

Minutes of the Board of Directors meeting

Held at Debenhams on 26th April 2017

Attendees

Mark Billington (Observer)
Kurt Jansen
Pieter Strömbeck
Daniel Southgate
Darren Harman
Shanta Bhagwandin
Daniel Spicer
Andy Stubbs
Jay Patel
Patrick Taylor (Vice Chairman)
Louise Baxter
Laura Lyons (*note taker*)

Representing

Harrow Council Economic Development
McDonalds
St Anns Shopping Centre
Brian Cox Estate Agents
St George's Shopping Centre
Harrow BID / Pop Marketing
NatWest
Harrow BID Chief Executive
The Chocolate Room
Debenhams
Harrow BID
Harrow BID

Apologies

Paul Ellis (Chairman)	Skipton Building Society
Russ Grayson	Met Police
Lee Graham	Marks & Spencer
Tanya Sprunks	Met Police
Keith Ferry	Harrow Council Business Portfolio holder

Patrick Taylor chaired the meeting as the Chairman was unable to attend.

1. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes from the meeting held on 9th February 2017 were accepted.

2. Changes to Harrow BID Company Directors

Board noted the retirement of Lauren Dowdle on 10th March 2017 as she moved on from Harrow.

3. BID Member Survey

The member survey suggested at the last Board meeting had been carried out by Savills with survey invite by email or hard copy via the BID Ambassador. The results were collated by Savills Insights Team and summarised in a presentation given by AS, which the Board then discussed.

AS commented that three surveys had been completed by Board members, the lesson being that a reminder should have been issued. We should also consider running our own surveys in future. Some Board members commented they had not seen the email with the survey invite which prompted a discussion about how effective digital delivery is in practice. PS said he had not seen an Ambassador for quite a while, although he knew individual businesses were being contacted. AS and SB will follow up.

Postscript: AS and LL have been looking at the businesses who regularly do not open any emails so the Ambassador can check that our database is correct with a view to increasing the open rate.

On the survey feedback, DH felt it is an awareness problem as a lot of the items highlighted are already being tackled by the BID, but businesses who are not on the Board or part of any sub-group are often not aware of what initiatives are being carried out such as HBAC, offender reporting through DISC, pigeon control programme, etc, etc.

Generally, survey responses had been very positive with a lot of the work carried out by the BID recognised and valued. AS said the views expressed by businesses could potentially inform allocation of the £45k sum moved from the year 5 budget to year 4. A discussion followed on how the extra £45k should be used. PT said the 'feel' of the town is important so the BID should highlight what is already planned (e.g. floral displays and festive lighting) so that sub-groups can think about what else is needed. DS suggested each sub-group should bid for funds based on what issues arise during their meetings and that this should be done as soon as possible. KJ said we should use the money on something tangible that businesses can see is an improvement. DH agreed and said we should get proposals now so that we are ready to order as soon as Board approval is given. Agreed that each sub-group should prepare their views at their respective meetings, DH said he would have proposals from the Ops Group in June. MB said we need to communicate to members that as a result of the survey we are working up plans which will be delivered by X date.

4. Finance & Governance

Shanta Bhagwandin – an experienced marketer with BID experience – has been recruited by POP Marketing as Events & Place Making Manager to replace Kimberly and she is integrating well with the BID team.

End of year carry forward (subject to final accounts) was £119k, slightly down on £123k forecast. KJ asked for guidance on how the surplus should be dealt with and AS said the BID can carry over funds with allocation as business priorities change relatively unconstrained if it is relevant to the BID area membership. The carry forward figure is due to good procurement and cost management, with a fairly healthy financial position regarding the costs going forward that are associated with BID renewal.

5. Operations

DH said Ops are doing well and LB is making good progress. Council representatives attended the previous Ops Group meeting and provided a detailed presentation on up and coming developments in the town which was very interesting. A highlight is the plans to improve Harrow on the Hill station access with lifts or escalators (with a contribution of £3m from the Council). However, the timescale for implementation is unknown. Anthony Wood has provided data for the station entry-exit barriers which is useful to gauge commuter numbers. PT said to a large extent businesses are subject to the investment of the town so the increase of flats in the town centre will increase footfall. LB suggested Adam and Hanif from the Council show the same presentation to a future Board meeting as it was very informative. DH said we could encourage larger brands and department stores by redeveloping under-used areas and the proposed St George's extension.

Cleansing – teams are now able to take photos and upload to the relevant department which is reducing reaction times by the Council. LB meets the clean team fortnightly and walks around the

town to identify any areas that need extra cleaning or repair works. LB has the option of using our SPOC, the Divisional Director, to escalate important matters if necessary.

Pest Control is going well with another cull due in June.

Landscaping – speaking to council regarding frequency of tree trimming and pollarding.

Enforcement – apart from issuing tickets for litter/spitting, the enforcement team are speaking to beggars but they require delegated powers to enforce against them.

Car Parking at Queens House has an issue with youth ASB. St George's has changed car park tariffs and refurbishment is scheduled. Parking charges are now in bands with short-stay costs increased and longer stays reduced, all to encourage greater shopper dwell-time alongside free parking from 6pm. PS said he offers 30 minutes free.

12.00 Mark Billington left the meeting. 12.10 Jay Patel left the meeting.

6. Harrow Business Against Crime

With Lauren Dowdle's resignation, Sanjay Bhudia from St George's Shopping Centre has taken the Chair. Main issue, bar lack of visible police officers, is youth crime and ASB. LB attends the anti-social behaviour action group (ASBAG). It has been noticeably quieter lately on the youth ASB front, which may be linked to the arrest of gang leaders following a stabbing approximately 3 weeks ago in Northolt. LB also attends SIG meetings (Serious Incident Group) monthly meeting of school and college heads from around Harrow and Met Police. CCTV shown to school heads so they can see exactly what issues the youth are causing. The HBAC group can exclude offenders, with the information on excluded individuals available on DISC so that members of HBAC can identify banned individuals.

12.20 Councillor Ghazanfar Ali arrived.

7. Marketing

The group have embraced a pilot of a new App which geo-locates fashion items on sale close to the potential customer. This is offered as a tool to bring extra footfall to the town centre and cut down on online orders. App scrapes retailer websites and targets people that have looked on line but would like to go a physical shop, and those who want to 'buy now' rather than waiting for delivery. It's also being trialled in Covent Garden and Carnaby Street.

Market on St Anns Road – Tender process carried out to see if we can improve the market offering. Three strong operators were interviewed: Market Place Europe, Bert & Gert's Market, and Market Square Group. It was agreed that Market Place Europe should be able to deliver the improved environment we are looking for, with a market planned at the end of June to coincide with Eid. Stalls to be in clusters, rather than a long strip with no access through, this company would also provide some funds to cover advertising to make the market cost-neutral to the BID. As a community-oriented group, MPE try to work with schools/community groups/scouts, etc. and provide educational visits to the stallholders and information on the products stocked.

POP marketing report – Business awareness of social media opportunities has been raised, with the ambassador collecting images for social media as well as competitions and business profiles.

The recent Hakkaland profile really improved their custom and increased general public awareness of this new business.

The two-day Easter “dinosaur take over” event was well received, with art and craft workshops, funfair rides, large dinosaur acts, and roaming entertainment around the town centre.

A short video was shown capturing clips of the event with feedback from businesses commenting on the work of the BID and how it has improved the area. All the Board were happy with the video and SB confirmed it would be uploaded to social media. It is hoped that future events can also be captured and PT suggested video clips should be posted regularly throughout the year to give some interest and insight as to the work of the BID.

8. AOB

LB thanked all those who had sponsored her to be arrested in aid St Luke’s Hospice.

Date of next meeting

11am Wednesday 26th July 2017 at Debenhams.