



Minutes of a meeting of the Board of Watford BID Ltd ('The Company') held at Pizza Express, Lower High Street, 10.30am on 1st February 2023.

Present:

Maria Manion	Watford BID Ltd
Daniel Berko	Aspect Property Group
Kathryn Robson	Watford Borough Council
Jill Farnsworth	Watford BID Ltd
Simon Plumb	Atria
Kwame Tefe	Moon Under Water
Donna Nolan	Watford Borough Council
Gary Foley	Everyone Active

In Attendance:

Glen Hempenstall	Watford BID Ltd
Kara Mesiano	Watford BID Ltd
David Vickery	Pryzm
Peter Taylor	Elected Mayor of Watford
Craig Butler	Herts Police
Cherie Norris	Watford Borough Council
Saffron Johnson	Watford Chamber of Commerce
Craig Hawkes	Glow in One

Kwame Tefe (Chair) welcomed everyone to the board meeting of the company.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Donna Lawrie, Chris Luff and Mark Ryan.

2. Minutes of Previous Board Meetings

The minutes of the Board Meeting held on 19th October 22 were approved.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Statutory and Corporate Affairs

a) Company Membership

No applications received.

b) Directorate

i) Resignations and Appointments

No resignations or appointments have been received.

ii) Directors interests - To note any interests/conflicts of interest declared

No interests or conflicts of interest declared.

iii) Other – Business Away Day Planning

Scheduled for Wednesday 23rd February 2023, Leonardo Hotel, Clarendon Road.

Peter Taylor requested to understand why he'd not been invited to the away day, as previous board away days have always included observers. As the Elected Mayor and Watford Police shall have standing invitations to attend Board meetings as observers and advisors but shall have no voting rights, it was agreed Peter Taylor and all observers should be invited to the away day, as it would be difficult to offer advise without observing the away day.

Action:

Kara Mesiano to extend invite to all observers to the BID business away day planning event on.

Donna Nolan advised she is unable to attend.

5. Trading and Operations

a) Chief Executive's report

The Chief Executive's report had been circulated to the Board prior to the meeting. The contents were noted and discussed. The following points were highlighted:

Supporting New Business and Atria - Simon Plumb explained the proposal and process in more detail to the board members. Whilst the board members were supportive of the proposal in principle, several concerns were raised about the risk to Watford BID and whether there should be an overarching legal agreement in place to mitigation risk.

Action:

Provide a copy of Savills current Purchase Order terms and conditions and estimated volume passing through to PR agency to Maria Manion – Simon Plumb

Complete a summary and risk analysis for board members to consider further at the business planning day on 23rd February 23 – Maria Manion

Purple Flag – David Vickery confirmed that Pryzm is still using the medical support team on a regular basis. Kathryn Robson advised that Watford Borough Council is currently working on the action plan to include Against Violence Against Women and Girls within The Community Safety Partnership.

Action:

Watford Borough Council to bring the action plan to the next board meeting to share with the board members – Donna Nolan and Kathryn Robson.

Watford Borough Council - Strategies and consultations – Maria Manion advised the board members the consultation documents are currently open for New Parking controls (of interest is the section covering the High Street).

Action:

Response to be submitted on behalf of Watford BID - Maria Manion

b) Finance report

The finance report had been circulated to the Board prior to the meeting. The contents were noted and discussed. The following points were highlighted:

Levy invoices, payments & collection - Maria Manion confirmed she is still waiting to receive the list of businesses with outstanding levy bills and advised that the NNDR team. Donna Nolan raised that it's key for Maria Manion to keep them updated when responses are not received from Watford Borough Council so that she or Kathryn Robson can chase.

Gary Foley enquired how many businesses have not paid they levy to date. Maria Manion was unable to provide an update as she has not received the updated list from the NNDR team.

Actions:

Chase NNDR Team on the list of outstanding levy bills – Maria Manion

Provide number of outstanding bills to Gary Foley – Maria Manion

Provide board members with agreed NNDR project plan and timeline of collection calls – Maria Manion

2023/24 Levy and beyond – Kathryn Robson highlighted, to protect the BID's reputation, delivering the floral displays and Christmas Light switch on is paramount. Maria Manion agreed and shared concerns that the BID would not be successful in the next ballot without those projects, but the difficulty faced is reducing spend also reduces overall impact. Jill Farnworth added, costs have already risen resulting in a reduction of flowers and displays.

Peter Taylor expressed that cost reductions need to be considered soon rather than later and proposed this be completed at the business away day and a further board meeting, ahead of the scheduled meeting in April be circulated with all board members attending.

Actions:

Discuss future approach, cost cutting and structure with Kwame Tefe (Chair and Daniel Berko (Vice Chair) – Maria Manion

To consult Watford Borough Council's HR department – Maria Manion

Schedule a further board meeting with all board members present – Kara Mesiano

Prepare papers and include full understanding of timelines in advance of the business away day and additional board meeting – Maria Manion

7. Watford BID rebranding and new website

Project update paper had been circulated to the Board prior to the meeting. The contents were noted and discussed. The following points were highlighted:

It was agreed in principle for Watford BID to proceed with the rebranding of Watford BID to Watford Town Centre BID by all present board members.

Saffron Johnson queried what would become of Visit Watford. Glen Hempenstall advised that the Visit Watford consumer brand would be discontinued.

Actions:

Watford BID and Watford Borough Council to arrange a meeting to discuss rebranding and new website collaboration – Glen Hempenstall and Kathryn Robson

Collaboration ideas to be discussed at the business away day on 23rd February 23 – All present board members

8. Project updates - Theme 1 (Enhancing the look and feel of the town) and Theme 2 (Promotion, marketing and events) - paper had been circulated to the Board prior to the meeting.

Due to time constraints not all contents were noted or discussed. The following points in respect of the Christmas Lights were highlighted:

Herts County Council has requested Watford BID complete part 2 of the licence, which would be an additional cost of £5,000 to the Christmas Lights budget. Whilst we have been asked to complete this previously, we have not done so and there is a risk we'll not be able to use the Christmas Lights or our Public Liability Insurance will be invalid.

Watford BID currently does not have an energy agreement in place for the Christmas Lights, so to commit to additional switch on requests throughout the year, would only be possible if we apply for an agreement each time, which would be time consuming. Peter Taylor has requested a policy to be agreed and put in place, as he is receiving a lot of requests to put the lights on, in support of charities or local events.

Saffron Johnson suggested that additional switch on requests could be sponsored by the requestee to mitigate the additional costs.

Jill Farnsworth confirmed that the lights would be switched on for the Kings Coronation, the board members support this decision.

Actions:

To discuss at next Vibrant Town meeting to gauge the other towns position with regards to licence 2 and if appropriate collectively push back to Herts County Council – Jill Farnsworth

To produce a blanket policy in respect of additional light switch on requests, other than Christmas – Jill Farnsworth

9. Grant Applications to be considered

Krants Bakery – New signage and awning.

Grant application was approved by all present board members.

Shopmobility – CCTV.

Grant was approved by all present board members.

Action:

Gain clarification as to who will be reviewing the CCTV and if they will be linked to the Town Centre CCTV control room – Maria Manion

10. Town centre Ranger - paper had been circulated to the Board prior to the meeting. The contents were noted and discussed.

11. Sustainability Update - paper had been circulated to the Board prior to the meeting. The contents were noted and discussed.

12. Visit Watford update Town centre performance: Vacancies and footfall data - paper had been circulated to the Board prior to the meeting. The contents were noted and discussed.

13. Visit Watford Update

Maria Manion provided a verbal to the board members. Peter Taylor expressed concern that no board members had agreed the discontinuation of Visit Watford. Maria Manion advised that she was unsure of where Visit Watford sat formally within the company, as it does not have a board. Peter Taylor suggested that as Watford BID had been funding the brand, it would suggest it sat under Watford BID. As a result of discussions, the board members agreed by majority that the Visit Watford brand be dissolved and recorded within the minutes.

14. Dates for diary:

- Directors Away Day – 23 February, Leonardo Hotel, Clarendon Road
- B2B – Business wellbeing conversation – 22 February, Jamacia Blue, Atria (1st floor)
- BID Business Social Event – 28 March, Boom Battle Bar

Future board meeting dates:

- 14th March 23
- 19th April 23
- 12th July 23
- 4th October 23
- 10th January 24

15. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

