**Minutes of RTWT Board Meeting**

**8.30am on Monday 26th September 2022, via Teams**

**Attendees**

Sarah-Jane Adams (BID Director)

Pam Loch (Chair)

Alex Greig (Vice Chair)

Justine Rutland

Richard Simm

Claudia Wiegand

Hilary Smith (TWBC Observer)

**Welcome and Apologies**

Apologies received from Gavin Tyler, Peter Allinson, and Alex Green

**Actions from last meeting**

No actions

**Minutes of last meeting**

The Board agreed the minutes of the previous AGM on 25th July 2022.

**Board update**

Sarah-Jane noted that Simon Youden of Fenwick has applied to join the RTWT Board of Directors, having previously served on the Canterbury BID Board of Directors. The Board voted unanimously to accept his application.

**BID update**

* **Staffing**

The BID has recruited a new Project Coordinator, starting on Monday 26th September.

* **BID Office**

Sarah-Jane has now moved into the new office on the High Street. The unit will act as a BID office and local hub, with branded window vinyl and signage to advertise the BID’s work.

**Event Update**

* **Art Week**

Art Week (22nd-29th August) and the accompanying colouring book were hugely successful, increasing visits to the RTWT website by over 880%. Over 550 members of the public attended free workshops and activities, with 20 events and around 55 individual sessions in total. 2,000 colouring books were printed. Sarah-Jane noted that the Art Week events and colouring book could be replicated as other themed weeks. The BID also produced a promotional video, with the total cost of Art Week coming in significantly under budget.

Sarah-Jane suggested a corporate version of the colouring book to be distributed to businesses in the town, with the aim of supporting the mental health and well-being of employees.

The Board also discussed potential future themed initiatives based on the success of Art Week, including a focus on ‘heart health’ for Valentine’s Day by providing free first aid/defibrillator training to local businesses.

* **RTWT Magazine**

The Autumn 2022 edition of the RTWT Magazine will be going to print in the next two weeks. Sarah-Jane also noted that for Christmas the magazine will switch to a Christmas Gift Guide to promote local businesses during the festive period.

* **Promotional Filming**

The BID will be filming a Halloween short film to promote the town centre.

* **Event Grants**

The Board discussed whether event grants should only be issued to levy-paying businesses going forward into the second term, or if the current system whereby any local events organiser can apply, should remain in place. Alex noted that the events that the BID supports should benefit the local town centre levy-paying businesses. The Board agreed that external local events are positive for the town, but that funds should also be allocated to events organised by the BID team to support local business and promote the town as a great place to live and work.

Sarah-Jane will gather feedback on events grants from other levy-paying businesses and present this at the next Board meeting for further discussion.

**Second Term Ballot**

Sarah-Jane noted that the ballot for the BID’s second term (2024-2029) will take place in October 2023. The first term officially ends in April 2024, leaving a 6-month buffer to enable the BID to prepare for the second term if successful, or to re-run the ballot if required.

Sarah-Jane will start preparing the business plan for the second term this autumn, with input from the Board Directors. A draft of the business plan will be provided to Tunbridge Wells Borough Council in the spring and baseline agreements will be agreed.

The Board discussed the BID geographical boundary and whether this should be amended to reduce the area and the number of businesses within the BID prior to the second term campaign.

Alex raised the possibility of allowing non-levy-paying businesses to join the BID on a voluntary basis. Sarah-Jane feels the BID area is already too large, but will add voluntary membership on to the agenda for the next Board meeting to be discussed.

Sarah-Jane also noted that the cap on the levy amount that businesses within the BID area pay is very low compared to other BIDs. Board members will consider this ahead of the next meeting. Sarah-Jane also raised the idea of offering charities a discount on their levy payment, as per many other BIDs.

**Second Term Business Plan**

Sarah-Jane asked the Board to consider changing ‘accessibility’ to ‘sustainability’ as one of the core priorities in the second term business plan. The Board voted and unanimously agreed.

The five pillars within the business plan are:

* **An attractive town to live, work and visit** (street scene, placemaking, aesthetic projects)
* **A cleaner and more sustainable town** (green projects – energy efficiency, recycling, street cleaning)
* **A well marketed and promoted town** (magazine, advertising, social media, promotional videos, advertising)
* **A town known for events, tourism, and heritage** (BID-organised initiatives, purple flag accreditation, supporting local events)
* **Supporting your business** (networking, training, business development, corporate strategy)

Alex suggested adding business intel to the ‘supporting your business’ pillar.

Hilary suggested holding a networking event off the back of the initial business plan consultation with businesses to bring corporate businesses in the town together.

**Any Other Business**

No AOB

**Future Meetings**

The next Board meeting will be on Monday 31st October via Teams.