



Present

Mike Killoran (in the Chair)
Steve Trynka (Vice-Chair)
Ian Kelly
Victoria Jackson
Jo Barnes
Dave Green
Amanda Austin

Princes Quay
Rollits
Hull & Humber Chamber of Commerce
Kingston Recruitment
Hull Citybuild
Alan Fruitiers
Prospect Centre

In attendance:

Ken Baldwin
Ian Bough
Sarah Jackson
Insp Andy Foster
Steve Warran
Kevin Priestley
Nick Pontone (Company Secretary)

Hull City Centre BID
Hull City Centre BID
Hull City Centre BID
Humberston Police
SJW / Chamber (Accountant)
Hull City Council
Hull & Humber Chamber of Commerce

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were noted from Mark Jones, Denise Anderton, John Holmes (Jo Barnes attended), Steve Allbones, Jeremy Coupland and Steve Tradewell.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 4th December 2007 were agreed as a true and correct record.

3. Matters arising

CCTV – the Chair asked if the vacancies in the CCTV centre had been filled. Ian Bough indicated that as far as he was aware they hadn't as yet.

Banners – the Chair asked if a paper had been prepared about specifically what the banners could and couldn't be used for given that a number of Christmas banners were still up. Kevin Priestley said that he would speak to the new portfolio holder and write a note for the Board. He indicated that the Christmas banners were a matter for the BID to arrange for replacements as appropriate. He also reported that the Council had ordered an additional hundred three crown banners.

Evening bus service – Ken Baldwin indicated that the service was not currently breaking even and would cost the BID circa £1000 per month. However it was noted that the service had been positively received before Christmas and January was not the best month to make a proper evaluation. The service would run until March when it would be assessed. It was noted that the BID would need to give 56 days notice if it wished to terminate the service.

£1 a day parking – the Chair asked Kevin Priestley if there was any feedback on whether there had been an increase in use of the multi story car parks as part of the £1 a day initiative. Kevin Priestley indicated that he would ask colleagues in the Council although reports on the impact on trade would also be an important part of the assessment. Ken Baldwin indicated that he had invited Graham Hall to present to the next BID Retail Forum and this issue could be picked up there. He also noted that the Tesco car park at St Stephens had had a major impact. Mike Killoran commented that it had been reduced to two hours free parking.

Bus Gate – Ken Baldwin commented that the bus gate had been removed recently. No feedback had yet been received from Saville Street traders, but he indicated that they were very unhappy at the time taken to remove the temporary bus gate as they felt it hit their Christmas trade.

Maps – Kevin Priestley reported that the company developing the map dispensers would be putting in an application shortly and a list of locations had been agreed by the Riverside Area Committee. The design was nearly agreed although there were some issues with the dispenser near the transport interchange due to its listed building status so this would form a separate application. The current view was that the other city centre map dispensers would be in place by Easter. Victoria Jackson highlighted that this was an initial BID priority which had been delayed and needed to be progressed as quickly as possible. Ken Baldwin highlighted that it had taken some time to get the design of the maps right and agreed as well as the dispensers. He reported that 20,000 would be distributed to hotel, tourist information offices etc.

Retail Crime Partnership – Ken Baldwin indicated that he had met the Retail Crime Partnership along with Insp Foster. A further meeting was planned for 30th January to ensure regular dialogue and communication between the BID and RCP.

City Centre Shuttle Bus promotion – Ken Baldwin reported that he had contacted Graham Hall about this issue but had not yet received a response.

BID mission statement – a mission and vision statement had been agreed at the BID Board meeting to discuss governance issues held on 17th January.

4. End of Year Accounts to 30th September 2007

Steve Warran reviewed the end of year accounts to 30th September 2007 for the BID which had been audited. He highlighted that the figures balanced with a gross surplus of £132,076 before management and administrative expenses of £132,076. The balance sheet showed debtors to the end of September of £216k, mainly from outstanding levies. It was noted that some of this had come in since the year end. The heading titled 'management fees' was incorrect and would be amended to 'salaries and administration costs'. Steve Warran highlighted that they were effectively 11-month figures as the BID started on 1 November 2006.

Steve Trynka highlighted that the address of the BIDs bankers, Barclays, was incorrect and should be amended.

With these amendments noted, the accounts were agreed.

5. Three month Management Accounts to 31 December 2007

The Board discussed the management accounts for the BID to the end of December 2007.

The Chairman raised the issue of BID collected levies. Kevin Priestley reported that the Council would charge the BID for the cost of putting in place the relevant software on the billing system for levies. This was purchased by the Council in 2006 and would cost circa £30k. The Council would also invoice for £30k annual costs of collecting the levy. The Chairman highlighted figures from the British BIDs association which showed that only 2 of 32 BIDs were charged £30k or more to collect levies and 11 authorities didn't pass on any cost to

their BID. He indicated that not only were the figures high but the BID had not been made aware of these costs. Kevin Priestley stated that this wasn't the case and that the BID had been made aware in 2006 that the software costs of £25k-£30k would be passed on as a one off cost. He suggested that the BID should meet with the Head of the Council's Collections Department to try to resolve the issue. It was noted that the BID had made provision of £20k to cover all collection costs. The Board felt that it was important to separate the issues of the one off software costs and the ongoing annual collection costs. They asked that clarification be sought on how the £30k annual collection costs had been arrived at and also suggested that the software costs could be apportioned across the 5 year term of the BID. The Board also considered the mechanisms for recovering bad debts. With these issues noted, it was agreed that a meeting would be sought with relevant Council officers to try to resolve the issues.

The Chairman asked for clarity about the £5k support the BID provided for Best Bar None, which was in the management accounts to 31 December 2007 as well as £5k recorded in the end of year accounts to 30 September 2007. Ian Bough confirmed that the BID's commitment was £5k although there had been some delay in receiving an appropriate invoice. Steve Warran said he would check the invoice to clarify whether the £5k should be in the end of year accounts to 30 September or in this year's management accounts.

Kevin Priestley asked if there was a projected income figure yet for the BID which included bad debt provision. Sarah Jackson reported that circa £61k was currently outstanding and the BID team were actively liaising with levy payers to reduce this amount. Kevin Priestley highlighted that the Council had effectively been providing the cashflow for the BID but ultimately it would only pay the BID the amount that came in through levies. Ian Bough highlighted that a detailed reconciliation process would be undertaken to clarify this. The Board discussed their approach to debt collection and the different options available to the BID to recover outstanding levies. It was agreed that the BID should be proactive in bringing in levies and agreed that operational judgements on what specific mechanisms used to achieve this would be delegated to the staff team.

Insp Foster asked whether the Board should set a strategy for the level of tolerance for the future when proceedings would be initiated to recover outstanding levies. Dave Green commented that a number of traders who had not paid their levies were waiting to see what the BID offered them before paying. Other Board members highlighted that it was part of the business rates system, mandated by a referendum, and wasn't a voluntary levy. The Board asked the BID staff team to consider developing a communications strategy for any publicity that may arise out of the debt collection issue. Steve Trynka suggested, and the Board agreed, that future policy on debt collection could be a matter for the Audit and Finance Sub-Committee.

6. Corporate Governance

The minutes of the additional BID Board meeting to discuss corporate governance issues held on 17th January 2008 were agreed as a true and correct record.

Steve Trynka reviewed the key decisions made at the meeting. It was agreed that finance and audit sub-committee would be established. Membership would be Amanda Austin, Denise Anderton and Ian Kelly. The sub-committee would appoint its own chair when it met.

In relation to the term of office for Chair, Mike Killoran stated that he had decided to step down as Chair at the AGM in March 2008 but would stay on the Board. Steve Trynka suggested that the position of Chair should be fixed for two years with a maximum of two terms. This was agreed for both Chair and Vice-Chair positions.

There would be an Away Day to discuss the Business Plan in June each year. It was agreed that a professional facilitator would support the day and it was suggested that David Burnby would be well placed to do this.

The Board would consider identifying Directors to provide support to the staff team in specific areas. It was that Mike Killoran would assist for marketing. A decision on which director might do this for safety and security would be taken at a later date.

The Board would consider at a future meeting the best way to engage non retail levy payers either in the form of an additional new sub-committee or current public or area based meetings.

In relation to the issues regarding the Retail Crime Partnerships radio system Ken Baldwin circulated a note to the Board on the BID security forum for larger retailers as had been requested. Insp Foster confirmed that the Police would work with the BID as key partners on tackling community safety issues in the city centre. They would work with the Retail Crime Partnership on the radio system. Ken Baldwin clarified to the Board that the BID had no specific role or involvement in the radio system. He said the security forum was an arrangement with the larger stores which included information sharing agreements and was not a matter for the Retail Crime Partnership. Mike Killoran suggested that an update paper be brought to the Board after the meeting on 30th January involving the BID, RCP and the Police.

The Board noted that the vision statement would be "...to make Hull city centre the destination of choice."

The appointment of the Operations Manager was discussed. Ian Bough had been seconded to the BID by Humberside Police until March 2008 and the proposal that the post be taken on by the BID from April when this secondment ended. Provision had been made in the business and financial plan for this scenario.

Ian Bough made a short presentation to the Board explaining the background and key responsibilities of the post over the past year. This included work to support the financial information of the BID, data sharing agreements and area tasking with the Police, the BID security forum, website and the cleaning and maintenance project. He also reported that he was working on a funding bid for street scene improvements in the city centre. Ian Bough then left the room whilst the Board considered the issue and after discussion it was unanimously agreed that Ian Bough would formally be invited join the BID team from 1st April 2008.

7. Business & Financial Plan 2007/8

Ian Bough made a detailed presentation to the Board on the operations elements of the BID in terms of safety & security and cleaning & maintenance.

In relation to safety and security he reported that the creation of a dedicated team of Ambassadors was a BID manifesto commitment. However, he also highlighted that Humberside Police were putting more resources into the city centre with additional Police officers, and more PCSOs. As well as the 6 funded Ambassadors, the BID had funded 1,800 additional man hours for Police operations in the city centre. It had also supported some of the costs for 6 street marshalls on an evening.

It was reported that in the previous years safety and security budget, the BID had invested £40k in Police operations, £137k on Ambassadors and £27k on street marshalls. The draft business plan provided for the continuation of Ambassadors and additional resources to support Police operations. Ian Bough reviewed the various options open to the Board in relation to its spend on safety and security.

Ian Bough also reviewed the BID's investment in cleaning and maintenance. He highlighted that the rapid response of the BID had made a real and positive impact in removing and reducing graffiti in the city centre. It was noted that the BID currently invested £72k on cleaning and maintenance.

The Board discussed in detail the various options open to them for the 2007/8 Business Plan to ensure it met its key priorities in relation to these issues. A number of issues were raised including the value for money of the various options, possible risks of changing various service providers, implications of direct delivery by the BID team and the respective roles and responsibilities of the Ambassadors, street marshalls, PCSOs etc. The potential to introduce some elements of the old 'ranger' service were also considered.

The Board agreed that the safety and security issue was a priority for levy payers and agreed that the BID provision needed to be rebalanced in view of the changing Police resources in the city centre. It was felt introducing ranger type services would also be positive for the city centre. It was agreed that the focus of Ambassadors should move away from community safety. The Board asked the management team to work on the best options for implementing these revised proposals including amending or terminating any contracts or SLAs as appropriate.

The Board discussed other areas of the business plan and particularly ways to support the evening economy. Jo Barnes highlighted the need for the BID to support evening economy projects and also looked to support more daytime based events targeted to bring families into the city centre. Victoria Jackson suggested bringing in more street entertainment. Ken Baldwin tabled a draft events programme for the city centre in 2008 which was being discussed with partners including the Council and DMO. Insp Foster suggested linking into the opening of the Albermarle music centre.

With these comments and decisions noted, the business and financial plan was agreed.

8. Managers Report

A written report was circulated and noted. It was noted that the BID Retail Forum would now be held on 5th March with Graham Hall in attendance to discuss transport issues.

9. Hull City Council City Centre Report

Kevin Priestley reported that the ground power units in Trinity Square were being installed first and then in King Edward Street. Some possible refurbishment work at the top of King Edward Street was planned.

Kevin Priestley suggested the BID attend the Riverside Area Practitioners Forum. Ken Baldwin would liaise with Kevin Priestley about this.

New electronic parking signs had been installed and were currently being tested.

Confirmation on the new portfolio holder for city centre issues was awaited.

9. Press Log

The press log was tabled and noted.

10. Any Other Business

Ian Kelly reported that colleagues from Fife were visiting Hull shortly to learn about how the BID worked. It was also noted that Ken Baldwin would be speaking at the national BIDs conference in Edinburgh on 4th February.

Dave Green highlighted that the parking issues on Paragon Street had not yet been resolved. Ken Baldwin suggested that traders be encouraged to attend the BID Retail Forum with Graham Hall to raise their concerns.

11. Date of Next Meeting

The next Board meeting would be held on 6th March 2008 at 10.05am at 34-38 Beverley Road, Hull. The AGM would be held immediately before the Board meeting.