



ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS
TOGETHER
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

RTW Together Business Improvement District

Minutes – 26/09/2023 – 1030 Cripps, 22 Mount Ephraim, Tunbridge Wells, TN4 8AS

In attendance: Alex Greig (AG), Alex Green (AJG), Alexia Taylor (AT), Clare Waller (CW), Hilary Smith (HS),

Justine Rutland (RT), Nicola Paffard (NP), Peter Allinson (PA), Richard Simm (RS), Suzie Lewis (SL)

1. **Welcome** by Alex Greig
2. **Minutes from last meeting:** Confirmation from RS that he attended the Pantiles Traders AGM -it was largely focussed on the seating issue and so no progress with additional board members.
3. **Any conflicts of interest:** None
4. **BID Director Report**
 - AJG highlighted some points from the board report. Sub committees have all had their first meetings. They work well and assist strategy and decision making.

Better Town

- **B2B Events:** Networking event at The George pub on 17 August went well. In future try to build on established events i.e., TN Card December drinks, to gain contacts – Jess Gibson could be an ambassador for the BID in the retail & hospitality sectors not so much professional services.
- **Improving Skills:** Training programs for First Aid, Social Media, Food Safety & Fire Marshalling will take place in Autumn. **A budget of £10k to fund all of these was approved.** Royal Victoria Place have an empty unit which we could use free of charge to run some courses.
- It was suggested that not all Mental Health courses are appropriate and so should be trialled before rolling out to levy payers.

ACTION: AG to send SL contact details for Ollie at Runway Training.

ACTION: HS will approach TWBC about running training courses, may be cheaper.

ACTION: PA will complete a Mental Health course as a trial.

Streetscene

- **Castle Street Lighting:** AJG renewed conversations with Castle Street and re-proposed that the BID would pay £3k out of the £5k cost to install upgraded lighting scheme. AJG developed a spreadsheet to work out fairly what each business should pay to make up the remaining £2k – this has been received positively. **Recommendation that RTWT pay £3k was approved.**
- **Art Project Camden Road:** AJG working with Camden Road to create an ART trail for the area and look to encourage support from partners as well as self-generated revenue via a community festival project in the Spring. Camden Road is a very busy, big community area and such a project will help to increase dwell time. **Recommendation to pay £5k towards kickstarting the project was approved.**
- **Christmas wreaths:** approval sought to increase spend to £8,500 from £5,000 on sustainable wreaths. The £3,500 increase will be taken from shop front scheme. After year 1, the scheme should cost £1-2k per annum. Levy payers will install wreaths which should be provided in a labelled box/bag alongside instructions. **Recommendation to increase funding to £8,500 was approved.**

Staffing & HR

- Discussion about Creative TW lead role filled by Bob Watts. This role is not funded by RTWT but by Arts Council.
- **Additional temporary staffing was approved to assist with ballot workload.**

ACTION: SL to invite Bob Watts to next board meeting.

ACTION: AJG to do a job description for temporary staffing

5. Governance

Ballot progress: Extensive progress made adding data, cleaning it up & linking it all together on MySolomon. Ongoing task. AJG is talking to more levy payers with positive outcomes. AJG spoke to Dr Julie Grail last week to discuss the proposed ballot timescale – she agreed this.

Newsletter on 4th October will formally invite levy payers to participate in a consultation process.

4th – 27th October: electronic survey.

17th & 19th October – drop in sessions.

18th October – open meeting with board members present.

Business plan will be completed after the consultation process. Procedural and governance can be copied from previous plan. The three sub-committees next meetings will focus on the business plan. The business plan & campaign need to be worked out in conjunction with each other. Legally there needs to be a business plan however it can be responsive to our levy payers' needs. It needs to highlight what the BID does using infographics, pictures, ROI and what they levy payers get for their money. Final design by Colley Raine in December for printing in January. Timescale of ballot attached in Appendix 1.

Recommendation to submit the letter to the Secretary of State notifying our decision that we intend to run a ballot to renew the BID levy was approved.

ACTION: HS to discuss list of ballot providers with Dr Julie Grail.

6. **TWBC:** Justine gave a TWBC update.

7. **AOB**

- Amplify & High Street Consultation to be added to next board meeting’s agenda.
- Next meeting is 10:30 on 6 November at TWBC.

Appendix 1 – Proposed Ballot Timescale

26 th Sep	RTW Together Board to decide to proceed with ballot
4 th Oct	Invite BID members to engage in consultation in monthly newsletter, social media and through partners e.g. TWBC
Oct	Review of all key principles, projects, rules, boundary lines, operating and baseline agreements
4 th -27 th Oct	Consultation* - Online survey
17 th , 19 th Oct	Consultation* - Run opportunity for drop in sessions at RTW Together Offices
18 th Oct	Consultation* – Run open meeting with option to discuss in groups
26 th Oct	Submit Letter to secretary of state
2 nd Oct, 16 th Oct, 1 st Nov	Workshops in board committees re. strategies for business plan
Nov	Business Plan to be drafted
Nov	Formal provisional sign off by TWBC
Dec	Business Plan final design to be completed and printed
Dec	Campaign materials to be drafted
Dec/Jan	Final Voter List Clean up finalised
Jan	Final sign off by TWBC via Justine and Hilary once Business Plan completed
Jan	Ballot statement to be finalised and campaign materials printed
18 th Jan	Launch of ballot proposal/campaign and publication of notice of ballot
Feb	Ballot Period / Campaign Period
1 st Mar	Announcement of result
Mar	Challenge Period
2 nd Apr	Start of new 5 year BID

*Indicative plans for the future will be suggested based on current activity but the priorities will be questioned with opportunity to add, remove or modify individual items and strategies