

## Board Meeting

13<sup>th</sup> July, 10am, Zoom

In Attendance	Apologies
Richard Cumming (RC) Gill Neill (GN) Tina Mainland (TM) Stuart Huyton (SH) Katherine Mackintosh (KM) Stephen Young (SY) Tracy Sellar (TS) John Divers (JD) Greg Robertson (GR) Ian Urquhart (IU)	Mark Angus (MA) Abigail Dempster (AB) Alistair Simpson (AS) David Patterson (DP)

Discussion: Change in Personnel	
<p>GN updated the Board on the recruitment process for the new BID manager. Technically Gill's last day will be Friday 7<sup>th</sup> August, however her last day in the office will be Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> August.</p> <p>7 applications were received and GN and RC scored them independently using the scoring matrix based on the job application. 5 applicants have been invited to interview.</p> <p>The interviews are taking place on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> July. The panel for interviewing is Gill Neill, Richard Cumming, Katherine MacKintosh and Stuart Huyton. After the interviews have taken place the new manager will be appointed that day.</p> <p>All interviewees have been asked to prepare a 5 minute presentation to show what they know about Elgin.</p> <p>GN told the Board that in preparation for the new manager, project briefs and guidelines have been created and has offered support until the new manager has settled in.</p>	
Conclusions	
Interviews will be taking place on the 15 <sup>th</sup> July and the new manager will be appointed that day.	
Action Points	Person Responsible

Discussion: Changes in City
<p>Gill highlighted that while Lockdown was a difficult position to be in, working through the Governments recovery plan, will in many ways be more difficult. Social distancing requirements are causing concerns and businesses are working hard to follow the guidelines. There was a discussion in the Moray Business Resilience Forum about this and Jim Grant (Moray Council) stated that the council will not be carrying out enforcement action regarding how someone has interpreted the guidelines unless they are very obviously not following the recommendations.</p> <p>Unfortunately some business owners have already decided that they will not be opening back up, the vacant shop rate was at 6.84% in February and is currently sitting at 8.4%. Undoubtedly more businesses will not be able to make it through the pressures and changes they have faced. However, Gill wanted to emphasise that Elgin went in to this situation in a stronger position than most towns in the UK. And that strength will hopefully help to aid the recovery.</p>

We have been giving people as much support as we can. GN has personally helped to get more than £300K for businesses through the small grant scheme ensuring that money has been retained in the local economy

Despite the concerns over Covid, people have been getting in touch about properties in Elgin and Business Gateway have had a strong number of people looking at starting their own businesses. We will continue to update businesses and continue where we can provide useful resources for them.

#### Conclusions

Unfortunately we have lost some businesses, but we went in to this in a stronger position than most towns in the UK as our stats were stronger than average and this should give us a stronger starting position as we move forward.

We will continue to update businesses and continue where we can to provide useful resources for them.

Action Points	Person Responsible

#### Discussion: Engagement with Moray Council

GN told the Board that we have been working with the Transportation Department around surveying the businesses to give them a chance to say what they did and did not want and need in terms of road closure and using outside space. The council is trying to support businesses to use the outside space wherever possible, particularly the cafes and restaurants to allow them to spread customers out.

Every business has had a chance to input their views via the survey on several occasions, the Council used the information gathered to help them devise the road closure plan.

In an attempt to make the process as simple as possible, businesses hoping to use outside space must apply by completing a simple form which we have distributed to the BID members. If a business's wants to allow alcohol outside their premises they will need to apply for an occasional license.

#### Conclusions

We have been working with the Transportation Department to find out what the businesses need/want in terms of outside space and gain their views on road closures. The information gathered helped the Council form their plans.

Action Points	Person Responsible

#### Discussion: Car Parking

When the announcement was made that the car parking charges will be returned from 1<sup>st</sup> August this caused outrage as some businesses haven't even come out of lockdown yet and this barrier has been placed which would stop people coming to the town centre.

We sent an open letter to all Councillors and senior officials and Moray Chamber send a joint letter with ourselves, Federation of Small Businesses and Visit Moray Speyside opposing the re-introduction of the parking charges. The BID businesses also put forward their views and opinions on the situation.

GN spoke to Graham Leadbitter and explained we are trying to make people physically and equally importantly emotionally safe when coming in to the town centre but asking people to use parking meters which would have been used by hundreds of people did not provide that safety and was detrimental to the situation. Her impression was that no one had considered the safety implications before the decision was made.

The parking charges are now being reviewed at a Moray Council sounding board meeting. In our open letter to the Councillors we asked for the free parking period to be extended to January which would allow businesses to adapt and get through what will be a quite difficult Christmas season.

GN said that her feeling is they will hopefully be extended to October. JD replied saying in his discussions with Graham Leadbitter this is what they will be discussing at their next meeting.

If they do extend to October, GN said there is a place for Elgin BID in partnership with the other agencies to try and get it extended further.

GN asked for the Board's thoughts, all agreed this was the best decision.

#### Conclusions

After the announcement of the parking charges being re-introduced from 1<sup>st</sup> August we wrote an open letter to the Councillors and Senior officials in the Council asking them to review this decision and extend the free parking period to January. Moray Chamber of Commerce also jointly wrote a letter to the Council with ourselves, Federation of Small Businesses and Visit Moray Speyside.

The parking charge decision will be reviewed, if after the review they extend to October we should campaign for them to be extended to January to help businesses through the Christmas period.

#### Action Points

- If after the Council's meeting the parking is extended to October, we will then arrange for another letter to be sent from ourselves and the agencies asking for it to be extended to January

#### Person Responsible

GN/New manager

#### Discussion: AGM & Awards

The AGM & Awards normally take place in October, our feeling is that it will not be able to take place as normal. The Awards can go ahead with Tina and the new manager going to the winning businesses to present their awards and get a short video clip. The AGM can take place over Zoom with the video clips being played throughout.

GN asked the Board if they agreed with that decision- all agreed.

#### Conclusions

The awards process will go ahead as normal and Tina and the new manager will go to the winning businesses to present the awards and get a short video clip. The clips will then be shown throughout the AGM which will be held via Zoom.

#### Action Points

#### Person Responsible

#### Discussion: Christmas 2020

In previous Board email correspondence GN asked the Board their thoughts on Christmas Light Switch On for 2020.

Plan A was to wait until September to make a call on the normal event

Plan B was to not have the normal event but instead have a series of mini-events as a 'Christmas Festival' such as a Christmas Treasure Hunt, choirs or carols over a couple of weekends. This would reduce the amount of people in the City Centre at once.

In the email correspondence GR suggested that we asked the businesses for their input. In the Board meeting GN asked GR to explain his thoughts regards consulting the members. GR explained that he thought we should explain the plan and ask for comments, that would help the businesses feel they have been listened to and give a greater sense of inclusion.

The Board agreed this would be the best idea as the businesses would feel engaged. If Plan B is the chosen plan, ideas will be pulled together and sent to the businesses for their ideas and thoughts as well as any other suggestions they might have.

#### Conclusions

We will wait until September to make a decision on the Christmas Light Switch On. If Plan B is chosen, the event ideas will be sent to the BID members to ask for their thoughts, ideas and any suggestions.

Action Points	Person Responsible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If Plan B is chosen send event ideas to members</li> </ul>	TM

### Discussion: AOCB

Negative Issues

RC told the Board that there is a group on Facebook that is severely against the road closures put in place by the Council and Elgin BID are being negatively commented on as well. JD suggested that GN meet with the transport department to arrange that we see any PR that mentions BID before it is sent out so we can comment on it. RC suggested to put a positive spin on it promoting the new disabled parking spaces and a shop local positive message.

SH asked if the Council will be reviewing the road closures, GN replied saying that in the webinar we hosted with the Moray Council, Nicola Moss said that they will be reviewing regularly. GN will get clarification from Nicola Moss how it will be getting reviewed.

### Conclusions

Following the negative comments on social media about BID being involved with the road closures we will contact Nicola Moss to ask for any PR that mentions BID is sent to ourselves for review before being released. We will also put out positive shop local messages on the BID social media.

Action Points	Person Responsible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Put out positive shop local messages</li> </ul>	TM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact Transport Department to ask for all PR mentioning BID to be sent to us before release</li> </ul>	GN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact Nicola Moss for clarification on road closure review process</li> </ul>	GN

**Next meeting date- TBC**

### **Action Point Summary 13<sup>th</sup> July 2020**

Action Points 13 <sup>th</sup> July 2020		Update
<b>Car Parking</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If after the Council's meeting the parking is extended to October, we will then arrange for another letter to be sent from ourselves and the agencies asking for it to be extended to January</li> </ul>	GN/new manager	
<b>Christmas 2020</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If Plan B is chosen send event ideas to members</li> </ul>	TM	
<b>AOCB</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Put out positive shop local messages</li> </ul>	TM	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact Transport Department to ask for all PR mentioning BID to be sent to us before release</li> <li>• Contact Nicola Moss for clarification on road closure review process</li> </ul>	<p>GN</p> <p>GN</p>	
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<b>Action Points 17<sup>th</sup> February 2020</b>		<b>Update</b>
<p>Board Participation and Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite businesses to get involved in next bulletin</li> </ul>	<p>GN/TM</p>	