Minutes of Board Meeting 19th May 2025

Held at Ripon BID office, 8 Westgate

Board Present and constituting a quorum: Richard Compton, DL (Chairman), Mark Lancaster (Joint-Vice Chairman), Stuart Baldwin, Stephen Craggs, Richard Taylor,

Others Present: Julian Rudd, Head of Regeneration, North Yorkshire Council (guest), Lilla Bathurst, (Manager), Layla Martin, (Comms Exec), Juliet Hawkins, (Business Liaison Officer)

Apologies: Andrew Williams, Megan Green, Rick Jones, Rebecca Layton (guest), Tony Denton (guest)

Proceedings

The meeting was called to order by RC (Chairman) at 6:00pm	
RC welcomed everyone to the Board Meeting and introduced Julian Rudd. 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 March Board and approval was given.	

Actions from previous meeting

LB confirmed she had received draft baseline statements from NYC and was reviewing them. LB also confirmed that progress on the new NYC operating agreement had been made and agreement reached on sticking points.	
LB confirmed that the BID summer entertainment planned did not fall on any Raceday Saturdays. LB also explained that RCC had free fairground rides booked for the 16th and 23rd August and that the BID would use Spa Gardens for their entertainment on 23rd August (BID entertainment booked for 2nd, 9th, 23rd & 30th August).	

Items for Discussion

Governance & Directors' responsibilities: LB distributed company membership forms and asked the directors present to sign the amended forms which now contain a new clause whereby any director resigning their directorship automatically resigns their company membership. LB will ensure those directors who were not present will sign the new forms.	LB

LB reiterated the need for directors to inform her of any new entries in the Register of Interests. LB will check this with those directors who were not present. LB explained that she had sent out the Directors' Pack with the agenda and urged all to remind themselves of the contents and also watch the podcast by Julie Grayling included in the agenda. LB will give RL the following forms to complete and sign: Ripon BID Ltd Director Application Form, Director's Code of Conduct, BID Company Membership Form and Register of Interest. Once completed LB will inform SB who will inform Companies House. ML asked that the website was updated to reflect any changes and LB asked JH to do this.	LB LB SB JH
<u>Ripon Big Sky Wheel / Easter Evaluation inc Huq:</u> LB explained that nearly 9,000 rode the Big Sky Wheel over the 3 weeks it was in situ. Businesses had got behind it with social media and feedback was good: *"Well done Ripon BID and thank you for all your efforts to make Ripon a bright city like York and Harrogate. We have never had as many orders in the past 20 years as we had last weekend. We will continue to support you through the Easter bank holidays." Zorro's pizza* SB asked if the operator had been pleased with the numbers and LB explained that he had seemed to be, he certainly was not unhappy. ML commented that the weather was very good for it. LB said there had been 14 Press Articles in total (not including the extensive social media): 3 from BBC, 2 from Yorkshire Post, 2 from Your Harrogate, 3 from Stray Ferret, 1 from Northern Echo, 1 from Darlington & Stockton Times, 2 from Harrogate Advertiser. LB had done 3 interviews with BBC Radio York and 1 interview with BBC Look North. ML said he felt the media and the marketing had been handled very well and LB said she would ensure that Tim Dabell was aware of the impact both via the traditional media and social media. 34 businesses took part in the Easter trail. 350 trail sheets were produced and distributed. LB explained that they had run out of trail sheets. 90 plus trail sheets were returned. LB equates that to around 525 adults doing the trail. LB said they had c.96 children at the crafting sessions equating to another 144 adults in attendance. LB said she felt it was very good value at £3.50 per child with face painting, balloon modelling, the Easter bunny and a crafting session – undercutting anybody who was charging for Easter activities in the area.	LB

Over the three months in the run up to Easter, Ripon BID has sponsored Greatest Hits drive time show with Simon Mayo. Difficult to measure success of this other than the fact that it is the No.1 listened to drive time show in the UK. LB explained that they could measure the digital audio campaign, which targeted the A1 corridor during March and April. Results were as below:

Bauer Radio Campaign vs Visitor share

Postcodes	Unique impressions	Visitor Share
DL	140,054	21.84%
DH	28,179	2.06%
LS	13,826	3.74%
YO51	4,008	2.38%

Vs: negligible visitor share from these areas for the year Mar 24-Mar 25 (except YO51 2.79%)

The DL postcodes got 140,000+ unique impressions and Ripon's visitor share went up from negligible to 21.84% for that postcode. The same result was seen with Durham & Leeds - less unique impressions but it's still a jump in visitor share. LB reported that the visitor share from North East postcodes is reflected in the feedback from the Cathedral, the Himalayan Gardens and Newby Hall. LB said they would continue to target this area after this success.

ML said he felt the Race Course would back that up too.

LB went on to explain the footfall figures from Huq for the Easter Holidays. LB had compared Easter holidays 2025 with Easter holidays 2024. The first week of the holidays saw a 9.73% increase to the same week of the holidays in 2024. However, the second week saw a large decrease which culminated in an overall decrease of 14.6% - this could in part be attributed to excellent weather in the first week and the arrival of the Big Sky Wheel and then damp, cold weather in the second week and the fact that families may well have taken advantage of the two bank holidays to go away. LB confirmed that Skipton had seen the same sort of pattern in footfall and ML said his hospitality clients had experienced the same.

LB explained that MRI Software (formerly Springboard) had stated that the week in the run up to Easter Monday: "Coastal and market towns experienced a decrease in footfall, with weekly drops of 6.7% and 4.7%, respectively, which could suggest that some shoppers opted to travel abroad for their holidays."

Ripon saw a 4.89% drop week on week reflecting this trend.

ML said he felt that the last minute decision making was still an after effect from Covid but also not helped by the current economic situation made things very worrying for small businesses in particular. LB confirmed that it appears to be a National (with the exception of London) trend of declining footfall.	
Digital Update: LM explained that the Big Sky Wheel didn't just impact on footfall, it also had an impact on web traffic to the Visit Ripon website as well. Where traditionally we would see roughly 10k page views per month, from March Board Meeting until this Board Meeting there were 78k – up 82.7%. Most viewed pages were the events, the Big Sky Wheel and the VE Day celebrations. LM said the BID had retained the No.1 place on Google for Events in Ripon, Ripon Events, Visit Ripon and Ripon BID. User locations have shifted slightly and Manchester and Newcastle appear in the top 5 for the first time. Results from Instagram - just under 15k views up 91% and a reach of nearly 3k users, up 80% and content interactions were up 91.9%. So it was a success in that we marketed the events including the Sky Wheel very well and have the figures to prove it. ML asked if LM had managed to do any user generated content comparisons as user generated content is yielding far greater engagement as it is seen as more authentic. LM explained she hadn't as yet but that Facebook is where there was a real leap. Just short of 183k views, which was up nearly 500% and a reach of 29.4K users. Content interaction was up 377% and when LB went back on the wheel after the small generator fire that was viewed 18k times! Top posts were Big Sky Wheel, Easter activities, the weekend round ups and People Make Places which has been helped by JH being able to schedule more businesses in. The aim is to do them every 2 weeks. LB said she felt LM had done a great job on the content and this was backed up very well by all JH's work on keeping the website up to date. All this has been organic growth rather than paid adverts. ML said this should all be reflected back to NYC to explain that we are very good at marketing events. He also continued that for an in-house team to be delivering this quality was exceptional. An agency would cost far more and wouldn't have the relationship building and trust that in-house produces.	
Financial Report:	

SB reported on the financial position. Reminder notices have gone out but income is behind budget. LB will discuss next steps with NYC enforcement.	LB
<u>Update on Projects:</u> LB updated on projects explaining that from the £40k Towns Boost fund, the south side of the market square was steam cleaned on 18th May and the results look really good. The city image bank project has started with Joe Dodsworth having spent one day so far photographing businesses and the first bank of photos has come through. Each business will be given access to their file. The 16 new planters for Kirkgate should be in place and planted by the end of May. Summer Activities are booked and the AR trail is being created. There are lots of great marketing materials and a press release is ready to go. LB explained she would hopefully get good press coverage as it is a new event.	
<u>Reballot:</u> LB explained she was working on an Impact Assessment of what has been achieved and has informed NYC and the Secretary of State of the intention to hold a New-Term Ballot. LB will keep the New-Term Ballot panel informed.	
<u>Y&NYCA Vibrant & Sustainable High Street Fund:</u> LB explained she had put an application in to run a feasibility study by hiring 10 Christmas Market huts and holding a 3 day Christmas market – this was something that was requested at the Indie group networking. If this was a success a business case could be made, if businesses wanted it, to purchase huts to use for Ripon events and to hire out to other centres to recoup the cost within 2 years. The application was rejected on the basis that it would "give Ripon a competitive advantage over other centres". RC said he felt that was the whole point. LB explained that out of the 4 NY BIDs only 1 had an application accepted. As a collective the 4 NY BIDs have written to the CA to give feedback, ask for clarity, to express disappointment and ask who was on the judging panel. LB has a meeting on 17th June with someone from the CA and then the full day visiting attractions with the Mayor of Y&NY on the 19th. In light of the decision there is the possibility of a Plan B for Christmas market huts, which is to use the Grip/Portas funds to hire the 10 huts and continue that feasibility study plan. LB will write a full project proposal for the board and get it out by the end of next week for consideration. In brief, it would be a Ripon BID Christmas market curated by Little Bird. The project proposal will include all costings and full transparency on revenue.	

SB asked if there was still the idea to use some of the money for enhanced seating on the Market Square. LB explained that in light of Martyn's Law coming into affect and the fact that any event expecting over 800+ (including on the Market Square) will need to have enhanced protections including physical measures – hostile vehicle measures (HVM) means that there is a risk of anything the BID does add could be removed. LB also understands that AW is asking NYC to look at a capital program including a full re-paving of the Market Square. LB felt it was better to wait until the position was clearer before embarking on this. LB went on to mention commuted sums and a meeting between AW, Cllr Peter Horton, LB and Alastair Baldwin Associates to see what could be spent and where. RT said he had discovered the Workhouse Museum had been allocated £1,200 and LB confirmed Temple Gardens has been allocated £13,000.	
<u>Footfall for February and March:</u> February 2025, saw a decrease of 16.3% over all days. Thursday, footfall weakened significantly, but also weekend footfall, weakened. February's not a great month, traditionally, but there is a bit of a worrying trend. Monday is a 15,000 day. Wednesdays are 15,000 day. Thursday, see a dip. Friday, there's a slight uptick, and Saturday is still a good day. Sunday, previously has been a really high footfall day. But even so, without much open it is not able to translate into spend. On a positive note, the higher concentration of annual disposable income in the 20,000 bracket, at 79.9% compared to a regional average of 59.3% and a national average of 53.4% means that those who are coming, even if they're coming less, have a higher disposable income. There was a decrease again in March, but a lot less than in February only 4.1% and weekend footfall improved slightly. The catchment increase shows an increase in visitor share from the YO7 and DL6 postcodes from the previous period. Thursday footfall in March was the second worst day after Sunday. A trend for Thursdays. North Yorkshire visitor share was up as was West Yorkshire was up as were Northumberland, East Riding and Darlington. ML asked about the various media reports around Ripon market and LB stated that she had spoken with Phillipa Ireland-Mustoe and it was her understanding that the self erect traders had been offered the equipment for free along with a concession on parking their vans. LB also said that she felt that NYC were doing a much better job at advertising how new people could try the market and she would encourage them to run that initiative for longer (it ran for April only) to get some more life in the market. LB also said the BID could look at branded tarpaulins to smarten the market using the full Visit Ripon colour pallet, not just blue. This could form part of	LB

the BID consultation process but would need to wait until the full picture from NYC is known. ML stated that the best example of this was Keswick.	

AOB

Julian Rudd: JR said the new Mayor wants to see investment plans come forward for each town in North Yorkshire and a small number within the York City Council area. Over the next 2-3 years they will be taking that work forward, including for Ripon, and that essentially seeks to guide what local priorities are in terms of development of projects. Some potential areas have been touched upon such as the bus station project, but the combined authority need a pipeline of projects developing and JR said he wants to do that with local people and organisations such as the BID and city and town councils. The most significant plans will be around Scarborough and Harrogate and Selby, but then there are a number of places, including Ripon, where there will still be a lot of effort going into producing those plans. JR went on to say that they really need to work with people to understand what change and improvement they would like to see. JR mentioned that there is also a consultation out on the new North Yorkshire local plan. Obviously, as that moves forward, that will also impact upon the future of Ripon and this part of North Yorkshire in terms of development, etc. SB asked if those plans will be dovetailing with the Uredale Community Partnership and JR confirmed it would and that he or someone from NYC would be attending the next Uredale meeting in June. LB mentioned that Karl Battersby had confirmed that NYC would also be looking at the Ripon Neighbourhood Plan (started in 2011 and finalized in 2019) and he had confirmed that they would be. Stephen Craggs: SC asked about gaining clarity on what NYC had proposed about a central hub for CCTV and whether that would impact the RadioLink scheme that Ripon BID funds. LB said she had not heard anything from HDBAC who run the CCTV hub in Harrogate and would ask. JR also said he would also ask the question.	

RC thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 7:10pm.	

Future Board meeting dates: 21 July, 29 September, 24 November