

THESE MINUTES ARE DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED BY THE BOARD AT ITS NEXT MEETING

**A Meeting of the Interim Abingdon BID Board  
Was held on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> May 2016**

**Attendance:**

Paul Holt, Nick Cosford, Mel Inness, Mark Thornton, Andrew Threlfall, Kevin Thompson, Stuart Bates.  
Julie Downing, Russell Downing, Andrew Watts.

**1. Welcome**

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting and introduced Julie Downing as the Abindon BID manager, Russell Downing and Andrew Watts of In Publications, the BID management company

**2. Apologies**

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting were submitted on behalf of: Bryan Brown

**3. A.O.B:**

None

**4. Minutes**

Paul Holt updated the board on the operating agreement with Vale County Council. The first agreement was knocked back and discussions held to negotiate new terms. There will now be seven installments paid throughout the year. The Vale have agreed to pay their levy straight away.

Details were fanialised last week and bills were sent out, although Mel Inness said the business' had not received them yet. Mel Inness also stated that business' had received information that other market towns in the Vale and South Oxfordshire areas are received funding for town management.

Contracts are still in the process of being drawn up for In publications, Paul Holt to chase.

**5. Correspondence**

None received

## **6. BID Managers Report**

Russell Downing gave an overview of In Publications actions since the BID went live on the 1<sup>st</sup> May, including: Levy inserts had been produced to go out with the bills. The website Visit Abingdon is in production to be completed within the next few weeks. Social media is live with Twitter and Facebook. Meetings are arranged with NOGIN, to enable tracking of footfall so we have a benchmark. A vacant unit survey has been carried out. Branding exercise has been carried out with the help of Stuart Bates and Bryan Brown, these ideas will be available by the end of the week.

Andrew Watts added that we will look to sell advertising space to put money back into the bid. Regarding social media, we will look to promote business' in the BID levy area. There are 500 followers on Facebook at present, but it is the engagement that is the most important to us. Andrew Watts mentioned that we need to attract local people to the town, then aim further afield.

**RESOLVED: That the report be accepted by the Board**

## **7. Finance**

No Report

**RESOLVED:**

## **8. Project Up-date**

### **8.1 A well-Known Town**

Social media report was presented by Andrew Watts detailing the activity over the first month.

### **8.2. An Eventful Town**

Julie Downing has met with Bryan Brown to start to build contacts with a view to contributing/coordinating and events calendar for the town.

### **8.3. An Attractive Town**

Plans are in place to introduce additional floral displays and potentially bunting, this will need to be discussed with the Town Council once their scheme is in place.

### **8.4. A Productive Town**

None to report at this time

**RESOLVED: That the report be accepted by the Board**

**9. K.P.I's**

9.1 Footfall

Footfall for the region and across the UK has seen a decline in recent months with many turning to on-line purchasing, once we have established a benchmark with the NOGIN information we can put a strategy in place to address this.

9.2 Vacant Units

Russell Downing presented the vacant unit report, Abingdon currently sits considerably above the regional average.

**RESOLVED: That the report be accepted by the Board**

**A.O.B**

Mark Thornton asked if the BID would be available to help certain business struggling with Social media. Russell Downing stated that this is something that we could help with. Andrew Watts added that consultation workshops will be something to look at in the future on a free of charge basis for the first hour.

As a collective, we need to talk to other business' in the levy area to see if they would like to join our board. Letters will be going out to see if we can get some nominations for board members. We need diverse BID members from all business areas, also council members preferably from local and Vale and to bring in a member of the police force if possible.

Kevin Thomson mentioned that it was key to try and engage services of local business. Russell Downing reiterated that where possible local services would be used unless a clear and compelling business case to go outside of the BID area.

A meeting has been set up with Visit Oxfordshire.

Collabrative purchases will be looked at in the future for levy paying business.

Julie Downing will start to talk to the various different events committees to provide support and help with the marketing.

**RESOLVED: Social Media workshops to be arranged  
Nomination forms to be distributed for board members**

**Next meeting:** 6<sup>th</sup> July 2016 – Crown & Thistle