

CRIEFF SUCCEEDS BID LTD
Minute of a Meeting held on Tuesday, 9th February 2016
Crieff Hydro, 6.30 p.m.

PRESENT: Stephen Leckie, Chairman; David Agnew; Bob Anderson; Scott Bennett; Stuart Cassells; Neil Combe; Ann Cowan; Andrew Cuthbert; William Frame; Simon Pengelley

ATTENDANCE: John Bray; Jean Ann Scott Miller

APOLOGIES: Paul Attewell; Ailsa Campbell; Graham Donaldson; Alan Rankin

1. The Chairman extended a warm welcome, but regretted the absence of Directors, without apology. Good governance extended to the common courtesies of corporate life, and while absences were occasionally inevitable, they must be intimated in advance. He also repeated the need for the sub-groups to provide a written account of their activities in advance of the Board meeting.

2. Previous Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, 1st December 2015 were **APPROVED**, and the Chairman signed them as a true and accurate record.

3. Matters Arising

3.1 Registration of Directors. There was confusion as to Directors' status, with some having received confirmation from Companies House and others not. **Since the Meeting, SB has confirmed that all Directors have been correctly registered.**

3.2 Non-payment of levy. There was concern at the level of non-payment. Some of this was due to continuing problems with the data base, which it was hoped were now resolved, with the PKC business rates data base finally in sync with the levy data base. WF would provide further corrected addresses, and the Chairman stressed the need for all Directors to correct any anomalies. SP queried the Non-engagement category – were steps being taken to remedy the situation? JB assured him that he was gradually making contact with all businesses. He confirmed that the owners of vacant premises were still liable to pay.

3.3 Parking news flash. ACu and the Welcome sub-group had asked for 15 minutes of free parking on the meters, as happened in Perth. ACo would pursue the request, but pointed out that the Crieff meters had not been set to accommodate this. ACu and BA repeated the immediate need for car park signage – an issue pursued with the Council without any success for several years. **[ACo has since established that the scheme in Perth is a pilot for one-year only. There is no way it can at present be extended to Crieff.]**

3.4 Handover to John Bray. JB felt this was going smoothly. He was spending a lot of time with the businesses, and found that it could take up to two hours to engage with the people who had not supported the BID and were still unhappy. A common theme was that they did not know enough about the Board and its appointment. Communication was hugely important. SP added that Alan Rankin

had confirmed that he would be available to support JB and the Board as required until the end of June.

3.5 Contact between JB and sub-groups. (1) He had attended a meeting of the **Welcome Group**, and a report was tabled. NC stated that there was growing awareness of the Business Improvement Grant scheme, with a trickle of applications. (2) There had also been contact with the **Marketing Group**.

3.6 Christmas Event Feedback. BA had submitted a budget and outline costs, and JB was processing the information. A full and strict audit would be tabled for the next Board meeting. The event had been very successful, despite appalling weather, and would be repeated in 2016. BA emphasised the need for early planning, and stated that various options for extending the event were being considered. Footfall could only be estimated from the numbers entered in the free draw, and this had revealed some interest from out-of-town visitors. The Thursday late night shopping had been well supported, largely by local residents, and a number of businesses had reported record sales. JASM queried the event's status – it had earlier been agreed that while in 2015 this would be a BID project, in future years, BID would continue to support the event but it would be managed and promoted by an independent body. BA responded that there were technical difficulties involved – it would be necessary to continue the present format.

4. BID Company

4.1 Management Accounts. A Purchase Order log had been issued. JB was working on further documentation to allow day-to-day examination of income against expenditure. Referring again to the present levy shortfall, JB stated that much of it was due to non-payment by PKC. This confidential information had been leaked into the public domain, and he had been challenged by a prominent nay-sayer. There was general concern, and while it would be difficult to trace the source of the leak, the Chairman again urged the need for corporate integrity. ACo was asked to pursue the issue of non-payment, and she assured the Board that the agreed levy would not be affected by any budget cuts. Alan Rankin was in discussion with the Council about the additional budgeted funding of £35k, and it was hoped this would still be available against identified projects. **(JB later reported that the Council were now showing as having paid. He would check the next day to ensure that the money had in fact been lodged.)**

4.2 Directors' Code of Conduct. (1) **Declarations of Interest.** A pro forma had been issued to all Directors, and the information would be published on the BID website. Completed forms should be submitted to JB by 29th February. NC was concerned to establish the circumstances for a conflict of interest. SB explained that there was no conflict in the normal operation of business owners as Directors. However, if a Director-owned or operated business applied for a Business Improvement grant, the Director concerned would clearly have to withdraw from any discussion. (2) **Document Source.** SP asked if the Code of Conduct was based on a template. JB responded that he and AR had developed a modified version of the Forth Valley College document, which they felt mirrored present needs. (3) **General Discussion.** NC suggested that the BID website should publish contact names so that people could direct their concerns appropriately. JB agreed that transparency and communication were crucial. He

would correlate all information, and update the Board at the next meeting. The Chairman repeated the need for apologies to be registered; for sub-groups to report in writing in advance of Board meetings; for email circulation to be confined to essential items. He added that the training programme provided by Scottish Enterprise would probably resume in March. JB reported on recent contact with the Alloa BID, which operated without sub-groups. They had included local churches in the BID area, and this had helped to increase community input, which he believed was a key factor in success. NC stressed the need to support all businesses, and to listen to the nay-sayers. JB added that however much the BID was aimed at increasing visitor levels, it must also support the core local community. (4) **DB Consultants.** BA reported a distinct lack of enthusiasm among businesses he had spoken to. **AGREED** that the Bottom Line sub-group should investigate. **[WF has since forwarded contact details for Mark Livingston, Energy and Utilities Consultant.]** (5) **Board Meetings.** The Chairman suggested that as well as the monthly scheduled meetings of the Board there should be two or three extra meetings during the year to allow a general stock-taking. **AGREED**
It was finally and unanimously AGREED that the Directors' Code of Conduct be approved and adopted.

4.3 Levy Payment. SP asked about the formal process involved in following up non-payment. It was explained that this was operated by PKC and had been agreed as part of the Operating Agreement. The Board could nudge the process forward, but had no active role in it. SP again highlighted the present shortfall of 14% as against the budgeted contingency of 5%. He sought reassurance that the Council would vigorously pursue the process.

4.4 Purchase Order Controls. JB confirmed that he was developing an appropriate document.

5. BID Business Plan

5.1 Marketing sub-group. SC reported that VOLPA had been appointed as marketing consultants following a competitive tendering process. He was satisfied that they would give value for money, and they already had an excellent reputation locally. The application for grant funding from the VisitScotland growth fund had to be lodged by 18th February.

5.2 Welcome sub-group. NC reported that the group would meet again next week. They were looking at agreed action points and would welcome suggestions from the Board for a BID-led event. As earlier reported, the Business Improvement Grant scheme was gaining momentum. The group was keen to establish contact with local bodies such as Crieff in Leaf and the Visitor Centre. BA commented on the need to get a good news story into the public domain. He asked what progress had been made on obtaining email addresses for all levy payers – email contact would be an excellent way of publicising the Improvement scheme. JB replied that progress was slow, and cautioned against indiscriminate use of email addresses, some of which had been provided on a restricted basis.

5.3 Bottom Line sub-group. **5.3.1 Staff Loyalty Scheme.** NC asked for more background information. How and where were such schemes being operated? There must be clear evidence of success before any agreement to adopt the scheme. There should be far closer contact with local businesses to establish

opinion. BA pointed out that no scheme could be compulsory. Businesses choosing to participate would advertise the fact. Various views were expressed, with DA stressing the need for customers to enjoy the Feel Good Factor. This could be achieved in a number of ways from complementing a purchase with a gift, or issuing tokens for a cup of coffee in participating businesses. SB instanced the issue of free parking tokens. It was finally **AGREED** that the Bottom Line group would proceed to the next stage by contacting other BIDs for information and advice, and by gauging local support. SC would provide details of sample loyalty schemes.

5.4 Making it Happen sub-group. No report.

6. AOB

6.1 crieff.org. JB reported that discussions with CUSP were continuing. The website was at present strongly community-facing, and would need radical change before adapting to BID's needs. SC felt that radical change meant considerable expense. Would it not be better to buy another domain name and develop a custom-built project? NC also felt that BID could not get bogged down in other organisations' business and that a balance must be struck. JB agreed that if the cost of adapting the site had to be met from the Marketing budget, it might not be cost-effective. However, he saw value in continued community engagement, and felt that for BID to maintain this would build on a growing community interest in the site. He believed it could be developed by partitioning the separate strands, while still allowing entry through a single portal. He also stressed that a full digital strategy must be developed of which a website would only be a part.

6.2 Communication. BA again stressed the need for direct communication with the businesses. JB assured him that a second newsletter would be issued by the end of the month.

6.3 Office Accommodation. The Chairman reported that discussions with PKC regarding the Town Hall were in danger of stalling. The Council were asking for an annual rent of £5,000, which had not been budgeted. There were also doubts about the level of repair they were prepared to carry out.

6.4 Leader Funding. JB stated that while the fund was now open again, there were tight restrictions attached which made it unattractive for BID's purposes.

6.5 Science Festival. Event Grant Funding had been provided.

7. Date of the Next Meeting – Tuesday, 15th March 2016, 6.30 p.m.,

Glenturret Distillery. In the unavoidable absence of the Chairman, the Meeting would be chaired by Stuart Cassells. BA also tendered an apology.

There being no other competent business, the Meeting ended at 8.25 p.m.

Signed

Date