



OUR ABERDARE BID BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Peppers, 27 Canon Street, Aberdare, CF44 7AP | Tues 29 Mar 2022 – 17:30 – 19:00

Attendees:

Amy Brewin	RCTCBC Prosperity & Development - Town Centres (AB)	Ann Hyett	BID hub coordinator (AH)
Dawn Thomas	Board member & Levy member AM Bags & Shoes (DT)	Andrew Webb	BID board occasional observer & levy member Director - Aberdare Markets & Town Hall Co (AW)
Dawn Penny	BID manager (DP)	Catherine Bryant	Board member Taylor Rose (CB)
Jack Harries	Community Liaison Officer - Vikki Howells, MS office - attending as an observer	Darren Notley	RCTCBC Prosperity & Development (DN)
Lindsay Winstone	BID board & levy member Tesco (LW)	Jonathan Bowen	BID Director, board & levy member Morgan's Fish Bar (JB)
Mark Adams	BID board & levy member BPI Consultancy (MA)	Nigel Webb	BID board regular observer & levy member Operations Director - Aberdare Markets & Town Hall (NW)
Jim Bradley	BID Chairman, Director, board & levy member Bradleys Coffee (JBr)	Stacey Dyer	BID board & levy member Ty Hafan (SD)
Tom Bateman	Communications Officer - Beth Winter, MP office - attending as an observer		

Apologies:

Item	Detail	Who
1.	Welcome: JBr opened the meeting and each attendee introduced themselves	
2.	Apologies: 2.1 Apologies: given as above	
3.	Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising: 3.1 The minutes were agreed by all and DP noted outstanding actions from the last meeting to be discussed during the relevant agenda items.	
4.	Levy income: 4.1 2021-22 Levy Collection: DP noted the collection rate has stayed at just over 63% / £47,557 - an increase of <1% since Feb's board meeting. A discussion regarding outstanding debt took place and it was agreed that the RCTCBC collection process to chase outstanding debt must be adhered to. ACTION: DP to check with RCTCBC rates on the status of chasing outstanding debt for 2021-22. 4.2 2022-23 Levy Collection: DP noted the projected 2022-23 levy collection is £75,040.40 from 236 hereditaments. This is a decrease of £1,804.50 / 5 hereditaments from 2021-22, however a slight increase of £231.75 from 2020-21 and a decrease of 4 hereditaments. DP noted the draft levy bill accompanying letter will ask for up to date contact details and be translated to Welsh ahead of being sent out by RCTCBC.	DP



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Item	Detail	Who
5.	<p>Health & Safety:</p> <p>5.1 Health & Safety - general: JBr asked ALL to provide any relevant Health & Safety info that we may be able to share, apply best practice, etc. JBr noted Trinity Hall on Canon Street as a dangerous structure. AB noted that RCTCBC do not deem the building as a dangerous structure and so it has been put through to the council's general enforcement team for them to contact the owner. AB suggests to keep reporting to customerservices@rctcbc.gov.uk if no visible change is made.</p>	
6.	<p>Climate Change:</p> <p>6.1 Climate Change - general: JBr noted unnecessary cars with engines on whilst stationary and being mindful of not buying food if it will go to waste and offering small, medium or large.</p> <p>ACTION: DN to email DP with residents' home insulation grant to circulate in the BID newsletter and on social media. (c/fwd 6.1 from 04 Feb 2022)</p> <p>6.2 Climate Change - insulation for stone built buildings: JBr noted the need and opportunity for someone to create an insulation solution for stone built buildings and asked TB and JH to feed this back to Cynon MS and Cynon MP.</p>	AB/DN
7.	<p>Local Development Plan:</p> <p>7.1 Local Development Plan: DP noted that she gave consultation feedback to ensure that the BID can be involved with future planning applications to consider their effect on the town centre.</p> <p>7.2 Local Development Plan - Lidl 2: JBr noted that we have been advised that to challenge the planning approval of Lidl 2 that we would need to go to court. JBr also noted that a few business owners and community members feel the building of Lidl 2 will bring about more jobs for the town. The board agreed that they felt Lidl 2 will adversely affect the town centre and that it will not generate cash into the town. It was felt that the community are welcoming a larger Lidl with more choice than that of the smaller existing Lidl on the Gadlys.</p> <p>7.3 LDP - Freedom of Information request - JBr noted he was sent two reports from RCTCBC planning.</p> <p>ACTION: DP to forward the Lidl 2 Freedom of Information request reports sent to JBr from RCTCBC to all.</p> <p>7.4 LDP - brave decisions: JBr noted that we need to funnel relevant planning issues/applications through to Cynon MS & Cynon MP</p> <p>7.5 LDP - Access - A discussion took place regarding easier access in and around Aberdare and notably Commercial Street. DP noted that access and parking are issues within the overall BID 5 year plan and work on these is in progress.</p>	DP



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8.	<p>Aberdare 'CORE' hub:</p> <p>8.1 CORE hub - current status: JBr noted that we were given a matter of weeks to get Compton House as the venue for the CORE project and that the project has been extended to the end of Jul 2022 rather than end of Jun 2022. JBr added that Barclays bank advisors are hoping to be set up in CORE by 11 Apr 2022.</p> <p>JBR commended the contractors for the work they have carried out to date. JBr also noted that work continues to encourage other organisations to take up office space/meeting room/hot desk space.</p> <p>JBr invited the board to view CORE once it is open with a further invitation to levy members to a launch event.</p> <p>8.2 CORE hub - funding: JBr confirmed that claims to the UK Government Levelling Up fund have been made for invoices paid by Our Aberdare BID and that process continues.</p> <p>8.3 CORE hub - thanks: MA gave thanks to JBr for the effort and time he has put into the project so far. MA added that he understands why JBr has made decisions and moved ahead so that the project could get underway in such a short time period.</p> <p>8.4 CORE smart board options: MA noted that AH asked him to review quotes received for different smart board solutions. MA added that the first quote was scarily expensive at over £7k and so he obtained alternative quotes and wanted to explain the validity of some of the quotes and put to the board for a decision. MA continued to explain that a lift for the smartboard was included in the quote and the supplier noted that this will enable use by those who are disabled. MA noted quotes for the use of USB connection and cameras to enable video meetings.</p> <p>JBr noted that to date he has made financial decisions for the project, however that there are costs that will require board approval.</p> <p>It was agreed by the board that a simple flip chart will not suffice.</p> <p>DT suggested using SMART paint on the walls that can be drawn on instead of purchasing an expensive SMART board.</p> <p>JBr added that a SMART board would be a nice-to-have, however that there is a need for a full time member of staff to man the CORE building.</p> <p>MA added that graphics for door decals are a nice-to-have and not essential.</p> <p>MA confirmed that the SMART board quote could most likely come in at £5,800</p> <p>JBr noted that we have not exhausted our capital expenditure that is a total of 10% of the full funding that has been granted.</p> <p>MA noted that the SMART board is critical for the training room facility and that we must not rely on potential funding that could be made available, and that we need to do everything we can to earmark £6k from the existing funding grant if we have the additional capital.</p> <p>JBr noted that he understands that the SMART board is now a priority to procure for the CORE project.</p> <p>DT noted how the training room with SMART board will enable more virtual meetings which means less travel in the way that we have all travelled to be at this board meeting in person.</p> <p>8.5 CORE hub - broadband: MA noted that we received a broadband quote providing 200mb for £90 pm for 5 years, however that the BID cannot commit to a 5 year contract. MA noted an alternative quote of 1GB fibre broadband for £55 pm for 12 months. MA added that there are upfront costs to provide handsets and trunk-lines of £1,300, however MA is to speak to the potential supplier to see if a more competitive quote can be provided or alternative solutions.</p> <p>ACTION: MA to obtain additional broadband quotes for CORE</p>	MA



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8.	<p>Aberdare 'CORE' hub, cont.:</p> <p>8.6 CORE hub - signage Pen y Cymoedd funding: DP noted that part of the PyC Vision funding has been reallocated from the Look & Feel vinyls project to signage for CORE and as such, she needs to provide an update to PyC to accompany the funding claim of £6k. DP reminded the board that the PyC logo must also be incorporated wherever possible for projects they have kindly funded.</p> <p>8.7 CORE hub - launch and press: A discussion took place regarding feedback and perception of CORE from levy members and local business owners. JBr explained that we want to attract and encourage people to use CORE for office space/hot desking and to use local shops, restaurants, businesses, etc whilst they are in Aberdare town centre using CORE as a base for their work. JBr added that Tom Addiscott of Wales Cooperative Centre is the lead for the project and will oversee marketing of a 'hard' launch and that he is working with AH and DP to ensure clear messages are given.</p> <p>ACTION: MA to contact Tom Addiscott and Ben Bostock at Wales Cooperative Centre to ensure that the BID are involved in the management of the CORE hard launch.</p>	MA
9.	<p>Projects progress.:</p> <p>9.1 Look & Feel PyC funded projects - Planters: DP noted that she met with the 'super planters' volunteer team who continue to keep the plant pots, foliage and flowers looking great. DP added that the volunteers have come up with some great ideas and are instrumental in engaging with Town Church Primary school to enable their year 6 class to carry out a mini 'planting' tutorial where they will be given a certificate. This will enable the BID to show our community that local children are caring for the planters. In addition, our volunteers have asked if the responsibility of re-planting can be transferred to them. DP asked the board for their comments.</p> <p>The board agreed that local replanting is a great way forward to involve the community and that the 'super planters' are very much an asset to the BID. MA added that we need to promote this as much as possible. DP also noted MA's idea of engaging with the Scouts, Brownies etc as children to gain badges for the maintenance of planters.</p> <p>9.2 Look & Feel PyC funded projects – Welcome signs: DP noted that feedback on the new welcome signs has been great. DP added that the placement of them was questioned by a few people, however RCTCBC carried out risk assessments for both locations. In addition, it was noted that the sign by Tesco on the A4059 was covered by tree foliage and AB has asked that the council cut the trees back.</p> <p>DP added that she needs to provide a project update to Pen y Cymoedd to accompany the claim for funding of £3k for signage.</p> <p>9.3 Look & Feel PyC funded projects – Empty units 'vinyls': DP noted that this project is included in the 2022-23 projects list for approval. JBr added that the Poundstretcher building needs to be cleared out following on from the removal of the art installation.</p> <p>ACTION: DP and DT to clear out the Poundstretcher building - following on from art installation removal.</p> <p>9.4 Look & Feel – general: DP noted that she attended Beth Winter, MP's 'town centres' meeting, and although the feedback about the BID's achievements was very complimentary, it was noted that the amount of empty units was not helping the look of our town. DP added that in addition to the quarterly RCTCBC strategic meeting she and JBr attend, she will also be meeting with Beth Winter's comms officer, Tom Bateman and Simon Gale, Director of Prosperity & Regeneration to discuss this further and find possible solutions.</p>	DP/DT



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9.	<p>Projects progress, cont.:</p> <p>9.5 Marketing & Events - Postcards: DP noted that she has not had time to distribute these as planned earlier this year, however that distribution of them with an accompanying clear message is included in the list of projects for approval for 2022-23.</p> <p>9.6 Marketing & Events – loyalty scheme: DP noted that she has been contacted by the team at ‘near me now’ which is now called ‘vzta’ and that she and MA will meet with them in accordance with projects for 2022-23.</p> <p>9.7 Marketing & Events - Fiver Fest: DP noted that she felt 50 shops/businesses taking part in Fiver Fest this year was a great achievement and that again, it helped to create a real buzz in town. DP added that she has started to ask levy members/business owners for their feedback and will be following up with those that took part, with an email to thank them for taking part and asking a few questions for feedback to see if we do it again next year. DP continued to explain that the volunteers help this year was great and thanked them and Fiona Edwards of Proactive Aberdare for helping to source such enthusiastic individuals.</p> <p>9.8 Marketing & Events - Easter: DP noted that an Easter window trail event was not organised as the focus was to promote Fiver Fest to benefit our levy members, however that the BID are helping to promote Proactive Aberdare’s Easter Egg Hunt via social media and by putting up a poster in the town centre notice board. DP added however that Tracy Lewis of Card Centre Aberdare has gifted the BID with some Easter decorations/crafts and the board noted great thanks to Tracy. DP continued to explain that levy members will be invited on a first come first serve basis to collect packs of decorations from Card Centre Aberdare to decorate their shops with. In addition, the Easter crafts will be given to Fiona Edwards of Proactive Aberdare.</p> <p>9.9 Look & Feel – general: DP noted that she attended Beth Winter, MP’s ‘town centres’ meeting, and although the feedback about the BID’s achievements was very complimentary, it was noted that the amount of empty units was not helping the look of our town. DP added that in addition to the quarterly RCTCBC strategic meeting she and JBr attend, she will also be meeting with Beth Winter’s comms officer, Tom Bateman and Simon Gale, Director of Prosperity & Regeneration to discuss this further and find possible solutions.</p>	



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9.	<p>Projects progress, cont.:</p> <p>9.10 Marketing & Events - Jubilee: DP noted that she is in the process of trying to find someone with a small ‘cherry picker’ that may be able to put up bunting. MA added that his contact at local company Walters may be able to advise/help.</p> <p>ACTION: MA to contact Walters to see if they can provide a cherry picker to put up bunting in time for the Jubilee.</p> <p>DP added that in addition, DN has invited BID managers to opt for a Beacons Platinum Jubilee virtual trail with print media and vinyls for £499. JBr noted that we need to be very careful with our current budget. DP asked for help to formulate the 2022-23 budget.</p> <p>ACTION: DP and JBr to go through the 2022-23 budget. (c.fwd 11.3 from 04 Feb 2022)</p> <p>9.11 Marketing & Events – Caradog Fest: DP would like to invite businesses that regularly put on entertainment, eg pubs, Jacs, etc to provide a Caradog ‘fringe’ calendar of events to promote on social media and print media. DP added that she is liaising with Amanda Webber of the Welsh Gifts & Wool Stall in the market for ideas on a loyalty product that levy members can give out with purchases.</p> <p>9.12 Marketing & Events – Winter/Christmas: DP noted that this was included in the 2022-23 projects for approval.</p> <p>9.13 Marketing – video promotion - free: DP noted that the four videos gifted by Tantrwm were used for International Women's Day as each video just happened to feature female business owners. DP added that the timing of the videos was great as a follow up to the awful WalesOnline article by Katie-Ann Gupwell as the videos featured one levy member that the WalesOnline article featured.</p> <p>9.14 Marketing - video promotion - funded: DP showed the draft BID promotional video to which the board all agreed that a great job has been done by Tantrwm on the video.</p> <p>ACTION: MA to provide the final Tantrwm animation video version to JBr to submit with the funding claim to RCTCBC.</p> <p>9.15 Marketing - journalism: DP referred to the awful WalesOnline article by Katie-Ann Gupwell and explained that she contacted Katie-Ann via Twitter to ask why she did not include any mention of the BID. DP noted that Katie-Ann said she reported what was said. However, since that time, DP has spoken with two of the levy members featured in the article who stated they mentioned the work the BID is doing. In addition, one levy member noted that they were specifically asked by the journalist not to smile for the article’s photos. DP added that Katie-Ann has suggested the BID meet with her, however that DP still awaits her availability. DP continued to explain that she has also given feedback via the All Wales BID managers meetings she attends to ask that Lee Walters, Dep MS - Climate Change strive for better representation of BIDs and their towns within Reach Plc (who own WalesOnline). DP finished by noting that Reach Plc contacted her three times to push sales, prior to Katie-Ann’s article and that their continual negativity about Aberdare town in articles does not give her any confidence in spending levy members’ money with Reach Plc for marketing.</p> <p>9.16 Information & Communication – email database: DP noted that we have just under 52% of levy member email addresses with the remaining 48% being non levy members. DP added that the sign up process continues, however that this should form part of a wider marketing exercise to ensure that we can communicate regularly. LW suggested adding a request to ask for up to date contact details on the draft accompanying levy bill letter</p> <p>ACTION: DP to update the accompanying 2022-23 levy bill letter to include all forms of communication with web link and QR code and asking for levy members’ up to date contact details.</p>	<p>MA</p> <p>DP/JBr</p> <p>MA</p> <p>DP</p>



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9.	<p>Projects progress, cont.:</p> <p>9.17 Information & Communication – Business Crime Reduction Partnership (BCRP): DP noted that this is in line with the 2022-23 projects for approval.</p> <p>9.18 Information & Communication - South Wales Police vote of no confidence: A discussion took place regarding the recent South Wales Police (SWP) vote of no confidence. It was agreed that the follow up meeting that DP and JBr had with SWP, and their subsequent action of giving DP flyers to hand out to levy members and giving out a small amount of paper surveys to shop/business owners was not sufficient to bring about positive change. It was agreed that the vote of no confidence in SWP is to be escalated as appropriate in line with 2022-23 projects.</p> <p>9.19 Information & Communication - Lidl 2 planning approval / Local Development Plan: (See previous item 7.1.)</p> <p>9.20 Access & Parking - parking proposal to RCTCBC: DP noted that this is included in the 2022-23 projects for approval.</p> <p>9.21 Access & Parking - Traffic and parking risks Commercial Street and Market Street: DP noted that she is working with Vikki Howells, MS' liaison officer, Helen Boggis on this to provide a joint letter to RCTCBC. In addition DP noted that she received a call from the Federation of Small Businesses (South Wales) last Friday afternoon on behalf of one of the FSB's members who owns a business in Commercial Street to ask for an update on parking restrictions in Commercial Street. DP added that she explained to the FSB that she keeps levy members informed via face to face, email, social media and WhatsApp and via board meeting minutes that are publicly available on our website in relation to updates on access and parking and all other projects.</p> <p>9.22 Access & Parking - parking on double yellow lines outside St John's Medical Centre: No update given. (c/fwd 8.11 from 04 Feb 2022)</p>	
10.	<p>Volunteers & Support:</p> <p>10.1 Volunteers - onboarding: It was agreed to defer this item to the next meeting as time had run over so much and board attendees needed to leave. However, MA and DP will meet to discuss a volunteer 'pack' to use for onboarding.</p> <p>ACTION: MA and DP to meet to agree on a volunteer 'pack' to use for onboarding.</p> <p>LW noted the Tesco volunteer champions that may want to help with BID projects.</p> <p>10.2 General support: DP reiterated the welcome support from Fiona Edwards of Proactive Aberdare, new volunteers and the continued support from the 'super planters'. DP added that Nerys Royal from RCTCBC Tourism team attended the last Aberdare 'hubs' meeting and it was agreed at the meeting to invite Zip World to attend with a view to see how we can create an Aberdare tourist route. DP finalised by noting she has now made contact with Zip World Tower's General Manager via LinkedIn and awaits further contact to arrange a meeting.</p> <p>10.3 BID complaints: DP was pleased to confirm that she has not received any further complaints.</p>	MA/DP



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11.	<p>RCTCBC update – project management:</p> <p>11.1 RCTCBC project management - general: AB noted that the programme of maintenance currently being delivered in the town as a result of DN walkaround with Highways and the Council Leader before Christmas. Railings have been repainted (by Wilko's and Argos) and several sections of highway have/are being resurfaced.</p> <p>11.2 RCTCBC project management - absent landlords & land/building appearance: AB explained that they continue to work with the owner of the gap site opposite Peppers/next to Pop In café to find a solution, however where this might not progress as RCTCBC would hope in the short-term, they will also consider improvements to at least make it presentable! DP added that she has obtained the land owners contact details and will make contact to discuss this with them in line with 2022-23 projects. (c/fwd 8.11 from 04 Feb 2022)</p> <p>11.3 RCTCBC project management - window repair: AB also noted that they have chased RCTCBC Corporate Estates regarding the broken/patch up window above the walkway from Market Street and Commercial Street and await a response (c/fwd 9.3 from 30 Jun 2021)</p>	
12.	<p>Board governance:</p> <p>12.1 Board governance - agreed practices: It was agreed to defer this item to the next meeting as time had run over so much and board attendees needed to leave.</p>	
13.	<p>2022-23 Projects for approval:</p> <p>13.1 2022-23 projects - approval: It was agreed to defer this item offline as time had run over so much and board attendees needed to leave and that DP will email a list of potential projects to all for their information. (c/fwd 11.3 from 04 Feb 2022)</p> <p>13.2 2022-23 projects - board support: DP referred to her Secretary's report at the AGM and reiterated that her working hours cannot be sustained and that the level of work requires additional support, and so asked that board members consider which projects they may have time to devote to once the final 2022-23 projects list is approved and how much time each week/month. (c/fwd 11.2 from 04 Feb 2022)</p>	
14.	<p>AOB:</p> <p>Date of the next board meeting: Friday 10 June 2022 at 08:00 - 10:00</p>	

MEETING ACTIONS:

Item	Date	Detail	Who
4.1	29-03-2022	DP to check with RCTCBC rates on the status of chasing outstanding debt for 2021-22.	DP
7.3	29-03-2022	DP to forward the Lidl 2 Freedom of Information request reports sent to JBr from RCTCBC to all.	DP
8.5	29-03-2022	MA to obtain additional broadband quotes for CORE	MA
8.7	29-03-2022	MA to contact Tom Addiscott and Ben Bostock at Wales Cooperative Centre to ensure that the BID are involved in the management of the CORE hard launch.	MA



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9.3	29-03-2022	DP and DT to clear out the Pounstretcher building - following on from art installation removal.	DP/DT
9.14.1	29-03-2022	MA to contact Walters to see if they can provide a cherry picker to put up bunting in time for the Jubilee.	MA
9.14.2	29-03-2022	DP and JBr to go through the 2022-23 budget.	DP/JBr
9.18	29-03-2022	MA to provide the final Tantrwm animation video version to JBr to submit with the funding claim to RCTCBC.	MA
9.20	29-03-2022	DP to update the accompanying 2022-23 levy bill letter to include all forms of communication with web link and QR code and asking for levy members' up to date contact details.	DP
10.1	29-03-2022	MA and DP to meet to agree on a volunteer 'pack' to use for onboarding.	MA/DP
6.1	04-02-2022	DN to email DP with residents' home insulation grant to circulate in the BID newsletter and on social media.	DN
8.11	04-02-2022	DN to liaise with enforcement officers in relation to motorists parking on double yellow lines outside St John's Medical Centre as this is increasing the risk of head-on collisions in the 'turn right' section at the junction of Seymour Street.	DN
11.2	04-02-2022	ALL to confirm if they are able to devote time to upcoming projects, and if so how much time they can devote each week/month.	ALL
11.3	04-02-2022	DP to send list of suggested projects for Apr 2022 March 2023 to ALL for board approval.	DP
12.1	01-10-2021	ALL to consider big thinking in the new year, on how we can improve Aberdare town and increase footfall with locals, visitors and tourists.	ALL
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

Date of the next board meeting: Friday 10 June 2022 at 08:00 - 10:00