



OUR ABERDARE BID BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Peppers, 27 Canon Street, Aberdare, CF44 7AP
Wednesday 11 August 2021 – 11:00 – 12:00

- Attendees:** Amy Brewin – RCTCBC Project Officer, Town Centres (AB)
 Darren Notley – RCTCBC Prosperity & Development (DN)
 Dawn Penny – BID manager (DP)
 Gethin Jones – BID levy member observer | Sgor Digital Marketing (GJ)
 Jim Bradley – BID Chairman, Director, board & levy member (JBr) | Bradleys Coffee
 Johnathan Bowen - BID Director, board & levy member | Morgan’s Fish Bar (JB)
 Mark Adams – BID board & levy member | BPI Consultancy (MA)
 Nigel Webb – BID board observer | Aberdare Market (NW)
 Tom Addiscott – BID board observer | Wales Cooperative Centre (TA)
- Apologies:** Helen Davies – Marketing specialist | BID volunteer (HD)
 Lindsay Winstone – BID board & levy member representative | Tesco (LW)
 Rebecca Thomas – BID board & levy member representative | Santander (RT)
 Tony Missen – BID board & levy member | Anthony Charles (TM)

| Item | Detail | Who |
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| 1. | Welcome 1.1 JBr opened the meeting, welcomed all attendees, noting Tom Addiscott as an observer. | |
| 2. | Apologies 2.1. Apologies given as above. | |
| 3. | Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising 3.1 AB noted that she did not attend the last meeting and was asked to be removed as an attendee on the minutes. ACTION: DP to amend the minutes from the last meeting to remove AB as an attendee. | DP |
| 4. | Pen y Cymoedd (PyC) funding update: 4.1. PyC Vision Fund conditions: DP confirmed that draft agreements are in place for Tesco, McDonalds and Baguette Express. We are still waiting to hear back from Lidl. 4.2. Look & Feel funding / RCTCBC approval: DP/JBr were extremely happy to confirm that consent has now been received from RCTCBC and Highways for the placement of planters throughout town and in addition, welcome signs amendments have been agreed. 4.3. Look & Feel funding reporting: DP noted that she is due to provide PyC with a progress report this Friday, 13 Aug 2021 and this will include a claim from the Vision Fund. | |
| 5. | Levy income: 5.1 2020-21 Levy Collection: DP noted the current 2020-21 levy collection rate is 89% / £70,005.75 an increase of 7% since last month and the RCTCBC levy collection process continues. 5.2 2021-22 Levy Collection: DP confirmed that the 2021-22 projected levy is a total of £76,845.00, just £1,628 less than 2020-21 total levy of £78,473.00. DP added that since the 2021-22 levy bills were sent Mon 19 Jul 2021, there has been a collection rate of 26% / £20,000.00 - mainly owing to larger chain businesses payments. | |
| 6. | Wales Cooperative Centre (WCC) & Our Aberdare BID - Community Renewal Fund (CRF) partnership application: 6.1 CRF application status: DP noted that we were expecting a decision at the end of July 2021 as to whether our CRF partnership application with WCC is approved, however the decision date has been delayed. DN added that a decision for all RCT CRF applications should be made in the next 2 weeks. | |



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| 7. | <p>Projects progress:</p> <p>7.1 Look & Feel PyC funded projects – Planters: JBr confirmed that we have ordered 60 square planters to be installed throughout Aberdare town by next week. JBr added that the cost of planters has increased by £50, owing to shipping container/shipment costs. JBr suggested to DN that RCTCBC CCTV cameras could help with any potential planter vandalism. JBr added that any vandalism would need removal and replacement straight away. JBr noted that we need to ensure that planters are watered regularly and he noted with great thanks that Baguette Express bought a watering can immediately to ensure they looked after the planters placed outside their café. A conversation regarding the supply of watering cans took place and it was agreed that the BID would procure watering cans for levy members to use to keep planters watered outside/nearby their premises in the same way that Baguette Express are kindly doing. DN noted that Tonypandy, Porth and Treorchy employ an external contractor to water planters/hanging baskets in all 3 towns. A discussion regarding hanging baskets took place and the possibility of this being a project going forward and how they would be maintained/watered. JBr noted that we are also placing the BID and PyC logos on planters and that printed vinyl for this is currently being tested to ensure adhesive is strong enough.</p> <p>7.2 Look & Feel PyC funded projects – Welcome signs: JBr noted the meeting that took place between the BID and RCTCBC/Highways Mon 09 Aug 2021 and that amendments to welcome signs to be compliant with regulations have been carried out and therefore the project is now approved with an installation date of 6-8 weeks time. A discussion regarding signs cost negotiation took place and it was agreed that cost must be agreed between JBr and Dylan Kelleher in Highways and JBr confirmed that £6,000 has been budgeted for the welcome sign project. DN added that Dylan would like to meet with JBr/DP at the welcome sign sites ahead of installation to agree the positioning of them. JBr finished by stating he feels that great progress for the welcome signs project has now been made.</p> <p>7.3 Look & Feel PyC funded projects – Empty units ‘Correx’ boards: JBr noted that the units DP had identified (old Profile & old Emmaus) are no longer available as they have now been/due to be tenanted and so DP has made contact with agents for other empty units in Commercial Street and Canon Street, including the old Burtons.</p> <p>7.4 Look & Feel – empty units - art installation: DP noted great thanks to the local artists who continue to work on the art installation. DP added that an installation date is yet to be confirmed by the property manager of the old Poundstretcher building.</p> <p>Gethin Jones (Sgor Digital marketing) joined the meeting as an observer.</p> | |



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| 7. | <p>Projects progress (cont.):</p> <p>7.5 Marketing & Events – training workshops: DP noted that Sgor provided a GIF containing testimonials of online marketing and this was shared in the last email newsletter to levy members.</p> <p>JBr asked GJ’s opinion of the training. GJ noted that we need to ensure the right level of training is provided. JBr added that the gain of such training needs to be quantified. MA added that people will not turn up to free training if they don’t value the content of training.</p> <p>GJ noted that there is no one size fits all solution and that each business’ requirements is completely different.</p> <p>JBr suggested that GJ spends time with a levy member business owner to help with online marketing to help show other levy members the benefits of digital training.</p> <p>7.6 Marketing & Events – loyalty scheme: DP noted that she and volunteer Ann Hyett carried out walk rounds in town and that there was a great and positive interest, however DP noted she only received a few links to offers from levy members.</p> <p>DP added that this was quite disappointing, however there was quite a short timescale to promote to levy members and that we will register with the next Fiver Fest (free event) taking place October 2021 and allow enough time to communicate and promote the event.</p> <p>7.7 Marketing & Events – Winter festival: DP noted that a winter event is scheduled in the project plan to start organising end Aug/start Sept 2021.</p> <p>DN added that he and AB are attending a meeting today to discuss Christmas events to find out what RCTCBC’s intensions are for winter events, however that there is a genuine desire to hold events.</p> <p>JB asked if RCTCBC winter event dates would be in place normally at this time of year to which DN confirmed yes.</p> <p>JBr noted that the BID definitely wants to hold an excellent event and would like DN to note that at his meeting.</p> <p>DP added that she has discussed a winter event with Ian Woodland, RCTCBC emergency planning officer and that he was extremely helpful, noting that the BID would need regular meetings with RCTCBC to arrange an event, especially if road closures are needed.</p> <p>DP noted that ideas/suggestions will be explored as part of this project.</p> <p>7.8 Marketing Strategy: DP explained that in order to promote our projects and to attract tourism/extra footfall in Aberdare that we need a robust, easy to follow marketing strategy so that time is spent effectively on promotion and nothing gets missed.</p> <p>JBr added that if there is money in the budget to use a marketing strategy to move the BID forward and advertisement of the improvement to town then this must be put in place.</p> <p>DP added that HD continues to provide great expert advice and volunteers her time to help out with marketing & events projects and that she will ask HD to provide a quote for a marketing strategy.</p> <p>ACTION: DP to request a quote for a marketing strategy from HD and other local marketing specialists.</p> | DP |



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| 7. | <p>Projects progress (cont.):</p> <p>7.9 Marketing - Flyers: JBr noted that the date for the distribution of flyers has not been achieved due to unforeseen circumstances outside of the BID's control. JBr added that it is unacceptable for a deadline such as this to be missed as it affects promotion of improvements in town, potential tourism and increasing awareness of the BID. DP added that this is extremely disappointing as the flyers were to follow up to the promotion of the BID in the Aberdare Park Road Races programme. DP noted great thanks to Derek, organiser of the event who gave the BID a free page in their printed event programme. DP added that our ad included a QR code linking directly to the BID's business directory.</p> <p>7.10 Marketing – free advertising through Trivallis: DP noted that Trivallis are reviewing the way they communicate information with their tenants and therefore their magazine to tenants is not currently being produced. Trivallis will keep us updated on this. DP added thanks to HD for liaising with Trivallis on this.</p> <p>7.11 Information & Communication: DP was pleased to report that our email newsletter database is now just under 200 email recipients. DP added that she has been carrying out a data cleaning exercise to confirm just under 100 of those emails are for levy members and that data cleansing continues. DP added that she has created a Facebook group solely for levy members to keep them updated, to share info and generally build the levy member community so everyone can help each other. The Group has just over 30 members and this continues to grow.</p> | |
| 8. | <p>RCTCBC car parking changes:</p> <p>8.1 Car parking and footfall: DP added that she has not met with Vikki Howells to discuss the question to be posed at the Senedd of supermarket free parking vs town paid parking. This is owing to Vikki Howells needing to cancel the meeting and an alternative date is yet to be arranged.</p> <p>8.2 Car parking provision for business owners: DP noted that she has not yet drafted the car parking objection/petition owing to the priorities of other BID projects.</p> | |
| 9. | <p>RCTCBC update – project management:</p> <p>9.1 RCTCBC update: DN firstly noted that his priority has been to help get the planters and signs projects moved forward. JBr added that DN has been a great help and gave thanks on behalf of the board.</p> <p>9.2 RCTCBC draft tourism strategy: DN noted that he awaits the findings of the draft tourism strategy survey and this will be made available to public in due course.</p> <p>9.3 RCTCBC visits from UK Levelling Up Fund Team: DN noted that a team of Civil Servants responsible for the UK Levelling Up Fund had visited RCT. They visited a number of locations and spoke to some businesses during their visit. This was the second visit in as many months with Robert Jenrick, Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government previously visiting Treorchy town centre.</p> <p>9.4 RCTCBC press release RE Covid funding: DN noted a recent RCTCBC press release to showcase businesses that were given covid funding. The press release included businesses in Aberdare, including Jacs and Aberdare Market.</p> | |



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| 9. | <p>RCTCBC update – project management (cont.):</p> <p>9.5 RCTCBC Communities for Work Plus: DN noted that a member of the Communities for Work Plus would like to attend a future BID meeting to help with their engagement with local businesses. DN asked if this can be added to the next BID board agenda.</p> <p>9.6 ACTION: DP to add RCTCBC Communities for Work Plus to the next board agenda.</p> <p>9.7 RCTCBC update - Maintenance of covered walkways: DN noted that the walkway has been painted, however the window has not been replaced.</p> <p>9.8 RCTCBC update - Wall at end of Commercial Street: DN noted that Tee 2 Sugars has been used by lots of businesses in the Rhondda. DN reiterated working with youngsters that frequent Game Box Aberdare could be a good idea. DP suggested working with the RCTCBC Youth Engagement and Participation (YEPS) may also help and noted that Karin Mear (local artist) has also expressed an interested in being involved with art projects. DN added that he will liaise with the RCTCBC Art Service to see if they want to continue with the art project or if it is a project that the BID can take on, and to agree budget. ACTION: DN to liaise with RCTCBC art service to agree budget for a mural at the end of Commercial Street.</p> <p>9.8 RCTCBC update – Replacement benches: JBr explained that 18 benches are to be reintroduced in town following their removal during Covid. JBr added that Our Aberdare BID logos will be added onto the end of each bench. DN added that AB carried out the work and provided a report that has led to the installation of the benches.</p> <p>9.9 RCTCBC – Local Development Plan (LDP): JBr asked DN to comment on the recent LDP survey. DN noted that he has not had sight of the current document. JBr noted that he and DP took time to complete the survey in great detail. DN, AM and GJ left the meeting.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">DP</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DN</p> |
| 10. | <p>BID support & relationship building – update:</p> <p>10.1 General support: DP noted that that the loyalty scheme walk rounds she carried out were really useful and found a general positive and supportive response from talking to over 100 business owners.</p> <p>10.2 BID Levy Member voluntary sign up: DP was pleased to report that we received our first voluntary levy member sign up and testimonial: <i>“Our Aberdare Bid has successfully managed to maintain contact with small businesses in Aberdare during lockdown and has provided essential help and guidance on all manner of things. Dawn is particularly knowledgeable about the local business network and encourages collaboration between businesses to ensure that the Aberdare economy thrives. I am particularly interested in becoming a part of the Levy group as I know that the networking possibilities are huge and collaboration is what we should all be about. I am eager to benefit from the wealth of experience and skills this town and its businesses have to offer.”</i> It was agreed that this is extremely positive feedback to share with existing levy members and to promote to potential new voluntary levy members.</p> <p>10.3 Cynon Valley Community Vision (CVCV) advisory group: DP noted that she could not attend the last meeting owing to taking time off in lieu (TOIL).</p> | |



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| 10. | <p>BID support & relationship building – update (cont.):</p> <p>10.4 Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) – kickstart scheme: DP noted that she continues to wait for an update from RCTCBC/DWP.</p> <p>10.5 Further meetings: DP noted that she is yet to meet South Wales Police and Karin Mear, Officer of St Elvan’s Heritage.</p> <p>10.6 BID complaints: DP was pleased to confirm that she has not received any further complaints.</p> <p>JB left the meeting.</p> | |
| 11. | <p>Finance update:</p> <p>11.1.Coalfields Regeneration Community fund: DP noted that this action is to be carried forward owing to other BID project priorities.</p> | |
| 12. | <p>Digital marketing update:</p> <p>12.1.Social media awareness and engagement: DP noted in addition to our kind volunteer, Carolyn Walton-Freeman actively sharing our levy members’ Facebook posts, that DP carries out engagement on other Facebook pages and groups promoting Aberdare for all it’s positives and benefits.</p> <p>DP added that she has noticed from Facebook group that quite a few people moving to the area.</p> <p>12.2.Mailchimp email newsletters: DP noted that there has been a slight increase in sign up, opening emails and engagement.</p> <p>12.3.Business directory: DP noted that she is receiving great feedback about the business directory as people really like being able to see a list of businesses available in town.</p> <p>12.4.Promoting business in town: JBr noted that going forward we need to encourage businesses to town, especially if we are not successful with our application of the CRF fund for the Aberdare hub.</p> | |
| 13. | <p>AOB:</p> <p>13.1.Health & Safety: No Health & Safety items were raised.</p> <p>13.2.Climate Change: JBr and MA noted the recent report from the government noting the need for hydrogen cars and the replacement of gas central heating with hydrogen.</p> <p>13.3.Footfall: JBr noted the footfall data he now receives from Llanelli and how it is broken down to measure weather and other measures.</p> <p>ACTION: DP to circulate latest Llanelli footfall report as an example of the breakdown of information and how the BID could utilise such data to further improve Aberdare town and attract footfall.</p> <p>13.4.RCT Interlink micro fund application – award of £250: DP received confirmation during the board meeting that the BID’s application was successful. The money is to be used to print posters promoting town/BID for levy members to put up in their shops/businesses.</p> <p>Date of the next board meeting: The date of the next meeting is to be agreed.</p> | DP |



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MEETING ACTIONS:

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| 3.1 | 11-08-2021 | DP to amend the minutes from the last meeting to remove AB as an attendee. | DP |
| 7.8 | 11-08-2021 | DP to request a quote for a marketing strategy from HD and other local marketing specialists. | DP |
| 9.5 | 11-08-2021 | DP to add RCTCBC Communities for Work Plus to the next board agenda. | DP |
| 9.7 | 11-08-2021 | DN to liaise with RCTCBC art service to agree budget for a mural at the end of Commercial Street. | DN |
| 7.1 | 30-06-2021 | DP to ask Councillor Ann Crimmings about H&S requirements for litter pick events. | DP |
| 8.2.1 | 30-06-2021 | DP to discuss Commercial Street restricted loading zone before 11:00 and after 17:00 at her next update with Vikki Howells, MS. | DP |
| 8.2.2 | 30-06-2021 | DP to draft car parking objection petition letter | DP |
| 9.3 | 30-06-2021 | DN to liaise with relevant team within RCTCBC to investigate if broken window in the covered walkway to the market can be replaced and the current ply boarding removed. | DN |
| 9.5 | 30-06-2021 | DP to engage with local artists, college, schools, etc to come up with ideas for a mural on the wall at the end of Commercial Street. | DP |
| 11.4 | 30-06-2021 | DP to draft Coalfields Regeneration Community fund marketing & promotion funding requirements brief for inclusion with our expression of interest for the fund. | DP |
| 7.4 | 14-04-2021 | ONGOING: DP to obtain feedback from levy members during day to day communication regarding low take up of the RCTCBC Town Centre Maintenance Grant and update AB/DN at project update meetings. | DP |
| 9.2 | 14-04-2021 | c/fwd: DP to confirm if Beth Winter, MP questions for Parliament, WG and RCTCBC can be shared with the Our Aberdare BID board. | DP |

Date of the next board meeting: **TBC**