



Sutton Coldfield BID Board Meeting
Tuesday 4th October 2022, 4.30pm

Gracechurch Shopping Centre Management Office

MINUTES

1. Attendees

(alphabetical order)

- Alison Clack, Cerda Planning
- Angela Henderson, BID Chair, Gracechurch Shopping Centre
- Cllr David Barrie, City Councillor
- Cllr Jackie Cummins, Town Councillor
- Cllr Mark Roberts, Town Councillor
- Cllr Rob Pocock, City Councillor
- Michelle Baker, BID Manager
- Stephen Nixon, Enoch Evans LLP

2. Apologies

- David Hemming, Burley Browne
- Mark Harris, Mark Harris Accountants
- Mark Wilkinson, Coburg Banks
- Stephen Roberts, Robson Lister

3. Chair's Announcements

Angela Henderson thanked all BID Board Members for attending and said that she would be formally stepping down as BID Chair on 1st November 2022 after 3 years in the role which included the Covid pandemic, rebalot and change in BID management.

The BID Board Nominations took place.

- Nominations for new BID Chair Alison Clack. Proposed Cllr David Barrie. Seconded Jackie Cummins. Unanimous vote in favour.
- Nominations for new BID Vice Chair David Hemming (in his absence). Proposed Steven Nixon. Seconded Mark Roberts. Unanimous vote in favour.

4. Update from BID Manager

- I. New BID Executive Committee - Michelle Baker said that it would be useful for there to be a BID Executive committee for the BID Manager to contact in-between BID Board meetings to discuss ideas and provide updates. This would be a Committee without voting rights and the Committee would not be making decisions as all decisions must be brought to the Board. An email had already been circulated to ascertain which Board Members would be interested in being part of the BID Executive Committee. It was agreed as new BID Chair Alison Clack, Vice Chair David Hemming, current BID Chair Angela Henderson plus Mark Harris and Mark Wilkinson.
- II. Farmers & Craft Market The Board discussed the first BID Farmers & Craft Market that took place on the last Sunday in September with 38 traders, a Gordon Ramsey lookalike, live music and excellent footfall. Various Members of the BID Board had attended to show support on the day. Coffee Number 1 and The Works had both contacted the BID to report higher levels of footfall due to the market.
- III. Proposal for new BID Assistant – Michelle Baker explained that when she took on the role of BID Manager the two consultants undertaking marketing & events and social media had been informed their services were no longer required and the services were brought in-house and managed by the BID Manager. The third consultant that assisted with events had their hours reduced until the end of the year. An events graduate Jade Hill had submitted her CV and asked whether there were any opportunities to assist the BID. Michelle Baker informed the Board that as the Farmers and Craft Market was managed in-house we did require assistance on market days and also with the Christmas events. The BID Board agreed by unanimous vote for temporary assistance until 31st December 2022.
- IV. Proposal for new BID website

The BID Board agreed for BID Manager Michelle Baker to prepare a tender brief to invite quotes for a new BID website. Quotes to be brought back to the Board next month for final decision.
- V. Update on BID NotWorking Event - two new prospective Board Members will be in attendance at the BID NotWorking Event on Friday 7th October.
- VI. BID Christmas Events - The Board discussed two proposals 1) fund a Christmas lights switch on event or 2) fund 6 weekends of roaming Christmas

entertainment such as a giant snow globe, The Grinch and Father Christmas. The BID Board agreed that local businesses needed support with driving footfall into the town centre and that the budget would be better spent by funding multiple weekends of entertainment over the Christmas period rather than invest in one evening event.

VII. Christmas Tree Proposal – the BID Board agreed it would be great to have a Christmas tree at either end of The Parade to be a focal point in the town. Michelle Baker to look into costs and logistics.

VIII. Sponsorship of Christmas Lights

Cllr Mark Roberts said he did not think there was a conflict of interest and thought that the Town Councillors should be permitted to stay in the room to discuss this item and vote on the matter. Michelle Baker said as Sutton Town Council had originally requested the £25,000 contribution there was a conflict of interest as Councillors for the Town Council would be voting on the matter which were funds requested by their Council. Michelle Baker invited all Councillors to stay for the opening discussions.

Angela Henderson said that following the August BID Board meeting, Michelle Baker had notified Jan Rowley at Sutton Town Council of the BID Board's decision not to fund the town's Christmas lights this year. Olive O'Sullivan CEO at Sutton Town Council had then called and emailed Angela Henderson to say that the BID Board may not be familiar with the background and that the BID had funded the Christmas lights in previous years. Also that whilst Sutton Town Council had placed the order for the brand new lights directly with Birmingham City Council, this was done with goodwill with the expectation that the BID would continue the funding arrangement as it had in previous years. Angela Henderson read out all email and written correspondence from Olive O'Sullivan to present the salient points to the BID Board for consideration so that all BID Board members knew all of the background and points put forward by the Town Council. Olive O'Sullivan had requested that the BID Board reconsider the decision made at the August BID Board meeting as without the BID funding there would not be any Christmas lights in the town centre.

Cllr Mark Roberts said that Sutton Town Council were not asking for the funding, the funding was a request from Birmingham City Council as they are the supplier. BID Board Members said that Sutton Town Council were the Client as they had placed the order without any prior approval or written consent from the BID. The contract is therefore between Sutton Town Council and Birmingham City Council.

Michelle Baker had been in touch with an Officer at Birmingham City Council and presented the Board with a 2 page Paper from them which showed the design of the new Christmas lights, the roads the lights would be installed and the total 5-year costs. The new lighting scheme did not areas within the BID boundary including Brassington Avenue, Queen Street, Duke Street, Midlands Drive, Newhall Retail Park and Gracechurch Shopping Centre, all areas that include levy paying BID members. This means BID Members paying BID levy would not benefit directly from the new lighting scheme.

The table of costs from Birmingham City Council showed the charge for the new Christmas lights and funding required from the BID as follows:

- Year 1 £13,076 scheme delivery charge and £38,850 new lights
- Year 2 £19,366 scheme delivery charge
- Year 3 £21,090 scheme delivery charge
- Year 4 £25,639 scheme delivery charge
- Year 5 £27,504 scheme delivery charge

The BID Board said the figures varied considerably to the £25,000 annual contribution requested from the Town Council and that there was a distinct lack of transparency and consistency.

The BID Board Members stated that this whole process had not been handled properly and that too many assumptions had been made.

All Councillors left the room so that the vote could take place.

Remaining BID Board Members Angela Henderson, Alison Clack, Steven Nixon summarised the current position and said it was not professional for an external organisation (Sutton Town Council) to ask the BID Board to reverse the unanimous decision that had previously been made in August 2022 where all BID Board Members voted not to fund the Christmas lights this year.

Remaining BID Board Members agreed that some confusion may have arisen from the Interim BID Manager who had not been discussing the Christmas lights with the BID Board but Sutton Town Council said he had been discussing with them. Sutton Town Council had been asked for copies of reports prepared by Interim BID Manager or minutes of the meetings where the Interim BID Manager had given the Town Council the go ahead to procure on the BID's behalf but the Town Council said there was no audit trail of these discussions.

Steven Nixon proposed that the BID Board vote against reversing the August BID Board decision and confirmed that the BID should not be funding the town's

Christmas lights. All voted and agreed not to reverse the decision made in August 2022.