

Minutes of Bute BID Board Meeting

Date: 12th February 2025

Location: Bute Fabrics 5.30pm

Attendees: John Glen (JG)
Sophie Reid (SR)
Alistair Forsyth (AF)
Duncan Martin (DM)
Reeni Kennedy-Boyle (RKB)
Daniel MacIntyre (DMAC)
Kirsty Durrant (KD) online
DL Gordon (DLG)

Apologies for Absence: Ian McCulloch, Fergus Murray, David Adams McGilp

Declarations of Interest: None

Matters Discussed

Action

1. Minutes of previous meeting of 22nd January 2025: Approved

2. Visit from Daniel MacIntyre – Empty Business Property Officer

Empty Property Relief will no longer be available in Argyll & Bute from April 2025. Daniel will be involved in a new business support grant scheme to facilitate getting empty properties back into productive use. He has spent today visiting Bute with a view to putting together a portfolio of empty properties. He highlighted the value of footfall monitoring to profile the demographic of the island to attract potential investors. We will request feedback from our levy payers regarding empty properties of concern and ask if anyone with footfall monitors would be willing to supply their data for this project.

DLG

DMAC left the meeting at 5.50pm

3. Update from DAM of Visit Scotland: Submitted to the Chair in writing to be circulated to the rest of the Board. A noteworthy point is that the Bute Community Land Company have expressed an interest in the Discovery Centre and are currently undertaking a phase 1 feasibility study into that prospect.

JG

4. Update from Argyll & Bute Council:

ROYAL HOTEL – KD acknowledged there was a visit by representatives of the UK Government regarding an application for the Royal Hotel to receive funding from the Community Regeneration Partnership Fund. JG, DM, and DLG attended this visit and an online meeting earlier in the week.

PROJECT PLAYPARK – Formal confirmation for the project to go ahead has now been received from the Council's Transport and Infrastructure department. The next step is to create a contract and purchase order. RKB suggested approaching the local nurseries to let the children choose a design for the trampoline. JG pointed out that the quote received is providing a good range of products for the funding, but we would ideally be looking for additional private funding to expand in future phases. RKB reported that part of the earlier playpark discussions with the Council had involved improving the Putting Green. Also, the maintenance agreement between BID and the Council has still to be signed off.

DLG AND
BOARD

ALBERT PIER – DM asked if there was any update on the demolition and a discussion took place on the importance of finding a space for coach parking. A contract for the demolition has been awarded and KD will seek confirmation of the likely timescale.

KD

5. Decision on Collaboration with Bute Island Radio

The majority are in agreement for this project to go ahead.

6. Marketing Plans and Budgets

DLG presented the Board with quotes for several marketing options for this season. JG suggested DLG meet with him and SR to discuss the budgets in more detail. DLG also suggested a deeper marketing strategy was required to target the most effective times and quantify the success of any paid campaigns. Accommodation providers, visitor attractions, VisitScotland, and CalMac can be approached for visitor numbers to Bute. RKB will check if she has Council figures available for sharing.

JG, SR, DLG

EVENTS - Upcoming events on the Island were discussed and JG suggested looking at big events on the mainland we could tie in with, in order to direct traffic to Bute. There have previously been discussions around giving grants to the pubs for live music events under such circumstances.

PAID ADVERTISING - The digital notice board in Guildford Square can be opened up for paid advertising at the same time as the collaboration with Bute Island Radio is announced.

7. Gardening Maintenance Proposal

The contract for a gardener is due for renewal and it was agreed this should be put out to tender for 2025. DLG will update the scope of work.

DLG

8. Business Support Grants

A discussion took place on launching our business support grants for this year. KD is happy to support the administrative process for this and RKB will be meeting with Stuart Brownlie of the Bute Enterprise Finance Fund to discuss the possibility of match funding.

RKB

9. AOCB

STREET ART PROPOSAL - Luke Winter has a proposal to collaborate with BID on fun, street art projects. It was agreed to invite luke to the board meeting next month to present his ideas.

LEVY EXEMPTIONS - KD has investigated the position on levy exemptions and confirms our previous decisions have been correct.

DOG MESS - DLG raised the issue of dog mess and would like to pursue this with the Council. RKB pointed out the issue is underreported, which hinders the council from allocating resources to it. A poster with the phone number for reporting has already been added to the digital notice board in Guildford Square.

TOURISM SUMMIT - DLG requested permission to attend Argyll & Isles Strategic Tourism Summit and permission was granted.

The meeting closed at 6.45pm