

Ripon BID – Board Minutes from 17th January 2022

Held via Zoom

Board

Present and constituting a quorum: Richard Compton (Chairman), John Alder, Stuart Baldwin, Sarah Blenkinsop, Kathryn Daly, Annette Duffy, Rick Jones, Richard Taylor, Sheila Webb, Lee Kettlewell, Andrew Williams

Apologies: Stephen Craggs, Stuart Martin

Others

Present: Elizabeth Faulkner, Lilla Bathurst

Proceedings

The meeting was called to order by RC (Chairman) at 12pm	
RC welcomed everyone to the Ripon BID Board Meeting. RC reminded the Board that the meeting was being recorded and to declare any conflicts of interest on the agenda. RC asked if the Board approved the minutes from the December Board and approval was given.	

Actions from previous meeting

RC asked for feedback from NYCC on entry signage (not on the agenda but a matter arising from the last meeting). LB confirmed that a meeting with Area 6 and Mike Chambers is due. It will be raised at that and LB said she would confirm the meeting this week.	LB
<u>Ginnels lighting</u> : LB said she had received two quotes, one local company had declined to quote. LB asked for Board approval for 3 rd Yorkshire based lighting company. LB confirmed the scheme is a simple scheme using eyebolts, outdoor festoon lighting. RC confirmed he knew of a company called FusionLX, SBa & RT confirmed this and RT will provide details and LB will speak to them.	LB
<u>Cleaning and Graffiti</u> : LB confirmed deep cleaning will commence once the heavy frosts are over. SBa asked what the feedback has been and LB confirmed that it had all been positive, particularly from the businesses adjoining the ginnels and the businesses on Kirkgate – the photos in the December Newsletter really showed off the difference.	
<u>Floral Ripon</u> : LB confirmed the quote document for floral displays has gone to Tate's, Studley Garden Centre, Walled Garden and HBC. LB said she had spoken to Jane Tate and they felt it wasn't something they wanted to quote for, LB directed her to the section on supplying 5000 daffodil bulbs which could be done separately to rest of quote and Jane said she was going to think about it. The Walled Garden have declined to quote and Studley have not yet come back. The BID has received a quote from HBC already. LB will update at next Board Meeting.	LB
<u>BID levy operating agreement</u> : LB confirmed that she has been liaising with Julie Gillett and the agreement is with the legal team at HBC and is in hand. RC asked LB to confirm that any delay in signing isn't an issue for the BID which LB confirmed.	
<u>Three After Free</u> : RC asked KD for news on the Free After Three parking and KD confirmed she had spoken with the relevant head of service within the council. HBC are currently experiencing some capacity issues, they are happy to pick up a conversation about it in the spring, KD will keep on to do list. RC asked LB to make a diary note.	KD/LB (March)

Items for Approval

Proforma project document RC explained that EF and LB felt that this document is very useful for getting both the BID team and the Board to focus when proposing projects. EF explained that the BID team would like the Board to use this document to propose projects, with the budget set for this financial year, the team would be looking at ideas for the next financial year. EF explained that the form is self explanatory, but it is a good tool to link everything back to the BID's objectives. EF went on to explain that the BID needs to be able to evaluate both short term and long term projects. This helps when talking to businesses and the BID will have documentation to show the outputs on events and projects. EF drew the Board's attention to the 'Resources' section – asking that the Board consider whether those resources are BID team members or could they be found elsewhere. EF thanked SBa and RJ for their feedback on the document. RC said he thought that made perfect sense and asked where the document would be found. EF confirmed that a copy of the template would be sent out with the minutes and it would always be available via the BID team. RC asked if there were any further comments, there were none and the document was therefore approved.	
Ghost Walks / Halloween EF explained that October half term falls neatly around Halloween which traditionally has seen a dip in Ripon's footfall. The BID team would like to put forward a series of activities in and around Ripon. EF explained that	

<p>the BID would like to build on the Ripon-specific activities already happening via the Museums such as the Ghost Walks – both family friendly afternoon ones, which support the businesses and more adult evening ones, which support the evening economy.</p> <p>The BID would also like to run city trails encouraging visitors to visit as many parts of the city as possible. The BID will also liaise with and support the activities that the visitor attractions put on over half term, particularly Lightwater Valley. In the proforma document the BID suggests things such as theming of ginnels and putting pumpkins in the trees in the square and creating really attractive social media stories. This would be a week long activity giving the BID an October half term campaign.</p> <p>Evaluation would be through social media engagement, footfall and dwell time figures. The aim is to create activities that in the short term bring in the local visitors, until the Ripon bed-stock is larger, and then bring in visitors from further afield.</p> <p>RC asked for feedback. AD stated that she thought it was a fantastic idea, especially if the festoon lighting was up by then. She felt it was quite a modest budget, as a business on the Market Square AD said she would happily contribute towards the project. EF asked for a Board Member to support the project and AD agreed to do this. EF also explained that the BID could build on this project year on year, getting other businesses to contribute and making the most of the ancient heritage. AW said he was very much in favour with what he had heard about Halloween but mentioned that there might be an issue putting pumpkins in trees firstly because they would need consent from HBC and secondly because they might clash with the erection of Christmas lights. LB and AW will liaise to see what is possible.</p>	LB/AW
<p>Ripon Poetry Festival</p> <p>LB explained that the BID would like to add to the poetry festival to ensure it has maximum reach, continues to be a success and leaves a legacy for Ripon. The BID could add to the festival by getting a high-profile (social media) influencer poet that appeals to the youth market – perhaps slam poetry or fringe poetry – into the schools. The idea would be for them to hold, potentially but not limited to, ‘A’ level English and drama student workshops. The BID would also promote the festival with poetry trails involving BID businesses and via social media.</p> <p>LB explained that she had had a very brief conversation with Simon Edwards from Little Ripon Bookshop. LB would also like to involve the Ripon Youth group and get them to help engage with the schools and youth. LB explained that looking at the previous festivals, it looked like a mix of poetry and literature, JA thought a literature and poetry festival is a good idea and had worked very well in Keswick. The aim would be to get Ripon into the national press and the poetry festival would be a good way to do this.</p> <p>LB asked for a lead director on this, RJ said he had a good working relationship with Simon and Gill Edwards and would be happy to be the director on the project, including holding pop-up events. RC and LB thanked RJ.</p>	
<p>Pre-Raceday Entertainment</p> <p>EF explained that she and LB had had a really good meeting with Jon Mullin at the Racecourse and that Ripon was very lucky to have tens of thousands of visitors coming to the city from elsewhere during Spring and through Autumn. The project is two-fold, firstly to ensure that visitors have a positive experience, with a vibrant and welcoming city centre, and secondly that we find out more about those visitors.</p> <p>The BID want to spend some of the money allocated on research and evaluation. At the moment the Racecourse has data on where the coach company has come from but not necessarily the people on that coach. Place Informatics data will help on this and give us a better picture of where visitors are coming from and how they move around the city on racedays.</p> <p>The BID wants to look at how we can increase dwell time by tailoring weekend breaks for people (when there is increased bed-stock). EF explained that the team are looking to do something prior to the racing, rather than after, animating the streets with street entertainment, music etc and making the city feel very special and vibrant for the visitors and for the regular local visitors. Events would be on the Saturdays during the day (pre racing).</p> <p>RC confirmed that this was already in the budget for 2021/22 and asked if anyone disagreed with the project. RJ stated he thought it was a good idea for daytime only - he only wanted racegoers before the races. EF confirmed this.</p> <p>AW said he was concerned that the coach parties were only coming for the races and he felt they had no interest in having street entertainment prior to the races. AW felt their agenda was only to go to the pub and go on to the races, they were not coming to shop or socialise. He felt that the racegoers’ focus was not on coming to Ripon City itself and that the project would not substantially increase their dwell time. AW thought it would be a better idea to target local residents to come into Ripon on the Saturday afternoon, he felt many locals avoid the city on racedays because of the groups of racegoers. SW agreed with AW’s comments.</p> <p>RC asked if part of the project is evaluation of who and how many people are coming. EF confirmed that evaluating is definitely part of the project.</p> <p>As the Board had identified that the local community sometimes felt alienated on racedays, EF felt that, to support the businesses, might the BID look at trying to evolve the atmosphere in the city centre to encourage the community to feel more positive about the influx of these visitors. EF also stressed that the Racecourse is interested in attracting new audiences and that is where the BID can help.</p> <p>RJ said that he has lots of experience of the racegoers from having a pub on the way to the racecourse and felt that both AW and SW and EF and LB’s points were valid and that the project was going in the right direction.</p>	

<p>RJ felt the project could start to engage with a broader audience. RJ also commented that the entertainment in the city centre should continue after the races have started (e.g. until 3-3:30pm) to encourage locals in. KD made the point that with thousands coming into Ripon for the races, if they see the city looking vibrant they might be enticed back on another day. RC said he had had that experience at Newby where people coming for a TractorFest day (for instance) return on another day because they have enjoyed the experience. SW pointed out that the family racedays were different and the atmosphere was more relaxed. EF also stated that hopefully VisitRipon website would be up and running for as much of the season as possible to push that message out to people that the destination has so much more to offer.</p> <p>RC asked, notwithstanding AW and SW's points and taking them on board, did the Board approve this in principle. The project was approved and RC thanked AW and SW for their inputs and caveats.</p>	
<p>Apprenticeship and Training Hub</p> <p>AD said she and RJ were really excited about the project and hoped that LK would consent to joining them. AD explained that as a business one of the biggest challenges going forward would be being able to keep her doors open because of the gap in the workforce. Post pandemic challenges are that people are reflecting that they don't want to work as long or as hard as previously. Both nationally and globally the biggest challenge will be resourcing the workforce.</p> <p>AD said she and RJ see the Apprenticeship Hub as a stop gap to give the Ripon area youth something to think about other than merely university. The project starts young people from a very young age coming into the workplace and being looked after. AD stressed that the project is not about getting cheap labour, it's about setting up a hub that is a point of contact for young people, with a tool box so that they feel protected and gain the skills that will help them progress as they mature.</p> <p>AD said she sees this as a way of putting Ripon and North Yorkshire on the map with an initiative that is sustainable for the future. This initial funding would be a starting point to offer support, offer the education, find out about funding and find out what the businesses need. AD said the project would work in collaboration with the schools and the youth groups to provide a point of contact that young people can come to get into the workplace at a young age and learn the right skills for employability going forward.</p> <p>AD also stated that the project going forward could be for the over 50s who want to retrain and remain in their communities.</p> <p>LK joined to say that he was a massive fan of the project, particularly as he was a product of the 1980s YTS scheme and he would definitely be joining. RC said he saw this project as an absolutely core BID project, supporting the businesses and employment within the district. RC asked if anyone disagreed and thanked AD and RJ for their idea. The project was approved.</p>	
<p>Heritage Open Days</p> <p>RT gave a presentation on Heritage Open Days - HODS (9-18 September 2022). RT thought that HODS would play to the area's strengths and involve the whole BID area. HODS are a national initiative and have been going since 1994, it is about encouraging as many people as possible to enjoy their local heritage. It is a free program, but not without business opportunity. Ripon has been involved before in a low key way, with the Gazebo on Blossomgate and trips up the Cathedral tower, the cell under the courthouse and the Light Railway and museum on the canal.</p> <p>RT felt that this could all be built on by widening HODS out to the wider BID area which includes Fountains, the Cathedral, Newby, Market Place, the Museums, medieval streets and chapels, three rivers, a canal and a spa, Grantley Hall, Norton Conyers, Markenfield Hall and Littlethorpe Pottery.</p> <p>From a BID point of view it is about trying to get as many people to go to the events that the project would encourage the above places to put on and what the connections are between them. RT suggested that this year the BID tries to boost up this voluntarily run operation and aim for 22 sites/activities in and around the city. Prizes could be offered to visitors who go to all 22 sites.</p> <p>There are opportunities for spend associated with HODS even though the open days must be free. RT said he felt it was a great opportunity for Ripon to be part of the HODS national initiative, if Ripon is seen as a centre of excellence for heritage enjoyment people will come.</p> <p>RT felt that it needs a part-time coordinator to liaise with the sites, some printing is needed to supplement digital promotion and volunteer support is available via the Ripon Civic Society.</p> <p>RC thanked RT and asked for comment.</p> <p>AD supported it, but flagged up the accommodation problem, she suggested that some of the sites mentioned could perhaps open up for camping. KD also agreed about the accommodation but said that there are 150,000 people in the Harrogate district, which is a huge audience of people who may not be coming into Ripon or even know of the heritage assets.</p> <p>KD thought there is a really big local audience who could come in for the day, or several trips, and could be more of a target audience. SW suggested a trail of the sites.</p> <p>RJ asked what support/resource was needed for the project. RC asked if this was for the Communications Executive and LB confirmed that the BID would be giving social media support. RT stressed that HODS definitely work, the trick is getting the benefits of HODS across into the BID businesses. RC confirmed full Board support.</p>	

Items for Information

<p>BID Company Membership Form EF explained that the BID company membership form (which allows levy payers to vote at the AGM) had gone out in the last newsletter and will be in the minutes. LB will be completing these with businesses on her visits. RC confirmed that he timed himself in completing it and it took 30 seconds.</p>	
<p>January Networking Events EF explained that the January networking events had been postponed due to the pandemic and as soon as the BID is comfortable it will confirm new dates.</p>	
<p>Communications Executive Position EF thanked everyone for their help on pushing the job description for the Communications Executive via LinkedIn. We have received one really interesting application ourselves and Helen Thornton from RMT is reaching out to one of their candidates for their recent post. We would welcome more candidates and asked the Board if they knew of anyone else.</p>	
<p>Place Informatics LB talked through the latest figures and data from Place Informatics. On looking at the maps and the “tourist reach” for Harrogate, RC asked if there were any conferences on in Harrogate at that time and LB said she would find out. RC also mentioned that Northallerton had NYCC offices where commuters are coming in which might skew the figures.</p>	LB
<p>Grants for Hospitality Businesses EF explained that we have updated the businesses in the newsletter about the grants and handed over to KD for an update. KD stated that applications for the £3.4m OHLG should be online any minute and a further c£380,000 ARG for those <u>not</u> eligible for the OHLG (but still in hospitality and leisure and suppliers to that sector) should be online on the 24th January. Both grants are only open for 4 weeks for applications. KD stated she was grateful for the support from the BID team to get the message out to BID businesses. KD confirmed that businesses could only apply for one of the two grants.</p>	
<p>Update on Financials SBa talked through the financial summary, budget comparison and forecast. RC asked which parts of the financials would go onto the website. EF explained that the top level figures would be available online (and in the annual report) and if further detail was requested either LB or SBa would be able to talk that through with businesses. RC asked for comments and thanked SBa.</p>	

AOB

<p>RC explained that he had brought AOB in front of discussion on the website as SBI is one of the firms quoting for the website business and this will enable her to leave the meeting prior to the website update. RC said he would like to bring up Board Membership at this point and explained that at present we do not have a representative from one of the supermarkets on the Board and that he was keen to have someone representing that sector. RC said he would have a conversation within the next month with EF and LB to look at sector representation and think about formally appointing a vice-chairman. Suggestions and discussion can then happen at the next Board Meeting. EF said she and LB would be looking at the make up of the businesses and making sure that the Board had the right proportion of sector representation.</p>	RC/EF & LB
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SBI left the meeting.

Items for Information cont.

<p>Website EF confirmed that the BID had bought the domain name visitripon.co.uk. She also confirmed that there are 5 companies who are quoting for the website and those shortlisted will be presenting to the panel in February. The panel is made up of Stuart Gill, Newby Hall and Chairman of the Visit Ripon Group, Alexa Vernon, head of marketing at Fountains, and Rick Jones as the Board representative, plus EF and LB. A decision will hopefully be made at the beginning of March. RC asked for comments, there were no comments.</p>	
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<p>RC apologised for the meeting overrunning, commenting that he felt it was important at this early stage to have full discussions and explanations so that everyone has a complete understanding of the BID’s modus operandum and thanked everyone for attending. The meeting was ended at 1:30pm.</p>	
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