

## **AGENDA**

### **Love Loughborough BID Board Meeting**

**Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> August 2020 at 12.00 noon**

**Via ZOOM**

#### **1. Apologies**

Michael Stokes, Sgt James Thomas, Emma Bishop, Karen Barnett, Celine Patel, Gary Bailey

LCN: Welcome – Cllr Shona Rattray

LCN: Resignation of Director – MP Jane Hunt, but remains a support member.

JH: Thank you for asking me to be a support member

#### **In attendance:**

Kelly Hill, Lisa Brown, Lez Cope Newman, Charlotte Havis, Andy Rhodes, Cllr Shona Rattray, Helen Harris, Sylvia Wright, MP Jane Hunt, Rebecca Garrett, Sue Blount, Sarah Goode, Cllr Jenny Boker, Mike Tyler, Cllr Johnathan Morgan, David Pagett Wright, Roger Perret, Thomas Mackey, David Exley, Caroline Nash

#### **2. Declarations of Interest**

There were none

#### **3. Minutes of Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2020**

No issues

#### **4. Matters Arising not on the Agenda**

None raised

#### **5. Partner Updates**

- a. Charnwood BC - Plaza & general

SW: In the process of taking events that were due to take place to cabinet for their final decisions. CBC didn't want to cancel all Christmas events without having other proposals in place.

The events that have/are been looked at are:

- Loughborough Fair
- Remembrance Sunday
- Christmas Light switch on
- Christmas Panto

Due to the guidelines with Coronavirus and being COVID safe, certain measures must be in place, and it is unlikely that these events can occur in their normal capacity.

Following the COVID guidelines and with the input of the event safety group, CBC need to put alternatives in place.

#### LOUGHBOROUGH FAIR:

Will not be happening in the same capacity this year, but this still needs to be approved by the cabinet and to be signed off.

No large rides will be present, but CBC still want to mark the charter and the 799 years of the Fair. The proposal will be to have some children's rides and some food stalls in the Market Place instead with the official opening of the Fair and reading of the Charter.

#### REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY:

CBC is in contact with the Royal British Legion. CBC is taking guidance directly from the British Legion. No parades are to take place this year, which is national guidance.

Loughborough will be hoping to ensure a ceremony will still take place and will include, the last post, prayers, the poppy drop from the Carillon and the wreath laying.

CBC will look to show the event live online rather than attract visitors.

A story board is being planned, to keep shots for the filming relevant. It will become a piece of social history of the time we are in and the footage from the day will be kept in the Carillon to mark the event.

#### CHRISTMAS LIGHTS:

To avoid mass gatherings, the town will be dressed, and lights will be put up and will still be turned on over the festive period but there will be no light switch on event. The

lights will be turned on earlier on in the day and a Christmas market will be in place. The market will likely be in for 3-4 days so people can go over the course of the days as opposed to on one day only. This should then avoid mass gatherings and ensure social distancing can be adhered to.

#### PANTO:

The Panto is a year long project and takes time to put it together. To avoid unrecoverable costs the panto will be moved to next year, 2021. 33,000 tickets are sold each year for the Panto with 94% capacity of the auditorium. CBC and the Town Hall are thinking of other ways to use the auditorium over Christmas to try and encourage footfall in a different way. This is in the process of being discussed.

#### LEISURE CENTRES:

All three centres are managed by CBC. Soar Valley and South Charnwood are open to no cost to the council. To reopen Loughborough CBC would need financial support and this need approving by the cabinet. A meeting for this will take place in due course. No plans to reopen/dates to reopen yet.

#### LOUGHBOROUGH UNIVERSITY:

Two meetings types take place with different officers involved. They are sharing information on how students are returning to campus and regular meetings are taking place. With regards to night-time, clubs are in discussion to open like pubs with tables instead of in their normal capacity.

There is a community group and economy group who are having regular meetings to discuss recovery plans for the town.

#### MUSEUM:

The museum is to open before the August bank holiday. The park is open so want to get the museum open to the public again too.

LCN: Can the Carillon open again too?

SW: no, as you can't meet the social distancing guidelines in there

The Museum will have a one-way system in place. A survey was carried out regarding the museum and what people wanted to see implemented and they had 147 surveys

returned, which was great to see and shows that people want to see the Museum open again.

Carillon Lottery BID is going ahead again and is looking to reopen again in October. The BID that Loughborough will put in will still go ahead but needs some tweaking before it can be sent.

The EDRF fund will be submitted at the end of August/start of September. This is in partnership with Love Loughborough. The funding is to specifically be spent on support for businesses at this time and will be used to promote the Shop Safe Shop Local campaign. Part of the campaign will include a video to showcase how safe Loughborough is to visit and also to promote shopping locally.

NTE group is meeting weekly. Love Loughborough and the University attends these meetings, and this helps to keep on top of issues.

LCN: Churchgate is looking good with lights up now. Can the market lights in the town be put on again as we normally have the bunting.

SW: normally CBC are putting the bunting up at this time of year, which isn't happening this year. Will raise the questions. It is not a case of just turning them on at a switch you need to have a licence for them which is applied for each year. Testing is in place so should be ok to do. The bunting will be missed this year.

LCN: To mention the banners on Browns Lane look unsafe can they be looked at

SW: will get someone to investigate it.

LCN: Can the Carillon be played

SW: It is being played- SW will send Lez a timetable

b. Leicestershire Promotions

SW: CBC are still working with them with the SLA to get a report on performance against the targets that are set- (currently waiting for report to come through)

Working with the tourism advisory board and Great Central Railway as part of the new 'uncover the story' the Bell foundry and museum is involved too.

10 stories are ready to go and will be released.

c. Police (NTE)

LB: A report was sent through from Gary Bailey stating the evening economy is opening nicely, pubs have got good measures in place, with a meet and greet system, track and trace and risk assessments carried out.

Some issues with a few pubs including the Blacksmiths, Ring O Bells and the two Wetherspoons.

These are being monitored and pub watch is involved too, who have more intel, and this is fed back into the NTE

The street pastors started back last weekend

Beggars haven't really been present recently

LCN: One outside George's fish and chip shop

LB: Police extended their duties over the weekends in previous weeks, but this is going to be phased back as the need isn't there.

Anti-social behaviour noted around McDonald's has picked up

AR: has had no incidences in McDonald's, the issues are just down the road from him. McDonald's is vetting people before they go in and the same is true of the Shelthorpe McDonald's

T.Mackey: Impressed with the police. They've had to call them a few times and their response rate has been incredibly quick and efficient

d. LCC – Growth Fund

HH: £750,000 has been applied for. Businesses can apply for between £2-£10,000 and the business contributes half the amount.

Grant panel had a meeting today and 6 grants have been approved which has meant £46,500 has been issued.

Quality of the applications has been poor, there has been a lack of retailers applying for the grants with many coming in from manufacturing.

Small businesses such as hair and nail salons applied as lacked grant funding from elsewhere, but this grant isn't really suitable for them as they haven't explained their projects and matched the criteria correctly. Most businesses have been used to the government grants of just applying for the funds, but

this grant takes time and need to put projects in, which seems to have been challenging for some.

LCN: The document isn't user friendly

HH: they have received 200 phone calls about the process, they tried to give examples but think that has confused people more, businesses aren't reading the guidance and not submitting quotes or figures.

M.Tyler: The grant is to be match funded for digital projects, which could be £60-£70,000, the £10,000 is good but could business afford to pay the rest at this time.

HH: there is a digital growth programme of up to £25,000 that she would direct business too.

HH to send this information to LB to pass onto MT direct

S.Rattray: This isn't accounting for the VAT element; can they lower the level to under £2000 to encourage more businesses to apply?

HH: if businesses put in the proposal it will be looked at. They are looking to initiate something for smaller projects.

KH: to recirculate information again to businesses.

## **6. BID Company Operational Update**

### **a. Solomon CRM- (Demo of the Solomon Showed)**

CH: Solomon is nearly ready to go live; data is being cleaned up and tidied and when it is working it will help the team to know what businesses have been contacted and when.

You can sort the data by different fields, area, recycling scheme, levy amount, social media campaigns etc

It will keep the data clean, stop multiple spreadsheets and duplicating work. We will then be able to pull up a business and see what help they have had, which will help when it comes to ballot and showing the time/monetary cost that each business is having from BID.

There is a system so see when the Ambassador has been to a business, when bags have been delivered etc too.

DPW: thinks its a great idea, shame we haven't had it sooner

LCN: We couldn't afford it before, but it is great

DPW: Is there a contract on this? When it come to renewal will they have us over a barrel to pay lots of money?

CH: it's a 5 year contract. But they only work with BIDS so if it goes to ballot and Love Loughborough doesn't get the vote the contract is ended.

LB: Similar to how it works with Elephant WIFI at the moment

SW: is there a tab to show which businesses are currently open

CH: data needs updating still of who is open

LCN: thanked CH for her work on it.

b. Stay Safe Video Campaign

LB: BID is working with CBC to put together a safety video to encourage people back into the town. This is being funded by Love Loughborough through the CBC grant as there is too much red tape to fund through the EDRF fund and timescales would have been too long to deliver the campaign.

BID is going to start the campaign on a local level with businesses in the town. There are 7 sectors in total and the clips for each business will be 30 seconds long.

AR: to save money and time McDonald's can give us a pre-made video that they have done that we can use

LB: Thank you, asked AR to send it over

KH: so far, we have 5 businesses signed up which are:

Olivia's, Body Transformation, Beautique, Irish and McDonalds. Still need a business for the professional services, is DPW or RP interested?

AR/DPW: passed the information on to the team

RG: Slider Town is interested

M.T: Tylers is interested too

KH: to add these to the list

LB: CBC has got £10,000 to put their videos together through the EDRF, but this is kick starting the process.

c. Wear a Mask Posters

LB: KH delivered posters to the businesses in the town last week that BID had put together to encourage people to wear a mask inside in the premise. 300 or so posters were hand delivered.

SW: Safety measure are in place around the town. There were some posters/signs vandalised, so they had to be removed.

d. Eat Out Campaign Update

KH: Contacted all the businesses about the 'Eat Out to Help Out' scheme to see who is on the scheme so we can promote them via our various platforms.

KH put together a trail on the LoyalFree app for the scheme to help promote it to the public. This went live at the start of the month 29 businesses are on the trail so far, businesses are being added day by day when they have signed up/told KH they want to be on the trail. It was important to drill down on the information to see how the scheme was working so KH ran a poll on social media to ask various questions about if people were using the app, using the scheme, making use of other areas of the town such as the park or shopping whilst they were here.

The percentage shows that the app hasn't been taken up on that much (could be people don't have the app) but the scheme has been taken up with 58% confirmed users. Shopping has been done by half the people that answered but the park was rarely visited with 69% saying no.

The scheme is being continually promoted on social media and website by KH

e. Christmas Lighting

LB: We are still awaiting costs to come back for the BID Christmas lights. 40 columns will not go up this year as the columns need testing and it isn't within the budget to do the testing and putting them up.

We are getting a quote for the icicles/ shop front icicles and then we can make a decision at the next board meeting.

## 7. Town Deal Update



LB: No major investment plans as yet.

In talks with KC Suri as he has some projects in place already.

No response from Carillon Properties as yet. No project for the vacant land at the back of the Carillon Court.

LCN: no contact as yet from Raf

LB: is going to work with SW to submit a joint deal, which is an ambitious project of up to five million pounds. This will cover a new market, cabins, Christmas market incorporated into the infrastructure, electrics will be looked at and also phase 3 of the Wi-Fi projects so this can be installed at wards end, Bedford square.

AR: Working with a company in Milton Keynes that looks after electric taxis/pods. This is something we can hopefully trial period for them in September/October. You program where you want to go, and the pod takes you there. Good for disabilities and disabled. Would Kinch be interested getting involved, get the bus to Loughborough before getting into the pod. The company thinks it will work really well in Loughborough with the university etc. AR currently putting the proposal in on behalf of BID

HH: would this link into a collective delivery system so all shops have their last deliveries to a centre hub then only one lorry comes into the town.

AR: Need to stop diesel lorries coming in to work on the sustainable front

HH: it's a unique selling point for the town

LCN: Not sure if Odeon is coming back as a cinema, there is talk that they could turn into a theatre.

RP: could work well with the generator project, with a unique space if its open to the public to work or exhibitions. Be good to blend the projects together and have them work together.

DPW: The space in the Market Place too, the complementary aspect can all work together and feed into the town board. There are now 3 separate dates for this, and Loughborough is now submitting its project at the end of October

SW: need to fine tune the application. The Generator Project will attract creatives and enhance the new Living Loughborough Project.

LCN: Application for the Queens Park, people can't find it. Can we have some new gates?

SW: needs to have connectivity and include the heritage of the town. All the entrances to the park need looking at.

LCN: Can the Avery be moved too its falling down? Then the café seating can expand.

SW: will pass that on

## 8. Town Centre Performance

### a. Footfall

CH: Looked at the footfall from last summer to this summer. The footfall at the start of the year was very similar, if not 2020 was higher in footfall but this dropped dramatically in March, obviously due to lock down. It is climbing up again but slowly.

Dwell time is 127 minutes and the peak is at 12-1pm which links to people going out on lunch.

The most popular areas are Market Place and Biggin Street. We are at 1 million decrease compared to last year.

LCN: any figures for Wards End?

CH: no counters there, that is part of the phase three plan if BID get the funds.

### b. Business Performance

LB:

Great Central Railway – Passenger service with approximately 400 passengers per weekend.

The station will close the first and second week in September for maintenance and will re-open the 19th Sept with dining services resumed.

Bonfire night event is cancelled but hoping for Santa event.

All based at Quorn at the minute as there is more room to social distance

LCN: does this include the Winterwonder Lights events?

JM: doesn't think it will include Winterwonder Lights but some sort of Santa train

Business movement:

Poundstretcher gone from the high street but looking for unit on retail park.

Argos – moving into Sainsbury's

Harveys – Regent Retail Park – not sure if it is closing down

2 Monkeys Café is closing at the end of the month

Peacocks- We think it might be going into administration

Peter Pizza moving into the old Fenways building

DE: a company looking at Cargo. No information as yet

LB: will do a walk around next week to see if there is any more movement in the town

RP: Previously when businesses become empty CBC looked at how they look or help other business look to move

HH: Melton did a pilot in regards to the council buying the premises or help with setting up private investors. But no appetite for it.

RP: Link to the town deal?

JM: town deal is for the whole of Loughborough not just for the town centre or buying up empty units.

MT: wanted to ask SW about the large pavement next to Tylers and if they could utilise it in some way

SW: that's for the highways but will send info of a contact to MT direct.

## **9. Budget Update**

LB: National retailers are asking for BID Levy discounts, which have included requests from Sports Direct, Next, Iceland and Primark. British BID's have issued a letter for BID to use so we are going to use it as a template and make it Loughborough suited to send out, so the messaging is consistent.

Levy Collection – June £7.3K came in

July £9.2K came in

Bank Balance at present - £111.714

August levy bills for those paying in two instalments have gone out so should know better figures at the end of this month.

£12,000 from the government grant is now in the bank. This grant has paid for Solomon CRM and the new safety campaign video.

## **10. Any Other Business**

RG: Slider Town is getting busier and she has not joined pub watch

S.G: Purple Pumpkin Patch is doing ok, no workshops for the time being due to guidelines and distancing will tell KH when they start so they can be promoted

JH: Thank you again for allowing her to be a support member, really appreciates it and think this is a really good group that she is happy to be part of

AR: 25% of sales now is on deliveries and this is on the increase.

DPW: 45 people normally in the office at Moss Solicitors

Half were furloughed which is now a quarter but only around 5 in the office. If their business is the same as others, there is a lot less workers in the town popping out for lunch or to shop which will affect the businesses and their sales

LCN: this is seen in the butchers as people aren't getting their lunch

AR: from next Monday McDonald's will have no staff on furlough and they are proud to say that through all of this they have made no redundancies. Staff have been flexible with working hours/roles, but no one has lost their job.

DPW: there is an explosion in the housing market at the minute, lots of people moving, which is interesting to see

LCN: lots of housing in Loughborough are sold off plan due to the growing University

TM: Barclays footfall is now down with 67% reduction to what it was. Apologies to KH for not doing the safety video, compliance makes it difficult. Want to let businesses know that Barclays can help with an application for grants and funding regardless if they bank with Barclays.

KH: This information has been circulated before, it is much appreciated and will circulate this again to businesses on email

JM: work patterns are changing, lots more people working at home at CBC is no different. This does have an impact but this is why there are developments in place to assist with this with 2,000 houses being built in the town which will equate to 4/5000 people in walking distance of the town so they can come in and eat/shop etc

Business Rates –

Government review of business rates – now online. Deadline 18<sup>th</sup> September. KH has send link - <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/hm-treasury-fundamental-review-of-business-rates-call-for-evidence>

**11. Dates of next Meeting: 8<sup>th</sup> September 2020, 12pm on Zoom**

MEETING ENDED