

## Bridgend Steering Group Meeting

Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2015, 5:15 pm – 6:15 pm

Wilkinson, Nolton Street

### Attendees

Rotimi Adegoke, Bridgend Osteopath (chair) (RA)  
Beth Daniel, Beth Daniel Hair Design (BD)  
Steve Easterbrook, Fizzy Foam (SE)  
Anne Easterbrook, Fizzy Foam (AE)  
Steve Watkins, Watkins Menswear (SW)  
Steve Bletsoe, Ella Riley (SB)  
Freya Sykes-Bletsoe, Ella Riley (FSB)  
Steffan Roberts, Wilkinsons (SR)  
Cllr Bob Burns, Bridgend Town Council (BB)  
Tom Evans, *The means* (TE)  
Laura Smith, *The means* (LS)

### Apologies

Rachel Bell, The Rhiw Shopping Centre (RB)  
Natalie Gordon, Bridgend Cycles (NG)  
Megan Bailey, Top Spot (MB)  
Rhiannon Kingsley, Bridgend County Borough Council (RK)  
Cllr Charles Smith, Bridgend County Borough Council (CS)

Item	Detail	Action
1.0	<b>Welcome and Introductions</b> RA opened the meeting and welcomed all attendees	
2.0	<b>Apologies for Absences</b> Apologies were given as above	
3.0	<b>Minutes of the Last Meeting</b> The group approved the minutes of the last meeting as an accurate record of the evening's discussions	
5.0	<b>Town Centre updates: What's new?</b>  TE informed the group that – in her absence – RK had provided him with details of town centre updates (as follows): <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demolition of the Rhiw car park is scheduled for July – further details will be communicated at the next traders' meeting</li><li>• An update on Vibrant and Viable Places will be given at the next traders' meeting</li></ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BCBC have started assessing town centre performance based on sales – current figures show an 8% increase on last year</li> <li>• Footfall in the town centre is down 2% since this time last year</li> <li>• The Look Up project has been launched in the town with great success</li> <li>• Civil Parking Enforcement will be issuing tickets for town centre area</li> <li>• The old Burtons shop has be reopened as a pop-up shop</li> </ul>	
<p><b>5.0</b></p>	<p><b>Lessons from Penarth</b></p> <p>RA had circulated a document detailing ‘Lessons from Penarth’ to the group. This was discussed and reviewed, and the following points were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RA informed the group that he had been in touch with traders in Penarth from both the ‘YES’ and ‘NO’ camps, including Nick Osbourne, leader of the ‘NO’ campaign, who like the others, was very open and helpful. He informed RA that he had also spoken to another trader in Bridgend regarding their opposition to the proposed BID.</li> <li>• Following a discussion regarding suspicions raised around the contractual and financial arrangements with the BID consultant in Penarth, the group agreed that maintaining transparency and clarity is key, and that any relevant information should be made available if requested.</li> <li>• We must push for and appreciate, the difference between improvements that businesses/traders would be happy to financially invest in, as opposed to those that they would just like/expect.</li> <li>• BB highlighted that Bridgend Town Council have plans to spend further funds on cleanliness and flowers within the town centre.</li> <li>• The content and order of the proposed programme needs to inspire businesses to get involved.</li> <li>• Key factor in building support is reaching out to businesses/traders and engaging them in the process.</li> <li>• We need to get the key decision making BCBC members fully on board.</li> <li>• We need to demonstrate that we are already being effective and will be taken seriously by BCBC; that we are able to represent businesses/traders.</li> <li>• SW stressed the importance of delivering action, and suggested further progress should be sought in discussions with Council Leader Mel Nott regarding parking and accessibility in the town.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Important that we reassess all decisions regarding ensuring they are considered for their merit, and present a viable option for the BID area.</li> </ul>	
<b>6.0</b>	<p><b>Marketing updates</b></p> <p>LS provided the group with an update on the activities of the marketing group, and the appointment of Huw David Design for the task of designing the brand for the BID. The marketing group interviewed a shortlist of candidates (Comgem, Savage and Gray, and Huw David Design) before deciding on the appointment.</p> <p>The group discussed name options for ours and the town centre’s marketing brand and identity.</p> <p>The following were suggested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CF31: Clearer Future</li> <li>• Brighter Bridgend</li> <li>• Future Bridgend</li> <li>• Bridgend: New Beginnings</li> </ul> <p>The group agreed that an email should be sent from FSB, chair of the marketing group, to all traders for whom RK has email contact details requesting comments/ feedback on these suggestions. A press release would also be prepared by LS for the Bridgend Gem.</p>	<p>FSB to email traders regarding branding/ naming process; LS to prepare press release on same topic.</p>
<b>7.0</b>	<p><b>Timescales and milestones</b></p> <p>TE informed the group that he was still awaiting feedback from the ratings team at BCBC regarding potential collection periods. He advised that the best time to begin the levy collection would either be January 1<sup>st</sup> or April 1<sup>st</sup>, in line with either the calendar or financial year.</p> <p>TE also awaiting details regarding cost of collection from BCBC – initial estimations provided were high. The cost of the BID software is also substantial, and needs to be considered/ discussed with BCBC.</p> <p>TE noted that there are industry guidelines from the likes of British Retail Consortium regarding the cost of collection and other core costs. These should be kept to a minimum and it is important that these are clearly set out in the BID proposal which will be sent to all eligible businesses.</p>	
<b>8.0</b>	<p><b>Theme areas and key services</b></p> <p>In relation to one of the key issues identified by businesses – accessibility and parking – TE provided the group with details regarding BCBC income from Council car parks. The following points were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Considering a potential pilot project around ‘free after 3’, TE informed the group that the loss to BCBC over a year would be c. £60,000, however without the Rhiw car park this would be c. £32,000.</li> </ul>	<p>TE to circulate draft of the baseline agreement to the group once he had discussed it with the Council.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TE suggested lobbying BCBC to introduce ‘free after 3’ as a pilot for the BID, and as evidence of what could be achieved if the BID were formalised.</li> <li>• SB suggested approaching private car park owners within the town, and noted that Nick Hegarty owns four.</li> <li>• RA praised the idea of ‘through after 3’ (i.e. vehicular access after 3pm) and noted the success of a similar project in Pontypridd.</li> <li>• SW highlighted that the majority of traders would prefer ‘1<sup>st</sup> hour free’ parking as opposed to ‘free after 3’.</li> </ul> <p>Following these discussions, the group agreed to pursue ‘free after 3’ as a potential pilot project and explore costings for 1st hour free.</p>	TE to pursue the free parking and explore costings for first hour free.
<b>9.0</b>	<p><b>Pilot projects</b></p> <p>TE updated the group on progress with the proposed window vinyl pilot project. Tim Woods had been approached to display his images in the windows. Funding support had been verbally confirmed from both BCBC and Bridgend Business Against Crime Partnership, and further funding was being sought from BTC. A proposal for the latter will be submitted for review on May 18<sup>th</sup>.</p>	TE to submit proposal to BTC for funding.
<b>10.0</b>	<p><b>A.O.B</b></p> <p>TE informed the group that an offer of assistance had been made by Beverley Smith of Mansfield Council, who is a previous resident of the area and currently has family living in Bridgend.</p> <p>Beverley informed TE that Mansfield BID had recently passed its first renewal ballot, and that they had encountered a number of challenges similar to those in Bridgend five years ago. It was now a great success and had helped to transform the fortunes of the town. She offered to share guidance and best practice and speak at a business event. The group welcomed the offer.</p> <p>During item 1.0 above, RA thanked ex-trader's forum chair, SW, for his many years of hard work selflessly representing Bridgend businesses/traders, communicating with the council and for supporting RA in his role.</p> <p>RA also congratulated SB on becoming the new trader's forum chair.</p>	
<b>11.0</b>	<p><b>D.O.N.M</b></p> <p><b>TBC</b></p>	