Minutes of Board Meeting 18th May 2026

Held at Valentino's, Westgate, Ripon

Board Present and constituting a quorum: Richard Compton, DL (Chairman), Stuart Baldwin, Rick Jones (Joint-Vice Chairman), Mark Lancaster (Joint-Vice Chairman), Richard Taylor, Stephen Craggs, Justin Scully (guest), Michaela Young (guest).

Others Present: Lilla Bathurst, (Manager), Layla Martin (Comms) Juliet Hawkins (Liaison)

Apologies: Andrew Williams, Megan Green. Rebecca Layton, Kathryn Daly (guest) Richard Butcher (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 being 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. ML at this point declared an interest in both GYS and the Stay Awhile Signs while RC, RT and JS declared an interest in GYS. RC asked if the Board approved the minutes from the March Board and approval was given.	

Actions from previous meeting

Apprenticeships: LB informed the board that MG had spoken with Kleek and would feedback when she had an answer.	MG

Items for Discussion

Great Yorkshire Show: LB explained that the show tent would be in Skell green from the Visit Ripon brand kit with the outside of the two adjoining tents branded Visit Ripon and Ripon BID. The inside panels, four sides and two back, would feature photographs of all the attractions plus Ripon in general. Ripon City Council has approved a grant of £5,000 pounds and donations have been offered by RMT and NT with LWV in discussions. Karen Sweeney, has got a very competitive deal on furniture and LB will get Save the Dog to edit our attractions video with hopefully a submission from VNY who may also contribute financially. Various attractions have now offered prizes	LB

for a daily competition and the competition page has been reskinned so competition entries and data can be collected into a mailing list for use after the show. Prizes received so far from Newby, RMT, NT, Ripon Inn and Grantley Hall. LB expects to be able to get prizes from both the Racecourse and LWV. Entry to the competition will be via a QR code and the data will also be sent directly to our visitor mailing list.	LB
Easter: LB explained that c.50% of trail sheets had been returned and feedback had been very positive. The leaflet holders on the outside of the office continue to prove very effective for both trail sheets and other information such as brochures and maps. LM had created the characters for the Easter trail via AI which had saved money on design and will do the same for summer.	
Summer: LB showed the board the idea of a new character Walter the Whippet, for the summer trail which will include Ripon-based facts to drive engagement and appeal to a wider audience. LB confirmed the climbing wall and a facepainter are booked for 3 Saturdays in August with the climbing wall just waiting on SAG approval. It is hoped the climbing wall will appeal to older children as well as adults.	
Stay Awhile Signs: LB explained that Stuart Martin has confirmed that he is stepping away from the project which enables the BID to step in. LB has received a quote from a joiner to create the top section, along with a quote for the design and production of the diabond inserts. LB has not yet got a quote for replacing the upright posts. At present 3 of the signs are missing completely with the other 2 currently in an acceptable condition. LB asked for the Board's approval to finalise quotes and move forward. At present the costs would be c.£1750 per sign. The Board (with ML abstaining) approved this for next year's budget. LB will revert when final costs are received. LB also suggested asking RCC for a contribution towards one of the three signs.	LB

Digital update: LM updated the Board as follows: Website 75k page views from 9.9k active users 9.3k new visitors Most viewed: Events guide, Blog Home, Spa Baths rejuvenation and Retail No.1 for Visit Ripon, Ripon BID, Days out in Ripon, Events in Ripon, Ripon Events & Things to do in Ripon. Instagram • Views: 14.6k (-43.6%) • Reach: 1.9k (-76.2%) Traffic Drivers • Hospitality offers • Blog • Weekend events Facebook • Views: 127.7k (-30.7%) • Interactions: 858 (-42.8%) Traffic Drivers • Re-opening of attractions • Weekend events These lower figures were to be expected after the success of the previous period. ML congratulated the team on the figures and stated that Meta weren't gathering data for the first week of May which will have had an impact and also that they are looking at GEO as well as SEO* – ML will discuss this with LM. RT asked about the ability to email out the blogs and LB explained that she was working on that with Susan Briggs and the Visit Ripon Substack mailing list and it would be able to be implemented shortly. Financial Report: SB reported on the finances to the Board which were broadly in line with budget bar some timing issues. SB confirmed that the court date for	ML/LM LB

liability orders was 21 May and following that NYC would forward with enforcement using a third party.	

AOB

Christmas 2026: SB asked about Christmas and LB explained that she had agreed to partner with Little Bird Markets again and provide 20 wooden huts for a 3 day Christmas market using the Portas Funds. LB said she had had discussions with the Cathedral and would be aiming on a much more joined up marketing campaign of both the 3 day market and the Cathedral Gift Fair. LM will be working again on the Christmas brochure and LB is confident of getting advertising revenue again to enable to distribution to remain the same. St Wilfrid's Stars 2026: SB asked for support from both the board and businesses for this year's awards and LB said she would encourage businesses to nominate themselves/each other. Nominations close in September: https://www.ripontogether.com/st-wilfrids-stars/ Board positions: RC explained that RT had decided to step down from the Board as he is no longer a trustee of RMT. RC thanked RT for all the work he had done to get the BID off the ground in the first place, allowing the BID to use offices within RMT and for all his support. RT said he would continue to support and would continue to work with the BID via the Civic Society and through HODS. JC added that along with being the GM at Fountains Abbey & Studley Royal he also chairs the advisory board to the LVEP for York and North Yorkshire and if he joined the BID board would be bring that experience to the table.	LB ALL

RC thanked everyone for their attendance and concluded the meeting at 7:05pm.	

Future Board meeting dates: 20 July, 21 September 2026

* SEO Vs GEO

SEO: Winning the Traditional Search SEO relies on algorithms that weigh keyword matching, site speed, mobile-friendliness, and backlinks. The objective is to secure a high ranking so users click your link and visit your domain. It requires ongoing link-building, page optimization, and technical audits.

GEO: Winning the AI Era GEO caters to Large Language Models (LLMs) that synthesize information rather than just linking to it. Instead of trying to get a user to click away, GEO ensures AI tools retrieve your content, reference your brand, and cite you as a trusted source. Success here requires highly structured data, clear headings, natural language, and establishing digital authority.