

**BedfordBID Board Meeting 102**  
Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> January 4:30pm, Virtual Online Teams



**BedfordBID**  
Business Improvement District  
Funded by Town Centre Businesses  
[www.lovebedford.co.uk](http://www.lovebedford.co.uk)

**Directors attended:**

Christina Rowe	BedfordBID
Sam Laycock (Chair)	Harpur Centre
Dave Roffey	Bedford College
Greg Warwick	Jeeves
Martin Keys	Gallone's Ice Cream Parlour
Steve McBrearty	Cash Converters
Charles Royden	Bedford Borough Council
Amanda Olliver	The Body Shop
Tony Moliterno	Mayfair Financial

**Also attended:**

Mike Lewis	Riverside
Patrick Lyons	Bedford Borough Council
Andrew Dennison	Macintyre Hudson
Leah Perkins	BedfordBID

**1. CHAIR'S WELCOME**

The Chair, Sam Laycock, opened the meeting and thanked them all for attending. She informed them the meeting was being recorded and read out the confidentiality agreement and conflict of interest statement.

**2. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received in advance of the meeting from:

Justine Ives	Bedford Borough Council
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**3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The Directors approved the minutes of the last meeting.

**4. BEDFORD BID TEAM AND STAFF PREMISES UPDATE**

Director Christina Rowe introduced Leah Perkins as the new BID Office Manager. Christina explained the headcount and payroll is down to 3.5 from 7, boosted by Social Media expertise from Dream Digital. The presentation for Dream Digital was previously sent to all attendees. The team had a temporary period of no office, where the new office is in Castle Lane and all are welcome to visit. The cost of the premises is  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the previous office and a nice location. The team moved themselves and in all dealt with it well and continued to support premises both on site remotely or online. We launched the Covid hub, vouchers and continued schemes such as the RRL. Some staff were furloughed at the beginning of last year.

## **5. MATTERS ARISING**

Malcolm Wyse from The Swan Hotel is retiring due to moving on to pastures new.

## **6. APPLICATIONS FOR NEW MEMBERS**

**Dean Thompson**, Distinct Group/Bedford Swan Hotel, Proposer Steve McBrearty Cash Converters; Secunder Martin Keys Gallones.

**AGREED:** There were no objections to Mr Thompson's appointment as Member of BedfordBID.

**Alex Falcon Huerta** FCCA / Director, Soaring Falcon Accountancy; Proposer Christina Rowe, BedfordBID; Secunder Sam Laycock Harpur Centre.

**AGREED:** There were no objections to Miss Falcon Huerta's appointment as Member of BedfordBID.

## **7. APPLICATIONS FOR NEW DIRECTORS**

**Dean Thompson**, Distinct Group/Bedford Swan Hotel, Proposer Steve McBrearty Cash Converters; Secunder Martin Keys Gallones.

**AGREED:** There were no objections to Mr Thompson's appointment as Director of BedfordBID.

**Alex Falcon Huerta** FCCA / Director, Soaring Falcon Accountancy; Proposer Christina Rowe, BedfordBID; Secunder Sam Laycock Harpur Centre.

**AGREED:** There were no objections to Miss Falcon Huerta's appointment as Director of BedfordBID.

## **8. FINAL DRAFT ACCOUNT 2019/20**

Andrew Dennison from MacIntyre Hudson presented the Final Draft Accounts for 2019/20, with key points:

- As a company limited by guarantee, there are no shareholders and it can't pay dividends, similar to not-for-profit organisations. Levy payers are not automatically members.
- Income and expenditure is remarkably consistent for 2019 - 2020, with a small surplus of £9,500 at the end of the year.
- Biggest change is on the voucher scheme, a lot less activity. We didn't have the big sale to Bedford College but without the discount cost of this, we have a £3,867 surplus this year compared to a £4,438 deficit last year.
- Cash reserves were ready and being put to good use. Overall, very consistent accounts.

Full accounts are on the website.

## **9. OPEN GENERAL DISCUSSION**

Town Centre conversation; how town centre businesses have/are adapting to the current situation and what we can do to further support BID businesses.

Martin Keys said one of the biggest positives are the Covid Marshalls and he has first hand experience from David who was exemplary. It would be good to feedback the message to their liaison officer Catherine to educate the other marshalls to engage with a personable approach. When people are advised and guided they feel safer, and there is a positivity with the seamlessness of the grants appearing in accounts. The more remote areas that are attracting the crowds such as The Park, Pavilion and The Embankment are missing

control from the Covid Marshalls. Other parlours in areas such as Northampton are not getting anywhere near the support we are here.

Mike Lewis said the support in Bedford has been great. Not everyone has had this type of networking and support. The new restaurants in the Riverside are exciting, they are both very proactive in marketing. The bigger chains struggled more and weren't as focussed on local marketing.

Tony Moliterno said they have had clients return as they want to deal with a human rather than a large bank. They are adapting with Zoom, Teams and conference calls. The Covid Marshalls make you feel safe and they offer masks rather than 'having a go'. Everyone is trying to adapt. It is difficult as estate agents are open and there is a big demand with the stamp duty deadline so we are trying to work as quickly as possible.

Tony offered the use of their printer for school kids, to print and deliver worksheets if anyone knows of any schools in need. The Chair said she is happy to look into this and be the point of contact.

Greg Warwick spoke about the closure of the High Street. All businesses were asked what they thought about it and believed the opinion was it wasn't a good idea. Unless the Council closes it down totally, he believes there is no advantage, as there will still be traffic and fumes. It isn't helping Bedford, and would rather spend the money on other things and think it is so detrimental to Bedford. Either make it fully pedestrianised or open it up fully to let the traffic flow through.

Sam said many meetings have happened, keeping everyone informed in great detail and to make sure it is done right. It is intended to get rid of people using the high street as a thoroughfare and affecting the environment. It is happening and if we can get as much done now it will be a benefit that doing it in normal circumstances. Sam asked Greg to give any positive and negative feedback during the works and wants him to be an integral part.

Charles Royden said there will no longer be speeding traffic, wobbly pavements and pools of water. There will still be access to shops and much wider pavements for a better shopping experience with the highest of quality. It will look much better and be an improved scheme. There was an extremely long consultation and we took everything on board that people said to produce the best for Bedford.

## **10. BOARD MEETING / INDUCTION DAY**

The Chair said Tony and Amanda have not had a formal induction yet and we will have 2 new members, which will be picked up between now and our next meeting. We will know more in the next couple of weeks and then pick this up as a priority moving forward.

## **11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

TBC - we will send out some proposed dates. It would be useful to know if there are any specific dates to avoid.

The Chair concluded the meeting at 5:25pm.