



Wednesday 27 May 2020
2pm
Virtual meeting

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT

David Bailey (DB)	Chair
Craig Mathie (CM)	Vice Chair
Mike Francis MBE (MF)	President

Sector & BID Representatives

Carol Scott (CS)	Leisure & Attractions Sector
David Squire (DS)	Transport Sector
Guido Schillig (GS)	IEA Sector
Paul Clarke (PC)	Coastal BID (Bournemouth)
Steve Riley (SR)	Poole BID
Steve Turner (ST)	Conference & Convention Sector
Tim Lloyd (TL)	Accommodation Sector

Professional Officers

Cllr Vikki Slade (VS)	Leader – BCP Council
Cllr Lewis Allison (LA)	Portfolio Holder - Tourism
Graham Farrant (GF)	CEO – BCP Council
Bill Cotton (BC)	Executive Director – BCP Council
Chris Saunders (CS)	BCP Tourism
Jon Weaver (JW)	BCP Tourism
Stevie Sainsbury (SS)	Board Administrator - BCP Tourism

Apologies

Sara Uzzell (SU)	LEP representative
Martin Davies (MD)	Town Centre BID

Guests

Samantha Richardson (SR)	NCTA
Rosie Radwell (RR)	BAHA
Andy Lennox (AL)	Wonky Table

1. Welcome

Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and confirmed that there were no declarations of interest.

2. DMB Barometer Survey wave2 – Samantha Richardson

SR gave a brief synopsis of the results from the latest Barometer Survey Please see attached slides.

The main points covered were

- Survival rates
- Length of time before return to profitability
- Current marketing & comms status
- Measures being taken to reassure customers
- Any re-thinking of product/offer
- Change of marketing approach to aid recovery

Following the presentation it was agreed that there is a level of 'survey fatigue' in the industry at the moment and that rather than go out with another survey in 3 weeks' time we will wait and reconsider the position in a month's time and make a decision then.

GF pointed out that one of the biggest issues that will be faced shortly is how many people who are currently being furloughed will be taken back on when the furlough period ends. SR agreed, pointing out that the survey indicated that 21.3% of businesses said that they were unlikely to return to full staffing when things return to some form of normal.

3. Social Distancing - Urban Areas & Open Space – Jon Weaver

JW outlined the current planning for social distancing in urban areas and open spaces that is being put in place in readiness for the opening of non-essential shops at the beginning of June and the subsequent opening of Hospitality currently planned for July. (Please see attached presentation slides).

AL thanked the Council for the work they are putting into the plans and reported that Wonky Table is surveying their members regarding dates for opening and is also working on a track and trace app which should be available in a couple of weeks. This app will enable people to track which restaurants have capacity and which are full, helping to disseminate customers across the restaurants and prevent queues forming. Businesses will be asked to sign up for the app

ST asked if there was any clarification on whether food festivals could be classified as the same as markets in some instances. JW felt that the Government are referring to established, traditional style markets

CM asked if BCP Council has been liaising with Dorset Council over plans for re-opening and in particular how the Police are responding across the area

JW confirmed that he has been looking at how other Councils are reacting and what plans they are putting in place but has not been in direct communication with Dorset Council at this time. There is Government guidance available and BCP are currently following this. Discussions are ongoing with the Police, but enforcement is becoming more and more difficult. The Council is working closely with the Police in relation to significant issues and problems.

There is a need for more Rangers and some funding is being put aside to look at the options for having a SWOT team to go around the 3 conurbations but JW emphasised that the Council still relies on businesses to keep them informed

DB asked what the situation had been in relation to the beaches over the bank holiday weekend. JW reported that things had been tight at times with social distancing very difficult – main hotspots were near the piers. It is a significant challenge with huge numbers choosing to visit the beaches.

4. Marketing Recovery Plan approach - Jon Weaver/Nicola Goode

JW reported that NG has been working on a plan, based around the framework developed by Visit Scotland which was presented at the last meeting, which she would be sharing with the Board following which it will be circulated electronically with a request for feedback.

NG then talked the Board through the plan (Please see attached Recovery Plan)

JW emphasised that what was being presented was an initial draft plan. He would like to set up meetings with the different sectors to discuss it in more depth and see how businesses can get on board with it. The Gantt chart had given an initial indication of what is required and when. Now need businesses to start sharing their stories and experiences.

DB agreed that the message needs to get out to the wider public once re-opening starts. People want to return but in some cases are unsure what exactly they will face and what the experience will be like. JW confirmed that this will need to be done sector by sector with videos being a useful tool to show people what it is like – similar idea to the Ryan Air promotional video.

RR reported that she is seriously considering closing the hotel for the winter as her business is reliant on group bookings for things like Dance holidays/Christmas parties etc. None of which will be viable with social distancing still in place.

Chair was forced to leave the meeting at this point as a result of an IT issue. Vice Chair took over the meeting.

VS pointed out that the Government have set up Task Forces but at the present time there is no local government representation on these task forces. Similarly, the Renewal Cultural Task Force has no tourism representation. This is something that VS is trying to address but she felt it would be helpful if the DMB and Wonky Table could send a letter supporting the inclusion of Local Authorities on these groups. **ACTION:** DMB to look into writing a letter to Nigel Huddleston

5. Sector Reports

- **Accommodation – TL**
 - Self catering
 - Planning to reopen 4th July
 - Planning on 100% occupancy
 - 9am departures/5pm arrivals
 - Have had no guidance so don't know if plans are legal/advisable
 - Caravan parks
 - Planning on opening 4th July
 - Visitors with 2nd homes on site can return
 - Initially no facilities will be available. No guidance received on this
 - Hotels

- The main issue is capacities
 - If hotels are to survive then spreading bookings over the week is going to be essential
 - If open, restaurants will need to be booked in advance
 - For some hotels winter bookings are reliant on the group trade – eg: Dance groups, Christmas groups/parties/ Banqueting. Some groups will defer to 2021 on the basis they don't think social distancing will allow those to take place. Others have cancelled. As a result some hotels may be looking at possibility of closing for the winter as by that stage furloughing will not be assisting the situation and bookings may be so low as to make opening completely unviable
- There was further discussion around a kite mark for standards. VS pointed out that the Council do not have the capacity in Trading Standards & DHO to carry out any inspections and are not required to do so. The Council has no enforcement powers. JW confirmed that Visit Britain are working on a kite mark standard which will be signed off by Public Health England and this is the route that the Council is currently supporting. SR agreed but also pointed out that Quality in Tourism have a scheme which is already up and running.
 - Coach travel business problems are also having an impact on Hotels
 - Shearings have ceased trading. This has had a major impact on the Majestic and Savoy hotels which housed 70+ staff, 25 of whom lived in. They have been given 28 days to vacate so are potentially homeless

Chair re-joined the meeting

- **Transport - DS**
 - Coach Travel
 - There is currently no funding available for coach travel businesses. DS has contacted Tobias Ellwood but not heard anything from him.
 - Urquart was biggest firm in Scotland and have gone under as well as Caledonian
 - Shearings had over 2500 staff and 64000 bookings.
 - National Express
 - Starting a limited network of services with the 035 Bmth/Poole/London service reinstated but only for 20 routes.
 - Facemasks, gloves and sanitiser to be used by all customers and provided where necessary
 - Local Buses
 - Contracted by Government to provide a base level of service.
 - Further funding is to be released but there are no details are present
 - Expected to increase to around 80% by 15th June.
 - Maximum capacity is 25/bus with strict regime in place
 - There is a conflicting message as Government are funding buses but telling people not to use public transport. Needs clarity
 - Rail Travel
 - South West Railway have a management contract and are increasing the frequency of trains
 - They have funds to promote local areas and are keen to work with us
 - Air Travel
 - Being used for freight and maintenance

- Looking at some restricted services but these are likely to be from main airports only
- **Attractions - CS**
 - Nothing has really changed since the last meeting
 - Businesses are working together on Risk Assessments and Terms & Conditions
 - Waiting for VB standards to be announced
 - Some businesses may not open until Aug/Sept
 - Social distancing remains the biggest issue
- **Conference - ST**
 - As most of the business is national or international it is very dependent on Government guidance
 - Been looking closely at guidelines from abroad but need the Government to say which way they are going – Track and trace or social distancing
 - Challenge for venues is the gap between when staff come back and when it is operationally viable
 - Can do smaller scale events with fewer delegates but to be viable need the big events which needs a relaxation of social distancing
- **Events - CM**
 - Very unlikely that any outdoor events will take place in 2020
 - With announcements that Hogmanay/New Year events are cancelled in Scotland even Christmas events are looking vulnerable
 - Focus needs to be on plans for 2021
 - Unique challenges with cash flow as don't get any money in until the event
- **Coastal BID – PC**
 - Would like to know when a decision is going to be made over Christmas Tree Wonderland
- **Poole BID – SR**
 - Cautiously optimistic
 - Need something to prolong the summer season to assist businesses
 - Levy invoices should have gone out through an agency 4/5 weeks ago. Some processing issues but will be going out imminently.
- **International Education Association – GS**
- 4 categories – Universities, Colleges, Boarding Schools & Language schools
- Quarantine issues are looming. No clarity over air bridges/corridors and where they are. Still looking for clarity
- There are also ongoing issues over students having to return home to extend visas. This results in documentation going backwards and forwards between countries. Need everything to be dealt with in one country
- GS & DB will be talking with Pretty Patel on 3rd July
- Need to address problem around students not being able to work. If they could just work for a few hours it would be an incentive to them to come to the UK as competing countries currently offer that. It is not about the money – it is about the benefit and experience of working

- Summer will be completely missed for language schools. Universities and Colleges with Sept/Oct intake have a problem with students not being able to secure the visas in time. Visa offices are currently closed and at present don't know how long that will continue.
- It is anticipated that the recovery will not be until at least Jan/Mar 2021 and possibly not until the summer 2021
- Furlough due to stop from June but is required for a lot longer. Need confirmation that it is going to continue
- Far East/Middle East countries are gradually coming back from East to West. There will be increased competition from S. Africa, Australia/Canada/Malta and the USA.

6. Date of next meeting

- **Tuesday 21st July 2020 2pm – 4pm**