

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

**A Meeting of the Abingdon BID Board  
Was held on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2016**

**Attendance:**

Paul Holt, Bryan Brown, Stuart Bates, Nick Cosford, Mel Inness, Kevin Thomson, Suzanne Huggett, Melanie Smans, Julie Downing, Andrew Watts.

**1. Welcome**

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting and introduced Melanie Smans from the Vale Council and Suzanne Huggett from the Nursery Shop. Also, the chair announced that Andrew Threlfall has withdrawn from the board at this time.

**2. Apologies**

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting were submitted on behalf of: Mark Thornton, Russell Downing, Sandy Lovatt.

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

Contract with In Publications.

**4. Minutes**

There being no matters arising Julie Downing proposed the minutes, they were seconded by Bryan Brown.

**5. Correspondence**

None received

**6. BID Managers Report**

Julie Downing presented the management report that covered a number of actions undertaken since the last meeting.

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

**7. Finance**

Stuart Bates reported that there is £17,000 in the Abingdon BID account at present, with a future £24,00 to come from the Vale collections.

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

**8. Project Up-date**

**8.1 A well-Known Town**

Social media report was presented by Andrew Watts detailing the

activity over the last 3 months. It was brought to the board's attention that if all the members followed Visit Abingdon, then it would help reach a wider area but also set an example to the businesses that we could all help each other by promoting each other's business.

Also a Social Media Workshop was carried out for businesses that was not well attended, Andrew Watts did make a comment that it would be good if board members could attend these workshops and talk to other businesses about future events to try to create more interaction. It was said that the person who did attend the workshop gained a great deal of advice to take back to his business.

## **8.2. An Eventful Town**

Julie Downing talked about the 3 events planned for the rest of this year.

A Hallowe'en treasure hunt to take children and guardians to 13 different places around the town that they might not have been to before.

Also, two different Christmas events held on a Thursday, these will be the start of annual events to encourage more people into the town. The events will be assessed after the event to see if Thursday was the right day to hold them.

Julie Downing also brought up the idea of holding Artisan markets next year, a question was asked, would this help the businesses in the town? A mixed feeling as Julie Downing and Andrew Watts both stated that Markets do increase footfall and would help prompt future return business and a more vibrant Town.

A discussion was held, what do we want Abingdon to be known for? We will come back to this at the next meeting for further discussion after some thought.

Moving forward to next year, Julie Downing is planning on inviting as many of the local event organisers together to see if we can co-ordinate an events calendar and help promote each other's events, working together to help make Abingdon a Vibrant, eventful town.

## **8.3. An Attractive Town**

We now have a quote for bunting around the BID area which will go up when the Christmas lights come down.

Julie Downing will approach the District Council to talk about street repairs as there are a lot of areas in the town that need attention.

## **8.4. A Productive Town**

Julie Downing reported that we are now a partner of Experience Oxfordshire, this will help with the exposure of Abingdon.

Julie Downing will approach the Town Council to see if there is a Tourism Budget. At this point, Melanie Smans talked about other towns in the surrounding areas implementing a Town Centre manager. This being funded 50% by the Town Councils, which is not happening in Abingdon, so a question was asked; Is there money available to help with the BID's projects?

Also, Melanie will organise a meeting with the other Town Centre managers to meet and share thoughts and ideas.

A joint utilities company has now been found and Julie Downing will start the process. At this point Julie Downing stated that this is where we would like to get business more engaged in the BID, starting by getting together a more up to date email data base therefore being able to notify businesses of ongoing projects, like the joint utilities. Also, Julie Downing will make contact with Salters Steamers to see where we can work together.

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

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

### **9.1 Footfall**

Sven Latham, from Noggin attended the start of the meeting to talk through the data that has been collected from the 9 different sensors places throughout the BID area.

A discussion was held about the high figures of footfall, particularly cars being counted which is not a true reading of footfall in the town. But we concluded by stating that this still gives us a benchmark of footfall levels at different times. Sven will asses the data to see if any changes can or need to be made.

Melanie Smans also stated that a footfall count will be carried out by the Vale in October which we will be able to compare data with our readings.

Julie Downing will also try to gain the footfall data from Bury's Street.

### **9.2 Vacant Units**

Julie 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**

It was brought to the boards attention that there are a number of buskers that are not really that good and do not contribute to the town. Could we look at sourcing better performers? Should permission be granted by the Town Council?

Contact should be made with Salters Steamers.

The contract with In Publications, the BID management company had made some progress .

**Next meeting:** 9<sup>th</sup> November 2016 – Crown & Thistle