

Minutes of Bute BID Board Meeting

Date: 18th December 2024

Location: Bute Fabrics 5.30pm

Attendees: John Glen (JG)
Sophie Reid (SR)
Duncan Martin (DM)
Erin Murphy (EM)
Ian McCulloch (IM)
Reeni Kennedy-Boyle (RKB)
Kirsty Durrant (KD) online
DL Gordon (DLG)

Apologies for Absence: Alistair Forsyth, David Adams McGilp, Fergus Murray

Matters Discussed

Action

1. Minutes of previous meeting of 13th November: Approved

2. Declarations of Interest: RKP declared that Fyne Futures may be in receipt of funding for their Active Travel work and so will exclude herself from any decision making around the Connected Transport Planning consultation and report.

4. Update from Argyll & Bute Council:

KD reported that Ministers will be visiting the Island some time in Spring to sign off the Rural Growth Deal, which is an ideal opportunity to showcase the island and its businesses.

RKB is still working on the Traffic Regulation Orders Project, which will focus on car parking and pavement parking with a focus group and working towards a consultation.

Connected Transport Planning Report

EM and KD

A report was published with statements of support for the Active Travel Project from BID, but BID have not made any statements for or against this proposal. EM and DLG have requested these statements be removed from the report, but this has not to date been actioned. KD will pick this up with Colin Young. EM suggested that it is now important to capture the opinion of our levy payers before the next phase of this consultation and will put together a simple questionnaire. RKB pointed out that this project is not just about a cycle path but is multimodal and about anyone navigating the town without a car, whether that be pedestrians, people in a wheelchair, people using mobility aids, people with prams and buggies etc.

Project Playpark

This has been put out to tender to three companies, and we now have a good quote, which meets our criteria. The next stage is to send the specifications to Amenity Services at the Council for approval.

Levy Exemption Request For Hardship

DLG reported a levy payer has contacted her to request a reduction or exemption of their levy on the grounds that their business is no longer trading, and they are having difficulty selling. They also have responsibilities as a carer. While the Board sympathised with these circumstances, it was felt that many businesses in the area are in the same position, and it would be unfair to make an exception for one individual business. It was suggested there are other

solutions, such as working with the estate agents on price or presentation to help with a sale or applying to the Council to change the property from Commercial to Residential, if possible.

Digital Notice Board Plan

DLG

SR put forward a proposal to open up the Digital Notice Board for commercial use, while maintaining free use for community events, tourist information etc. DM asked if this would be acceptable under the terms of our current license. DLG will check with the Council before proceeding.

Advertising on Bute Radio

DLG

Dorothy had discussions with Gloria fear of Bute Island Radio about a collaboration with BID that would benefit the radio station and the levy payers. We will invite Gloria to the next Board meeting to put forward some proposals.

Business Support Grants

ALL BOARD

A discussion took place on opening up the Business Improvement Grants over the next few months and whether the grants should be used for only shopfront improvements or with an option for other business improvement purposes. The budget, qualifying criteria, and scoring system will need to be agreed in advance.

RKB pointed out that we can also help our levy payers in other ways by informing them of other sources of funding or savings on energy bills, for example.

Communication With Levy Payers

DLG

DLG requested guidance on having a schedule of communicating with our levy payers. It was suggested a quarterly newsletter should be sent as a minimum with any other important updates in between. DLG proposes to make Friday afternoons available for meetings with levy payers. Discussion also took place on our social media policy, including dealing with potentially defamatory posts.

Board Member Recruitment

JG said nothing new to report. DLG suggested an open advert. RKB suggested creating a list of the skill sets required and the sectors that are not yet represented.

AOCB

IM would like to discuss at a future meeting plans for future events, including next year's Christmas event and discussed the possibility of crowdfunding. EM suggested grants might be a better source of funding for events.

DLG raised the issue of the mess in the bus shelter in Guildford Square.

A discussion took place on the Visitor Levy consultation and EM suggested that's another issue we could consult with our members on to represent the collective view.

The meeting closed at 6.50pm