

1. Attendees

Directors:

Bill Hicks (BH) – Deputy Director of Place, CCC
Clare Millett (CM) – The Westgate Hall, Board Chair
Clive Relf (CR) – Kreston Reeves
David Lewis (DL) – Café du Soleil/Café des Amis
David Wilkinson (DW) – Canterbury Cathedral
Jon Mills (JM) – The Foundry
Marco Keir (MK) – CCCU
Mark Pegg (MP) – Loake Shoemakers
Mark Stuart (MS) – Whitefriars
Paul Turner (PT) – The Marlowe, Board Vice Chair
Philip Pothén (PP) – University of Kent

Rachel Sanders (RS) – BoConcept

Observers:

Hilary Brian (HB) – Canterbury Society
David Kemsley (DK) – ACRA

BID Team:

- **Lisa Carlson (LC)** – CEO
- **Emily Wells (EW)** – Administrator
- **Rachel Pilard (RP)** – Marketing & Comms
- **Kathy Moulton (KM)** – Business Development

2. Welcome and Apologies

Welcome:

For the presentation of the Local Plan and discussion:

- **Andrew Thompson (AT)** – Corporate Policy & Strategy Manager, Canterbury City Council
- **Leo Whitlock (LW)** – Head of Policy & Communications, Canterbury City Council

Guests:

- **Matthew Arnold (MA)** – Commercial Director, Stagecoach SouthEast
- **Claire Bogan (CB)** – Store Director, Fenwick

Welcomed Hilary Brian from Canterbury Society as a new Board Observer Member

Apologies:

- **Alexandra Gordon (AG)** – Brachers
- **Blake McCaskill (BM)** – Republic Events
- **Dan Grimwood (DG)** – The Refectory Kitchen
- **David Lilford (DL)** – Lilford Gallery
- **Joanna Richardson (JR)** – Shepherd Neame
- **Karl Elliot (KE)** – Clague Architects
- **Mark Hedges (MH)** – Kent Police
- **Sarah Wren (SR)** – Oscar & Bentley
- **Simon Youden (SY)** – Fenwick

Introductions were made and Declarations of Interest listed as follows:

Declaration of interest: BH – Canterbury City Council, Service Level Agreement

3. Minutes of previous meeting (July and AGM) and matters arising

The Board minutes from 20.07.22 were approved and signed off. The AGM Minutes also approved and signed off.

Actions from the previous Board meeting were reviewed, agreed as complete with the following comments/amends:

- Board congratulated BID team for 2022 AGM
- Project updates p3 Safer Streets typo to correct – EW

4. Local Plan to 2045 – Presentation and Discussion

Guests AT and LW gave the Board a presentation of the key points of Canterbury City Council's proposed Local Plan to 2045.

Key points to note:

- Focus of the Local Plan is Housing and Transport infrastructure
- Timing: the Local Plan is a 15-20 year plan, therefore all proposals would not be immediate
- CCC vision for the Local Plan
 - Unlock the potential of Canterbury City, protect its heritage and enable economic and population growth
 - Remove through-traffic from the city's congested partial ring-road and myriad of rat runs
 - Create dedicated (and, where possible, segregated) road space for walking, cycling, public transport and other sustainable modes of transport
 - Canterbury Circulation Plan: reallocate swathes of city centre road space for a new generation of public transport - unshackling the bus station from gridlock and thus creating a new-found viability for frequent, reliable and cheap services across and around our city, district and beyond:
 - Car parks at the ends of journeys without people ever needing to cross the city regardless of entry point
 - New routes for through-traffic so they drivers can avoid it entirely
 - Eastern Bypass and upgraded Rough Common Road / Palmars Cross Hill

Local Plan documents

- **Full draft:** https://drive.google.com/file/d/110wV4ZPEykrI9-3wgKrMVZ_dZUh1PCH/view
- **Chapter 1: High Level Strategies** for environment, design, development, transport and infrastructure
- **Chapter 2: Strategic Policies** for Canterbury, including the Town Centre Strategy and site allocations
- **Chapter 6: District-wide Strategic Policies** including for business development, education, town centre uses, tourism and rural economy (Policies DS8 - DS12) as well as a range of other matters.
- **Evidence behind the draft policies:** canterbury.gov.uk/localplanevidence which includes specific evidence documents for
 - Retail and Leisure within the "Town Centres and Local Facilities" folder
 - Evidence documents for Economic Development and Tourism within the "Employment and local economy" folder.

Consultation Timetable:

- 12 Weeks with planned drop in sessions for more information
- Consultation feedback due in by 5pm on Monday 16 January

Board Comments:

- Trams not a viable solution as too costly and not space to do so with Canterbury's infrastructure
- How does the Local plan encourage business start-ups and new business investment.
- What is the provision for tourism development in the Local Plan?
- The ANPR infrastructure for proposed restrictions can be adapted to include vehicles like coaches

Actions:

- Encourage BID businesses to participate and comment on the proposed Local Plan – LC
- Draft BID response for discussion with the Board in early January – LC

6. Board Sub-committee reports

Marketing and Events (RP):

Last meeting 12 October 2022. Next meeting: February 2023

RP summarised the marketing stats as published in the July-October Ops Report and gave a brief overview of the latest projects:

Visit Canterbury:

Phase 1 of the project is now complete with the website soft-launched and live for 2 weeks. To raise awareness, a joint press release with Visit Kent is due to be sent out shortly.

Student Shopping Festival

The aim of the event is to welcome students into the city and familiarize them with the businesses in the area. BID was keen to invest in additional marketing, paying Student Republic to create digital and print marketing which was circulated through ads, at events, freshers fairs, door to door etc. Even with this huge marketing push, visitor numbers were down on the day. For 2023 a new strategy will be needed, more student led.

Halloween

Extra marketing support and a bigger, city-wide events offering, together with free Park & Ride was trialed this year to see if it would give an uplift to the city centre trade, which it did.

Christmas Light Switch On

Very busy and very successful night. Workshops run at the Beaney prior to the event produced the lanterns for the Christmas Light Parade which preceded the countdown to Christmas in Rose Square.

Features of this year's Christmas campaign include:

- Christmas in Canterbury guide (20,000 copies)
- Christmas shopping map (2,000 copies)
- Heart FM campaign (6 weeks)
- Stagecoach buses side adverts (5 weeks)
- Visit Canterbury homepage dedicated to Christmas
- Southeastern poster sites at their stations
- Christmas Window Trail to run with a panto-theme launching on 25 November

Canterbury Gift Card:

KM gave a presentation on the Canterbury Gift Card. Highlights as follow:

- Scheme is run by Miconex and operates in 80 towns and cities
- 127 businesses in the city centre are now signed up to redeem the gift card, meaning money spent on the card is ringfenced for the local economy.
- Sales figures for 2022: £45,022. Total sales figures since scheme launched £86,803
- Average £30 spent per gift card
- Concorde International purchased £35k of gift cards for its students in the summer, ensuring further income for the local economy
- Would like to see more corporate use of the gift card, ie staff incentives, rewards, gifts, prizes etc.
- Gift Card is heavily promoted within all BID campaigns and events and as much as possible within local community events.
- Coming soon is a Canterbury Night Out gift card. Essentially the same as a Canterbury Gift Card but packaged to appeal to those wanting to gift an ENTE experience (still able to use at all venues, shops etc)
- Advertising deal agreed with Facebook Canterbury Resident's Group to promote gift card to aid local businesses in return for charitable donation

Action: Set up meeting with CCCU and UKC to discuss how MyCanterbury can help students with cost of living – KM

Misc Marketing Comments:

- Food & Drink Festival 2023 – ongoing discussion about whether Event Umbrella or anyone else plans to organize the event and how BID can support.
- Phase 1 of the St Georges Street redevelopment is likely to be finished by July 2023 so could potentially be used for a F&B event space.
- CCC are designing a page on the website to signpost for cost of living support. Happy to collaborate with BID members' contributions to create a wider offering.

Finance (PT):

Last meeting was on 07 November 2022. Next meeting February 2023.

Summary:

- Year 3 finished at the end of September with total income at £548,411 and total expenditure at £570,212, with a balance of -£21,800 (deficit budget planned due to surplus carried over during the pandemic). Final invoices from the year are being processed and once complete Burgess Hodgson will be instructed to produce the accounts.
- The Year 4 budget was approved by the Board on 20 July. Subsequently, the team reviewed the total surplus and suggested increases in line with the business plan, namely increases in seasonal marketing, Visit Canterbury, Christmas decorations, Evening and Night Time Economy (reinstating the annual event) and Visit Canterbury.

Decision: Board unanimously voted to invest the surplus from year 3.

Strategic Development (LC):

Last meeting was on 31 October 2022. Next meeting February 2023.

Footfall

- Overall, increasing in November and footfall is becoming less of an indicator of spend.
- Vacant Debenhams and Nasons is likely having an impact, as is reduced numbers from the continent (could be due to Brexit and the reduced Eurostar service).

- We will continue to track footfall trends from the one footfall counter we have, but also plan to look at combining footfall with Whitefriars so we can see the overall trends.
- The group discussed year-on-year decreases by month which is currently 7.5% down on 2021 and 18.6% down on 2019, versus the total number of visitors for the year to date which is 12.7% up on the previous year – the monthly website infographic now includes both figures.

Sales

- Sales are increasing but so are costs.
- Capture rate and footfall – footfall is still down compared to 2019 but spend is up per capita.

Vacancy

- Holding steady at around 10% with 38 openings (28 independent and 10 national) and 27 closures over the past 12 months.
- The data includes a breakdown by premises type as well.
- Frequency of change noted, which is a pre-pandemic trend.
- Discussed businesses that open and reopen under the same business owner.

Inward Investment:

LC proposed that the BID moves ahead with building a property owner database, but first need to establish what data the Council has (and can this be shared) to avoid duplication. This could be incorporated into the BID's new database, Solomon. We collect some data through our monthly city survey but it's incomplete – and would need to include all property owners, agents, square footage, class use.

How can we signpost businesses and investors interested in Canterbury, including

- Signposting from the Visit Canterbury website to Locate in Kent or elsewhere
- Incorporating content, images, Canterbury USP on the Visit Canterbury website
- BID-produced welcome pack for potential investors, agents, businesses interested in relocating
- Bespoke event for agents to promote Canterbury as a place to do business
- Some of this will require additional funding.
- Short term focus will be what we can achieve via Visit Canterbury and buildign a property-owner database.
- Planning - Nasons now has planning based on an on-site solution. Debenhams is also looking at a similar solution but hoping a different, longer-term solution will be found.

Summary of Actions and Decisions

Actions:

- Encourage BID businesses to participate and comment on the proposed Local Plan – LC
- January board meeting to focus on BID response to the Local Plan
- Set up meeting with CCCU and UKC to discuss how MyCanterbury can help students with cost of living – KM

Decisions:

- Board unanimously voted to invest the surplus from the pandemic in years 4 & 5.

Next Board Meeting Dates

2022-23 Board Meeting Dates (all Wednesdays from 9:30 to noon):

- **18 January (changed to a Local Plan focused-meeting on 11 January)**
- **15 March**
- **17 May**
- **12 July**

AGM: 14 June

Signed:



Date: 15 March 2023

Clare Millett, BID Board Chair