/ markets are £3 per week. Both prices are plus VAT. Or, the BID could continue to fund/sponsor the site for another year.

Time taken to get a new shop on the website:

- Shop keeper responsible for putting their products on the site. Links show how to get started via videos. Also, it is possible to download website products straight to ShopAppy. Community Support is in place.
- Need 10 products on the site before the shop can go live.
- 20 mins per week to keep site updated and then share on Facebook.
- Sending customers to ShopAppy from Facebook can increase sales.

Site users - 40% are under 34, 40% are over 50

Already been in place for 4 years. Going forward another 100+ towns are interested in joining the website. Visa and NatWest are strong partners.

The board discussed their feelings from the presentation:

- Interesting offering pertinent to Penrith. There is potential
- Question about how delivery routes/orders could be put onto the website
- Interesting offering financially, however would need buy in from businesses
- Worthwhile speaking to businesses in towns who have been using the website for over 12 months
- Could create a shopping community which people really engage with. Selling personalities and concept of Penrith, rather than just the products
- Local independents would be the main businesses using this site

- Marketing to the end users is key – making sure people know about the platform

Actions: Directors to write down questions and email to PB to collate and send to Jackie in the New Year.

3. Matters Arising

Please refer to the matters arising report for more information.

4. Financial Update

4.1. Stuart Bell to provide latest Financial review

SB presented the P&L Report for year to date.

The meeting discussed how best to document budgets for directors. It was agreed a new line for 'committed spend' should be added to the P&L report. This would be managed on an external spreadsheet to trace committed spend not yet invoices and budgeted spend not yet quoted.

Action: PB and SB to get new line added to the P&L report to show committed spend

5. Chairman's Report

DB noted the success of the Christmas Lights Switch On. Feedback received from around the world, including Australia and South Africa, was heart warming and positive.

DB congratulated the board on the success of Penrith Sparkle.

Directors discussed negative feedback from levy payers concerning mini Christmas trees. The mini-Christmas trees have been placed in specific locations around the town to give an overall town centre lighting scheme. The trees were consolidated into specific areas, with Middlegate the focus for trees and lights and King Street having overhead festoon lighting and cross street banners. For 2021 the scheme will probably mean the mini trees are removed completely.

Impressive audience results for the online video has raise the profile of the town.

DB wished a Merry Christmas and best wishes for the New Year to all the business in town.

6. Projects Update

6.1. Christmas

No further notes

6.2. Town Working Party – future visions for Penrith

Action: To be discussed at January Meeting

7. Funding Requests

No new requests received

8. AOB

8.1. Greening

DW met with Pot Place. Seedlings are growing on and there needs to be a planting plan for 2021. At the moment plans have been based on a 'normal' year (pre pandemic).

Meeting adjourned at 19.06 pm

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

Approved by: Darren Broad

Signature:

Date of next meetings: Tuesday 19th January 2021 at 5.30pm on Teams