



ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS
TOGETHER
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

RTW Together Business Improvement District

Minutes – 22/05/23 – 1030 At the Town Hall, Mount Pleasant Road, Tunbridge Wells, TN1 1RS

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:** Approved
3. **Any conflicts of interest:** None
4. **BID Director Report**
 - AJG highlighted some points from the board report.
 - **Improving Skills:** Ed Lumsden presented ideas to AJG – to be picked up in Better Town & Environmental board subcommittee.
 - **Lobbying:** Creative Tunbridge Wells –the TW Compact. Different sectors & different people come together to try and represent the cultural sector for its benefit to try and develop it and drive cultural depth & cultural employment in the town. For the next 9 months AJG is proposing to host the proposed staff member at 52 High Street, no cost to RTW Together, – ties in with our database system and by working more collaboratively with Creative it should tie in well with RTW Together better town objectives. Benefits to levy payers will be long term.
AJG – still to meet Greg Clark.
 - **Grants:** Attraction grant open until 6 June. To fund strategic, long-term initiatives – support organisations that do exist, or could exist, that brings in people throughout the year. Grant will make them either more sustainable & keep them going or enhance their activity and bring in more people i.e., King Charles the Martyr Church as a cultural destination. Grant about providing a capital upgrade for attraction to do something which will live beyond 5-15 years. Attraction grant application like others however yearlong attendance numbers asked for instead of event specific. Street markets: £12k grants available. £2.5k going towards farmers market – top of town. Apart from Pantiles, no other applications were received. Meeting with Lower pantiles – not keen on markets – people attend markets, eat and drink but don't spend money in shops. PA described an ETSY market– really interesting stuff – no clash with levy payers. Showcase stall idea discussed – maybe bandstand on Pantiles on days when not being used as part of another event. Farmers market at top of town has been delayed to later in the year. Top of town need to set something up

to try and take advantage of the grants process – esp. with Amelia & RVP which are year-round weatherproof venues.

Grant process & scoring is the fairest it has ever been- each application had to be sponsored by a minimum of two levy payers, this increased depending on size of grant applied for.

Coronation: Amelia record attendance, RVP, Pantiles & Calverley grounds busy despite the weather. Next big event will be easier now more contacts have been established. Organising the event with Pantiles, Amelia & Council worked well. Press coverage in TOTW & The Courier.

Important that our levy payers know that we have done these events and making sure the levy payers understand the ROI in their investment in RTW Together.

Marketing: Vinyls on office window, bus megarear adverts live & rail station campaign starts on 5 June – running 2-6 weeks depending on platform. LT highlighted that area outside of station does not look great, BBC in particular. Big Question articles happening in TOTW, pertinent to professional services. What's On Guide to support people on what they can do in town will be distributed shortly – retail, hospitality, features & spotlight events – 4 per year. Door drops, train stations, estate agents & distribution from office. Any money made from advertising will be used to increase distribution of future guides.

CW may look to set up an event at the top of town – more discussion needed.

- **Action: AJG to add Ed Lumsden ideas to be discussed Better Town & Environmental board subcommittee.**
 - **Action: AJG to put street markets on agenda at first Events & Promotion board subcommittee – feedback to be sent to HS to discuss with council.**
 - **Action: Grants application process -discuss at Events & Promotion board sub-committee tweaks, if any, that should be made to the process.**
 - **Action: AJG to approach BBC about frontage /screens**
- 5. Ballot Progress & Dashboard Update:**
- Meeting with Julie Grail will be held 11am on Tuesday 23 May to agree process and clarity on ballot – either in person or TEAMS.
 - Some of Mid Kent's data is incorrect.
 - AJG ran through how the re-ballot voting process works.
 - **Action: AJG will send out Julia's previous email.**
 - **Action: AJG/SL to start populating Soloman with business voting intentions Y/N/MAYBE' will be done by Aug/Sep.**
- 6. Finance Report:**
- Books and records for 2022/23 have been sent to Ward Mackenzie for year-end report and accounts to be prepared.
 - Small change to levy income 2023/24 due to some late re-valuations mainly of RVP – overall effect is income will drop by £9,000.
 - Carry forward cash figure confirmed at £288,000.
 - £313,000 levy collected for 2023/24 so far – 388 out of 652 invoices.
 - Coronation event was brought in on budget.
- 7. Board Director Structure Review:**
- Alexia Taylor was nominated by AG to be vice chair of the board and seconded by PA.
 - AJG has prepared a recommended allocation of board members to join the sub-committees:
 1. Finance & governance
 2. Better town & environment

3. Promotion & events

The sub-committees will meet in tandem with board meetings as required and this will evolve as needed.

AG is in ongoing discussions with a potential new board director. They are a good fit and represent the commercial property sector.

- **Action: AJG to send out sub-committee recommendations.**
- **Action: board members to confirm with AJG if happy to join suggested sub-committees and if willing to be chair.**

8. TWBC: Justine gave a TWBC update.

9. AOB

- Next meeting is 3 July, venue to be confirmed.