



Minutes of Board Meeting

25th August 2022 – Wollens Board Room

Meeting commenced 2:10 pm

ITEM	ACTION	BY WHOM/ BY WHEN
<p><u>1</u></p>	<p><u>PRESENT, APOLOGIES, MINUTES, MATTERS ARISING:</u></p> <p>Present: Carolyn Custerson (CC) Chair – ERBID Chief Executive, Martin Brook (MB) Vice Chair, Owner of Pilgrims Rest, Pippa Craddock (PC), Richard Cuming (RC) Bygones, Chris Hart (CH) Chief Executive Wollens, Kevin Mowat (KM), Torbay Council Director of Place, Anthony Payne-Neale (APN) Court Prior Boutique B&B</p> <p>Also present: Alan Denby (AD), Torbay Council</p> <p>Apologies – Tim Godfrey (TG) ERBID Chairman and Partner, Bishop Fleming, Kelly Widley (KW) Food & Drink Hospitality Consultant, Claire Flower (CF) Director Beverley Holidays</p> <p>CC welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p> <p>Approval of 28th July Minutes – approved.</p> <p>Matters Arising - CC ACTION carried over to next meeting – CC to look into AGTO and whether we should join re: groups travel. The Mousetrap is coming to the Princess in 2023, coinciding with the IACF Festival. It has been added to the What’s On calendar. RICC plans – Jason and CC are to meet with Lex Leisure and the Council. CC notes that Lex Leisure have outstanding BID levy on Torbay Leisure and the Velo Park. DCMS Call for Evidence regarding proposed compulsory National Accommodation Registration Scheme. CC and TC/TDA to submit a response by 21st Sept deadline. CC highlighted the need for there to be a fair level playing-field for all accommodation businesses.</p>	<p>CC</p>
<p><u>2</u></p>	<p><u>Finance & Governance</u></p> <p>2022 Management Accounts and Debt Collection Update – CC Copies of the accounts were circulated to the Board. The bank account is looking healthy due to further levy collections. A further £32K has been collected over the last few months with the hope of this rising to £42K by the end</p>	

	<p>of August. We are now at 82.1% collection rate. Sheena sent a note advising that a £19K collection for July was very encouraging. Unanimous decision to continue chasing outstanding debt and to seek additional help as needed.</p> <p>Recent actions have been to take debtors off the ER website and the issuing of a Final ERBID Company Reminder letter. The letter, which was based on the contents of the Wollens 2021 letter, has been successful with many new payments promised and made. CC noted that there have been multiple responses from businesses with issues such as not having received an invoice, and payments being misallocated. She raised to KM that once this collection period is over, there needs to be a review meeting with Ian Westward (Torbay Council</p> <p>Looking to next year's data supply from the Council, CC has asked Ian for this to be in the form of a cross-report which advises us only of changes from last year's data, so we can simply update our database rather than creating from scratch. KM recommended following up with Ian at the appropriate time, most likely October.</p> <p>CC – plans for final debt collection push: Option 1 – Continue with Wollens, who will look to revisit their initial quote of £14K to reflect the reduced number of debtors. CH noted that Debt Collection agencies may not use qualified staff, and that Wollens have done the job for ERBID before. He raised a concern regarding the transfer of data to a third party, and whether the same level of checking would be done as by Wollens. Option 2 – CC obtained a quote from Lackfords, Newton Abbot, for debt collection. They charge a flat rate 15% on any collected funds. On £80K that is £12K so only a little less than Wollens.</p> <p>CC noted that last time the collection was for 5 years' worth of levy, whereas this is for just one year. Any final letter has to be by the end of October, and not before Xmas.</p> <p>APN raised a concern that there may be perceived conflict of interest by using Wollens (as CH is a board member) but the Board agreed that Wollens were best placed to undertake this work and had collected over £90k of debt last year on behalf of the Company.</p> <p>CC updated that the VIC card payment system has been moved from Mastercard to Clover, and thanked APN for that recommendation. This should result in reduced costs.</p> <p>Regarding a point raised at the last meeting, CC has checked with Mo and can confirm that VAT is NOT chargeable on the levy, so our accounting procedures are correct.</p> <p>Company membership / Board Elections – CC The new Board will be made up of seven elected directors, plus four co-opted directors, selected to fill any skill/experience gaps. Then the chairman will be selected by the new Board. A postcard has now been sent to all levy payers, plus two emails, as a reminder that to stand/vote in the forthcoming Election, and attend the AGM, they have to be a Company Member – deadline for membership application is 31st August. CC noted there is still confusion regarding membership of the BID Co., that it is not automatic and must be applied for. Next stage – w/c 5th Sept, Company Members will receive an email invitation to stand for Board Director Election. A 300-word bio and image to be provided by 23rd September.</p>	<p>CC</p> <p>CC/KM</p> <p>CC</p>
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	<p>We are working with Catherine Hayden (Electoral Services Team Leader at Torbay Council) and Civica to undertake a professionally run and independent ballot. The new directors/board will be announced at the November Board Meeting on November 24th. From queries in the room, CC confirmed that newly appointed directors will be required to sign up to a code of conduct to support the BID.</p> <p>AGM CC advised this has been booked for Thursday 29th September at the Hampton by Hilton’s new business suite. An invitation to attend will be sent to Company Members w/c 5th Sept., together with the last AGM’s minutes and the last year’s accounts.</p>	
<p>3</p>	<p><u>Destination Marketing</u></p> <p>Destination Marketing Review Meeting - PC PC provided an update on the meeting which had been attended by PC as Chair of the Destination Marketing Forum, CF as Vice-Chair, Eddie Bent (digital media) Steve Pearce (social media) and CC. Proposed new activity for 2023 that is in addition to activity of 2022 includes: VisitEngland – look to join up with the Brit Pass Campaign Possibly revisit TV advertising for 2023, depending on budget Social Media – invest more in generating UGC and in particular video content Press & PR – appoint a dedicated PR Agency to maximise media with a possible budget of £30K GWR Station Posters – look to expand with a focus on Exeter Produce a Things to Do Directory – these are the most popular pages on the website Brown Tourist Sign Review (Torbay Council to fund through the Resort Fund? ACTION KM will consider how funds could be reserved.) Possibly stage an ERBID Update/Conference rather than an ERBID Exhibition as prev. years. CC suggested an Attractions Showcase with a targeted fam visit. RC supported the idea and will put it on the ERA agenda.</p> <p>The proposed marketing activity for 2023 was presented to the Board. If agreed, the next step would be to cost it out.</p> <p>International Marketing Activity - CC International visitor numbers were devastated by Covid, as reflected in VisitBritain’s findings. This year has seen Dutch and German visitors travelling by car, there have been a few overseas coaches, and international students have returned, although not in the usual numbers.</p> <p>The area’s UNESCO status is a USP – how can we use this more? There isn’t an actual destination, such as a walk to promote. CH had observed in Scotland recently that most visitors to a UNESCO site there were from Northern Europe. APN noted that his business has seen visitors from Germany, Holland and USA. RC noted they have had Slovenian visitors, an area not much seen before. Comments in the room that there is a need to concentrate on the European market for 2023-24.</p>	<p>KM</p>

	<p>Cruise Torquay Gradual progress is being made with work still to do around producing a new dedicated Cruise Torquay brochure and web promotion, but there is now a momentum and budget allocated to try and be more proactive.</p> <p>AD queried if there is enough of a market to draw in cruise ships, with enough reason to come compared with, for example, Plymouth and Falmouth. CC advised we are a very suitable destination for the smaller cruise ships, emphasising the importance of attracting the right fit of operators and that relationship building is required. ACTION - RC will look into getting an introduction at Celebrity Cruises.</p> <p>CC observed that Agatha Christie is our main USP for cruise ships. CH noted that many passengers go on organised trips and that we have masses of venues within a few hours' travel and that the others who stay here have a lot of local places as well.</p> <p>VisitEngland Their emphasis now is on the Brit Pass train travel, which is the only campaign they are investing in for 2022/3. There has been a 58% increase in visits by train in the last 12 months across the UK.</p> <p>National Marketing Activity – PC In addition to the new activity listed above: We are planning to do large national posters again for next year, noting that people are travelling less far and leaving it later to book. Website – the What's On pages are the most visited and further investment is to be made to improve the search functionality. We are continuing with Google PPC (Pay-per-Click Ads). Continuing with digital campaigns, keeping a reserve budget for reactive campaigning. Proposed increase in the amount spent on social media. Proposed increase in user-generated media, and build a campaign around it. CloudRiff is still images only whereas video content gets more clicks, so Eddie and Steve are looking into how people can share their videos. Accommodation Directory and Food & Drink Directory – we have enough copies left that we don't need to reprint yet, and they can be downloaded online. More copies are being downloaded compared to requests by post. Business Tourism – continue partnership with MeetDevon and continue a relationship with the RICC. Regional – targeted seasonal campaigns – we won't re-run the Easter radio campaign as it is felt that funds can be better spent elsewhere. There is potential for working with GWR, possibly a deal for coverage in key stations, maybe for event promotion. APN supported doing more with train operators, advising his business has had more visitors by train this year than previously. Comments in room that train travel is ideal for pre and empty nesters looking to travel in the shoulder seasons, with good railcard offers making train travel cheaper than driving. Board request for CC to meet with GWR to explore future partnership promotions. We have taken a full-page ad in the South Devon Visitor Guide. We have had a meeting with Torbay Weekly to produce an Autumn/Winter Visitor Guide. CC noted that the Council-owned A1 poster boards are looking tired and therefore getting harder to sell the advertising space. KM advised that the Council are unlikely to have funds for this, ACTION CC to get a quote for repair with a view to ERBID funding this work. RC noted there should be a rolling programme of improvements. Events – ERBID should have more influence over the strategy for the Airshow.</p>	<p>CC</p> <p>RC</p> <p>CC</p>
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	<p>Blue Flag Awards – the online 2022 Visitor Survey will ask questions to find out if visitors are aware of the Blue Flag and if it influences their decision to come here.</p> <p>The B2B website is being refreshed to bring it in line with the B2C site.</p> <p>Photography – a new hero image is needed but lack of grass due to recent prolonged hot weather has delayed plans.</p> <p>We receive income from lamppost banners.</p> <p>It is proposed that we continue with: RH Advertising as our dedicated Multi Media Marketing Agency Market/Business Research with South West Research Company Thistle Data for loading events to website, as this is a less time-heavy option. Supporting and aligning to the strategic objectives of the now adopted DMP</p> <p>The Board agreed for CC to cost the 2023 Marketing Plan – ACTION CC.</p> <p>Discussion in room regarding Selfie Sites, with an agreement that they are a good idea. CC agreed the idea needs to be revisited and potential sites identified, bearing in mind visitor safety. ACTION- KM/CC will look at organising this with Head of Planning. Suggestions from the room that the start of the pier and the new Agatha Christie statue are good sites. There could be multiple sites, and a trail created. CC emphasised any site needs to have the official ER branding.</p>	<p>CC</p> <p>CC</p> <p>KM/CC</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Events Update - CC</p> <p>International Agatha Christie Festival We have produced a new Agatha Christie Mile Map/Walking Trail Leaflet and have paid for lamppost banners along the seafront at Torre Abbey Sands. Over £20k of ticket sales have been achieved for the 2022 Programme.</p> <p>England’s Seafood FEAST Plans are progressing but note that August is a difficult time of year to get details from busy businesses about events in October. A four-page supplement in the Torbay Weekly is being prepared. Videos have been made of local chefs, to be put out on social media channels.</p> <p>English Riviera Walking Festival Bookings are coming in and it is looking encouraging for this year with the Top 10 walks all 50% full or more. The event could be held in both Spring and Autumn next year.</p> <p>Bay of Lights - MB MB advised he’s talked with Brixham Chamber of Commerce to discuss lights in Brixham harbour. We would like to see Bay of Lights for 6 weeks over Christmas as part of the Bay of Lights scheme. Brixham have semi-costed a lighting system - £30K for pillars and lighting and £8K for a ‘dancing dolphins’ feature. MB left it with Brixham and advised we are happy to support with match funding to a maximum of £5k. He suggested some funding could come from ERBID and some from the Council. KM indicated that the Council have nominally set aside £60K for year-round lighting in Brixham but there is potentially an issue at the harbour with interference to navigation. CC suggested ERBID could support with £5K each for Brixham and Paignton, both on a match-funding basis.</p>	<p>KM</p>

	<p>KM ACTION – the council owns the infrastructure; KM will raise with Neil Coish from SwissCo there are too many different elements involved. CC emphasised to KM that we want to promote the Harbour of Lights idea, as it was seen to transform areas like Newlyn and Mousehole, in terms of visitor numbers. CC and KM to update at the next Board Meeting.</p> <p>The Great Big Paddle Parade CC reported she had met with Sean from WeSUP, the organiser of the event. All posters now have ER branding and a £3k sponsorship has been reconfirmed.</p> <p>2023 Food Festival – MB We submitted a detailed, costed, tender proposal to the Council, via their online Procurement portal, for ERBID to hold a Food Festival at Easter 2023. This was to be co-funded with the Council. There had been initial encouragement from the Council but we were advised that the tender had been unsuccessful as it was non-compliant. MB had a meeting with the Council to get the details. CC recommended to the Board that we don't re-submit, as the challenges of procurement make our plans unworkable. Thanks were given to MB for all the hard work he put in to create the tender. ACTION – MB to share the tender with the Board by email.</p> <p>Discussion in room regarding the obstacles that procurement puts on ERBID's aims to deliver its Business Plan to support and deliver events that help increase visitor numbers in the shoulder season. CC and MB recommended to the Board that there is an Events Partnership Review Meeting and we might need to reevaluate the budget for event partnership and how we work together. KM recommended that the meeting should involve the Council, who he advises are fully behind shared funding. ACTION – KM to organise a meeting.</p>	<p>KM/CC</p> <p>MB</p> <p>KM</p>
	<p><u>Key Communications</u></p> <p>Alan Denby, Torbay Council was invited to share an update on all of the key capital projects including: Harbour View – after the collapse of Midas, Morgan Sindall have been appointed to undertake a review of the work now needed to complete the project with an Autumn 2023 completion being aimed for. CH advised that there were ongoing issues for visitors regarding parking access and confusing signage, AD advised he will look into this. The Pavilion – Morgan Sindall appointed to carry out repair work. Costs have risen since first proposed. Decisions still to be made about the end use. The old Debenhams site – proposals are in for planning with hopes of work starting on site next year. Paignton – High St Fund – trail on pedestrianisation of Torbay Rd starts mid Sept. Crossways – demolition is under way in September. AD notes that these projects are complex and there is a lot of regeneration in the area. Costs keep increasing which makes projects more protracted. The Council are trying to work closely with community representatives. Recommends interested parties visit the Council website for updates and there is a new community newsletter to subscribe to.</p>	

	<p>APN raised a concern about empty, derelict buildings, asking what is the Council's approach? KM advised this is an ongoing issue that is being worked on in terms of discussions with owners, and working with limited resources.</p>	
	<p><u>AOB</u></p> <p>Paignton Sea Defence and Public Realm Project Board Master Plan</p> <p>KM and Jo Penhaligon, Torbay Council, introduced Kirsty Barker from LDA Design in Exeter, who presented the Paignton Sea Defence plan, via Zoom.</p> <p>The plan is now in Phase 3 with the final design in consultation open 19th Aug - 11th Sept 2022. The plan is 'to protect and enhance the precious open spaces along the seafront'. After consultation, the Master Plan will be submitted to cabinet for approval in October. It will then move to a more detailed design stage ahead of going for planning permission. The aim is to start construction by the end of 2023.</p> <p>CC queried how plans for the seafront might affect plans for large events such as the Airshow. Kirsty advised these should be able to continue in the same way, and in fact in some instances could be improved, with greater flexibility for closing/opening sections. However, access to the greens would need to be looked at in terms of access for events.</p>	

Meeting closed at 5:15 pm

Minutes taken by Alison Bayliss, Communications Executive for the ERBID Company