Minutes of Board Meeting 21st July 2025

Held at Valentino's, 14-15 Westgate, Ripon

Board Present and constituting a quorum: Richard Compton, DL (Chairman), Mark Lancaster (Joint-Vice Chairman), Rick Jones (Joint-Vice Chairman), Stuart Baldwin, Andrew Williams, Megan Green.

Others Present: Lilla Bathurst, (Manager)

Apologies: Stephen Craggs, Richard Taylor, Rebecca Layton (guest), Tony Denton (guest), Julian Rudd (guest)

Proceedings

The meeting was called to order by RC (Chairman) at 6:00pm	
RC welcomed everyone to the Board Meeting. RC reminded the Board that the meeting was being recorded (with the recording destroyed after minutes are approved), to declare any conflicts of interest on the agenda and asked if there was any change to the register of interests. RC asked if the Board approved the minutes from the May Board and approval was given.	

Actions from previous meeting

LB said she would continue to gather the appropriate paperwork on company membership and RL's director's application.	LB

Items for discussion

Your Harrogate Jamline LB explained that the funded sponsorship of Your Harrogate Jamline runs out at the end of August 2025 and asked if the Board wanted to renew. LB went on to explain that unlike the Bauer Media campaign it was difficult to track if the Your Harrogate radio advertisements resulted in more visitors. AW said he was keen to market Ripon to the North East and the Board agreed that this would be a more beneficial use of levy payers' funds. LB and LM will explore the possibilities with media outlets such as The Darlington & Stockton Times and The Northern Echo. ML said that well positioned social media ads campaign would be preferable to the radio and having that ability to update and that flexibility is important when you set up an ads campaign. LB said they would also explore social media possibilities with Your Harrogate and paid advertising via the BID's own social media.	LB/LM LB/LM

2nd Term Ballot LB took the Board through the CRM system in relation to the 2nd Term Ballot and explained that the BID team would be concentrating on filling in the missing information on voting intentions. LB explained that the first campaign newsletter has gone electronically and via post to all voting levy payers and that included the survey. ML suggested that the BID team includes a link to the survey on their email signatures and then changes that message to reflect things like rise in footfall etc. **New Project Suggestions** LB informed the Board that she had been looking at an app called TrailTale as a possible project for the next term, however having looked closely at it she felt that it was too complicated and given that both Visit North Yorkshire and Ripon Military Heritage Trust were looking at place based apps that it would not be a good use of funds. SC had fed in before the meeting that he felt the same. LB went on to explain that she had got quotes from both Place Support Partnership and the British Independent Retailers Association for their services, however given the lack of interest previously from businesses again felt that neither were a good use of funds. SC had said that he felt the premises improvement grants were of a direct benefit to businesses and that this would be a better use of levy payers' money. **October Half Term** LB took the Board through her proposal for a week's trail during October Half Term culminating in a pop-up Pumpkin Patch in the square. The Board discussed which timings and dates would be most beneficial to businesses. SC had informed LB prior to the meeting that he felt a Pumpkin Patch later on the Friday or even on the Saturday would benefit the evening economy businesses. However, AW said he felt that running an event on the day after Hallowe'en would not have the desired effect. He also said that most people would be taking their children Trick o' Treating from around 5:30pm on the Friday so the event would be most beneficial run from 10am-2pm which would give people the opportunity to take advantage of the lunchtime / café trade. The Board agreed with this suggestion. **Digital update** LB went on to take the Board through the digital stats as follows: **Website** 21.8k page views & 8.3k users since the last board meeting. Most viewed pages were Events, Walking Routes, Attractions and Food & Drink pages which is great news for levy payers as it shows users are actively seeking places to both visit & dine. Retained the number one ranking for Events in Ripon, Ripon Events, Visit Ripon & Ripon BID.	LB/LM /JH

User Locations Ripon Bath Leeds Manchester Newcastle Harrogate **Instagram** Instagram views achieved 15.6k Via Instagram we reached 2.1k users 562 content interactions Weekend round up posts, Theatre Festival & Grantley Hall events all helped drive numbers **Facebook** Via Facebook achieved 96.5k views and reached 24.9k users. The last month (June to July respectively) saw a 169.6% rise in views & a 204.8% increase in reach. 1k content interactions Top posts include Weekend round up posts, Theatre Festival & People Make Places which all helped to drive traffic and engagement. RC asked ML for his feedback and ML said they were excellent figures. **Financial Update** SB took the Board through the finances focusing on the income and grant money received to date and explained that the BID was on budget. **Project Update** RC asked LB to update the Board on current and future projects. LB explained that the funded Christmas Market was all booked and that Little Bird were happy with the quality of bookings. LB said she had booked both day and evening entertainment for the Friday and Saturday and daytime entertainment for the Sunday. The finance agreement with the Combined Authority has not come through yet but LB had been given assurances that all spend would be reimbursed. LB explained that Super Summer Saturdays was to be solely in Spa Gardens due to logistics and keeping a simple marketing message. The AR trail went live on Saturday and in a few weeks data will be available. RJ said he had been testing it and it looked great. AW asked that LB speak to Leah Crawford about RCC's fairground rides and LB said she would work with her on joint marketing of both the BID's and RCC's events.	LB

Footfall Update LB explained that in April 2025, Ripon experienced a 14.3% decrease in footfall, with average weekly numbers falling to 77,466 from the 90,367 YTD average, YOY average daily footfall dropped by 29.2%. Thursday experienced the most pronounced dip from 19,004 to 13,219. This was the picture both regionally and nationally. However, May saw a robust increase in footfall across Ripon, marking a significant uplift in city centre vitality. The average weekly footfall reached 122,542, a 26.6% increase compared to the year-to-date average of 96,802 and a 60.5% increase from April 2025.	

AOB

RC asked if there was any other business. LB asked if the Board would like to suggest to NYC that a trial was run to move the Thursday market to the south side of the Market Square opening up the car park. LB said she felt this would benefit both businesses who report that Thursday's are quiet and the market traders who would see people be able to purchase more if they were parked on the square. LB explained that with declining footfall on Thursdays (2025 and 2024 Thursdays were the worst weekday for footfall, 2023 saw good footfall on a Thursday however in 2022 it was the 2nd worst day of the week, 2021 saw average footfall, 2020 n/a and in 2019 it was the 2nd worst day) a fuller and busier looking market, alongside more parking spaces (120 plus the disabled bays), might reverse the trend. AW declared a conflict of interest and said he would not be voting on this issue but suggested that any suggestion to NYC should include something that incentivised the traders so perhaps a further discount on winter stall rates which could be covered by the parking revenue. The Board discussed the issue with RJ saying that before any letter of suggestion was written that LB found out what the footprint of the market was and made sure that it could fit on the south side of the Square. It was decided that subject to the above that the Board would make the suggestion to NYC that a trial was run during November, December, January and February and LB would be able to give them the footfall figures so that they could judge if it was a success or not if NYC decided to adopt the suggestion. RC asked LB to draft a letter for review. LB asked if the Board agreed with the proposal for a statue of the Ripon Hornblower put forward by Antony Prince. Ripon City Council have unanimously approved the principle and Ripon Civic Society support the idea. SC had fed in that he approved the idea but that he would disagree with funding it with levy payers funds. LB explained that she was not asking if the Board approved funding it in any way but whether they supported the idea in principle. The Board agreed that they supported the principle of a statue. LB said she would inform Antony Prince. LB updated the Board on the Theatre Festival. Audience numbers were up by 28% on last year. Tickets sold were up by 17% and there was a 33% rise in footfall year on year. Last year,	LB LB LB

Huq provided the MasterCard spend data, which showed a nice uptick over the weekend, but have said that it would cost £300 this year to provide the data so did not feel it was necessary. RC asked if there was any further business and AW said that he would like to see a partnership from Ripon attend the Great Yorkshire Show. He felt that the Visit Yorkshire stand was drab and poorly thought out and attended. If Ripon was to have a presence there it would need to be on a high footfall route and very well thought out, involving all our attractions and the City Council. LB said that she would raise it with the Visit Ripon Group at their next meeting on 18th September. ML suggested that Avenue Q is a good and visible footfall route with shops and other stands and is on the route to and from the car park. LB said she would put a proposal together with Stuart Gill from Newby so that they could speak to Yorkshire Agricultural Society about getting on the list. AW went on to explain that he was hopeful that the double devolution deal on the Town Hall is in its final stages. Following a meeting that he had on Thursday, North Yorkshire council was sending the proposals that have been draft approved by the City Council to legal. He said he was hopeful that by the end of the autumn, at the latest, Ripon City Council will have responsibility for the Town Hall and will be starting the process of public consultation over how the building can be used In future, bidding for money to try and raise what will most likely be between £4-5 million pounds that will be needed.	LB

RC thanked everyone for their attendance and concluded the meeting at 7:20pm.	

Future Board meeting dates: 29 September, 24 November