

Attendees

Directors:

Andrew Dodd – Canterbury Cathedral
Bill Hicks – Director of Place, CCC
Blake McCaskill – Republic Events
Clare Millett (Chair) – The Westgate Hall, Chair
David Lewis – Café du Soleil / des Amis
David Lilford – Lilford Gallery
Jon Mills – The Foundry
Karl Elliott – Clague Architects
Marco Keir – CCCU
Mark Stuart – Whitefriars
Marco Keir – Canterbury Christ Church University

Paul Turner (Vice Chair) – The Marlowe

Guests:

Lee May – Brachers
Dr Julie Grail – The BIDs Business
Richard Moore – Canterbury City Council
Clr Alex Ricketts – Canterbury City Council

BID Team:

Lisa Carlson (LC) – CEO
Rachel Pilard (RP) – Marketing & Comms
Lucy Martin (LM) & Julia Wierucka (JW) – Ops Managers

1. Welcome and Apologies

Apologies: **Claire Bogan** – Fenwick, **Dan Grimwood** – Refectory Kitchen, **Rachel Sanders** – BoConcept, **Sarah Wren** – Oscar & Bentley

Resident group observers (Canterbury Society and ACRA) will join us for the next two board meetings (6 Dec and 17 Jan)

2. Declarations of Interest

- Canterbury City Council (BH) – Service Level Agreement

3. Minutes of previous meeting (20.09.23) and Matters Arising

The Board minutes from 20.09.23 were approved and signed off.

Update on actions from 20 September

- Private vehicle use for commercial purposes in goods only loading bays: Businesses who use private vehicles for commercial purposes should ensure they have the correct insurance and some form of branding on their vehicle, for example a “magnetic sticker” on the side.
- LUF “highways” consultation – feedback was sparse, however, we submitted a response to the Council’s consultation with specific comments on the Westgate and St George’s / Bus station areas, and also wayfinding, lighting and fixed furniture.

Actions:

- Organise another meeting with Councillors early in the new year – LC
- Reminder to update Lucy Martin of any address changes for Companies House – ALL

Lee May from Brachers was invited as a guest with a view to joining the Board to replace Alex Gordon.

Action

- Seek formal board approval via email to co-opt Lee May as a Director for the remainder of this term – LC

4. Sub-committee & Ops Reports

Ops Report Sept-Oct 2023

Full report: available on the BID website for Directors to share.

City performance

- Footfall is bouncing back (almost 20% up on 2022, and now only 12% down on 2019), however the cost of doing business is still high, and therefore profit margins are still very tight.
- Discussed how the BID can have an input how encouraging new business openings and engaging in the planning process when a change of use is requested. This needs strategic oversight by the Strategic Development sub-committee.
- Vacancy down to 9.4% with 8 recent openings (3 retail and 5 hospitality) and 1 closure (retail). Year to date there have been 24 openings and 17 closures
- 35% of businesses in the city are retail, nearly 25% food & beverage
- 68% are independent and 32% are national brands
- This information and more is available in monthly City Performance Reports on the BID website: canterburybid.co.uk/city-centre-performance/

Inward Investment Toolkit

We hope to hear soon about funding for an Inward Investment toolkit which would be a jargon-free easy-to-follow guide with place-based information (ie, cultural, heritage and commercial context) plus hard data that business owners expect to see, plus testimonials and case studies.

Action

- Follow up on Inward Investment Toolkit timeline – LC

Finance – PT

PT gave a summary of current financial position:

Year 4: We are in the process of wrapping up Year 4 and instructing the accountants. Year 4 total income stands at £634,040 and expenditure stands at £695,575 giving us a projected budget balance of -£61,535. We deliberately planned a deficit budget in Year 4 to invest the surplus carried over from the pandemic.

Year 5: At the last Board meeting we presented two versions of the Year 5 budget:

1. The ambitious version that factors in a higher collection rate, and additional income in the form of grants and sponsorship
2. A version for sign off with some projects pared back in line with the confirmed surplus and income, with firm commitments (e.g., Christmas) highlighted.

The reason for this is that as this is the last year of this BID term, it is important that we ensure we know what the surplus amount to be carried over from Year 4 to Year 5 is before committing to new projects. The paired back version 2 of the budget was approved by the Board. Based on the surplus we now know we are carrying over, we have made some adjustments to the budgets to align it more with the aspirational budget, in particular bringing the Christmas campaign and event budget back in line with the original plans.

Levy – The collection rate for Year 5 as at the end of October stands at 32%, which is higher than previous years. There are some persistent non-payers and we need to consider how we manage the recovery of this debt. Approximately half of this debt relates to businesses in administration or liquidation so there is little chance of recovery. However, no recoverable debt is written off.

Action

- Finish financial statements for year 4 accounts – LM

Marketing & Events

Christmas Light Parade – 10 November, 6pm

The event saw 250 participants and with approximately 3,000 joining in the parade and over 5,000 in the city for the evening of the Light Parade Switch On Event and Christmas Market Opening.

The **Light Parade Video** can be watched here: [Video Link](#)

Hornby Train Trail runs from 18 November – 22 December. [Full details here](#)

Christmas Campaign:

- #Make your Christmas has launched. A business toolkit was circulated to BID businesses with assets to use in marketing, enabling everyone to join in with the campaign.
- The campaign is part funded by: Fenwick, Whitefriars, Cathedral, Canterbury City Council, Southeastern, Rockhopper (Christmas Market), Marlowe Theatre and Hornby.
- The campaign includes Heart and Smooth Radio Adverts, A0 Southeastern posters on platforms, Stagecoach Bus sides and rears, DAX Advertising campaign, Park and Ride bus rears and more.

Still to come:

- **Networking** – 15 November at Socialite and 12 December at The Ballroom. RP asked Board Members to contact if they would like tickets and to think of any guests they would like to bring along.
- **ENTE Campaign Workshop** – 27 November at Café du Soleil – please join the session and invite other ENTE businesses to help shape the campaign for 2024.
- **Training – *Strengthen Your Core (business) for 2024*** schedule currently being designed for Jan-April 2024 and will be shared with the Board when confirmed.
- **Longest Serving Staff Competition** – Launching 2 January with the winner announced at the Marlowe Theatre lunchtime networking session on the 15 February.

Action

- Let the BID team know which networking events you can attend – ALL

5. Workshop on BID term 3

Dr Julie Grail from The BIDs Business, joined the meeting to brief the Board on the principles of the ballot and the decisions the board will need to make over the coming few months. This is workshop 1 of 3 as part of BID Board meetings. The next two workshops will focus on the business plan, including the survey analysis.

Surveys

Over five weeks, from 27 September to 1 November, Canterbury BID conducted a formal, online survey to inform the development of the business plan for BID 3. The survey was designed to provide hard facts and figures, to help us understand what businesses and organisations in the city need to succeed going forward, and to ensure that our work continues to help improve the trading environment and the general look and feel of the city. We also conducted a survey in 2022, and a live feedback session via Slido at our AGM in June 2023.

The formal surveys sit alongside anecdotal feedback from networking, working groups & forums, and consultation workshops.

Workshop

Julie took the board through the renewal timeline and the key decisions the Board needs to make:

Board decisions for renewal



BID area

We also reviewed an initial analysis of the BID area using data from the current ratings list. The team has worked up 9 scenarios which will be reviewed by the Finance sub-committee on December 14th (any director is welcome to attend).

Roundtable on the roles the Board can play

The team has been working on the ballot process for a year now and will manage the ballot process (analysis, timeline, campaign) – with the board supporting on strategic oversight and peer-to-peer engagement.

Some board directors couldn't join us and we ran out of time due to the parking briefing so we will complete this matrix at the 6 December Board.

Key principle for renewal

A reminder that the BID levy is a pot of money that businesses can invest directly in improving the trading environment, no matter what the trading environment looks like (and it certainly remains challenging), unlike business rates over which businesses have no control. Also, a BID can't do everything – we have to understand our role and responsibilities versus others.

Our challenge is to **£500,000** annually on behalf of **650 businesses** with a team of 8 (FTE 6.2) and a board of 17, all of whom own or manage businesses and organisations in the city.

Key points from the presentation:

- Demonstrate **Value**
- Know your **Audience**
- **Engagement** and **Visibility** is key
- Take **nothing for granted**

Action

- Analyse survey results in preparation for the next two Board workshops – LC, RP, LM
- Complete Board roles for renewal – Rachel Sanders, Claire Bogan, Dan Grimwood, Sarah Wren, Philip Pothen
- BID area and levy meeting 14 December – CM, PT, LM, LC (and any other director who would like to attend)

6. Car Parking Consultation

Richard Moore, Head of Transportation and Environment, and Cllr Alex Ricketts, Cabinet Member for Tourism, Movement and Rural Development, joined the meeting at 11:30 to brief the BID board on the council's Off Road Parking Consultation (OSPPO), which includes proposals to:

- Introduce a 'Residents Rate' that provides a 10% discount on the hourly tariff rate in Band 2 & 3 ANPR car parks and at Park & Ride sites for residents in the district that are registered for an ANPR account **rounded to the nearest 10p**.
- Increase the free parking period for Blue Badge holders in all car parks from 2 hours to 3 hours.
- Remove the 20% EV discount offered to ANPR account holders and permit holders
- Increase daily capped charges: Band 1 £25 to £30, Band 2 £20 to £25 Band 3 £10 to £15
- Increase permit charges by approx 10% – see [Appendix 2](#) for full details.
- Increase hourly tariffs: <https://news.canterbury.gov.uk/consultations/proposed-changes-to-charges-and-conditions-in-council-car-parks-2/>
- Park and Ride
 - Proposal to re-open Sturry
 - Would like to run later in the evening (but might not be this year)
 - Comms plan will include the message that customers can get on any Stagecoach bus that stops by Park & Ride
- Whitefriars and Pound lane will move from Band 2 to Band 1
 - Accommodation permits will increase from £12 to £13
 - Business parking permits – 10% increase
- Minimum charges
 - 30 mins in Bands 2 & 3 (not 1 hour)
 - Minimum 1 hour in Band 1
 - Minimum 2 hours in Whitefriars, Queningate and Watling Street on a Saturday
- £30k on signage and marketing
- £300,000 to improve Castle Street Multi Storey (cleaning, lighting)
- New suggested Park & Ride site coming in the next Local Plan consultation in the new year.

Board comments / questions

- Can we ensure every bus that passes Park & Ride, stops there?
- Could there be season tickets for Park & Ride?

- Wayfinding is absolutely crucial. How will these proposals link to LUF?
- Later hours are needed for ENTE staff
- Better wayfinding is essential, especially the signage as you enter Canterbury.
 - £15k is in the proposed CCC budget for signage.
 - KCC are responsible for the signage outside the city centre. WiFi / connectivity is so poor which is partially why the digital signs (indicating number of spaces available) don't work. This needs to be addressed.
- Car drivers are the biggest spenders. With business margins so tight due to rising costs, this puts jobs and businesses at risk. Strong view that car parking increases will put businesses at risk.
- Suggestion to reconsider collection points as a direct mitigation to the impact of car parking prices increases to incentivise shoppers.
- What incentives will be provided? Suggestion to offer discounts at low peak times.
- Suggestion to include maps and visual marketing collateral as part of the marketing campaign, as discussed with the BID team, so people know how close they are to their designation. Include "concentric circle" style maps around the city with an indication of how long it will take to walk from point a to point b, for example.
- University perspective – 1/3 of students are commuters. Both students and staff would like to reduce their carbon footprint, but the reality is that some still need to park. What conversations are CCC having with other transport providers
- Why remove the 20% EV discount offered to ANPR account holders and permit holders?

Actions:

- Circulate a summary of the discussion alongside FAQs from the two previous BID workshops on parking to the Board – LC
- Send comments and ideas for the BID's reply – ALL
- Prepare reply to the Council's consultation from the BID – LC

Actions

- Organise another meeting with Councillors early in the new year – LC
- Board approval to co-opt Lee May as a Director for the remainder of this term – LC / ALL
- Reminder to update Lucy Martin of any address changes for Companies House – ALL
- Follow up on Inward Investment Toolkit timeline – LC
- Finish financial statements for year 4 accounts – LM
- Let the BID team know which networking events you can attend – ALL
- Analyse survey results in preparation for the next two Board workshops – LC, RP, LM
- Complete Board roles for renewal – Rachel Sanders, Claire Bogan, Dan Grimwood, Sarah Wren, Philip Pothen
- BID area and levy meeting 14 December – CM, PT, LM, LC (and any other director who would like to attend)
- Parking consultation
 - Circulate a summary of the discussion alongside FAQs from the two previous BID workshops on parking to the Board – LC
 - Send comments and ideas for the BID's reply – ALL
 - Prepare reply to the Council's consultation from the BID – LC

Next Board Meeting Dates

2023-24 Board Dates (9am for 9:30, until noon)

- 17 January (BID 3, Workshop 3), Fruitworks
- 20 March
- 15 May
- 17 July

Networking Dates

- 12 December, 5:30-7pm, Pub Quiz at The Ballroom (with a raffle for Catching Lives)
- 16 January, 8:30-10am MetroBank and Clarendon Fine Art
- 15 February, lunchtime at The Marlowe
- 20 March, 5:30-7pm, Citi Terrace

Ballot: 6 June to 11 July 2024

Event calendar: canterburybid.co.uk/events/month/

Signed:



Date: 06 December 2023

Clare Millett, BID Board Chair