**Eastbourne BID Annual General Meeting**

**Held at Urban Ground, South Street, Eastbourne**

**Wednesday 30th August 2023 at 6.20pm**

Top Table

Denise Harwood - Deputy Chair

Stephen Holt - CEO

George Message - Price & Co, Auditor

[35 attendees - directors, members and staff combined].

Stephen Holt (SH) thanked everyone for attending this third AGM. He went through some housekeeping procedures and drew everyone’s attention to the agenda, minutes, accounts and notice of the AGM that were available at the meeting. Each attendee was also given red and green voting cards to hold up during the meeting - green being agree: red disagree. There were also BID director nomination forms and biographies of directors seeking re-election. There were some maps on display illustrating the work that the BID has done over the past four years. Attendees were also asked to complete an online survey, as it helps to shape our future. SH explained the fire alarm procedure. He then handed the meeting over to Denise Harwood (DH) as deputy Chair. Comment was made that Shoes Simes, our Chair, had been unable to attend due to the national air travel issues.

Denise Harwood (DH) welcomed all present to the meeting and introduced George Message from Price & Company to the top table. Other BID staff present were Luke Johnson, Operations Manager and Ambassador Jason Smith who made themselves known at the meeting. Special guests in attendance were Caroline Ansell MP, Councillor Colin Swansborough and Sarah Dance from Eastbourne Alive. DH then asked all BID directors to raise their hands. Others present were invited to approach the Board afterwards if they had any questions. DH thanked the Board for all the work that goes in to supporting the BID, adding that they give all their time freely. DH thanked Angela Lacey for taking the minutes and Andy Spirou and his staff of Urban Ground for hosting the meeting.

**1. Notice convening the AGM**

Notice for the AGM was posted in accordance with the Articles of Association. Proposed by Simon Groves; Seconded by Christina Ewbank. Unanimously agreed.

**2. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Shoes Simes, Nick Ducatel, Paul Hill, Ian Lucas, Alexsandra Gatta and Jacquie Trott of JT Property Rental & Sales. In addition, an unannounced apology was received from Emma Mason.

**3. Minutes of the AGM held on 31st August 2022**

The minutes were proposed by Lucy King and seconded by Maxine Reid-Roberts. Unanimously agreed.

**4. Annual Accounts to 31st August 2022 and Auditor’s Report**

Abbreviated copies of the annual accounts were made available to members in advance of the meeting and over the last 14 days. DH then invited George Message to comment on the audit.

George stated that if anyone has any specific questions to speak to him after the meeting. George reported that the accounts are in a strong position. The levy income is quite consistent each year. There was a reduction in the amount outstanding compared to 31st August 2021. Bad debts were slightly higher than the previous year. 2022 saw an addition to the income stream of £180K via the ice rink. It costs a significant amount as well to run. There was a slight deficit, hence the levy. Other projects were detailed in the accounts. Administration costs rose by about £28K due to wages and salaries. This is due to the decision to bring the ambassador contract in house and employ directly. The overall surplus was £78K and there is £331K in reserve as at August 2021. From an audit point of view, there are no issues requiring attention. The accounts were signed off and submitted in time with Companies House.

There being no questions, the accounts were proposed by Tom Meggison; seconded by Christina Ewbank. Unanimously agreed.

**5. Election of Board Directors for the year 2023/24**

The BID seeks to represent the membership in every way possible and similarly the Board of Directors seeks to be representative of the membership as a whole, both geographically and by sector. Under the Articles of Association, one-quarter of the longest serving directors seek re-election each year.

Jeremy Sogno has stood down as a director of the BID Board and so three directors have been nominated for re-election under the Constitution. The Chair thanked Jeremy (in his absence) for his hard work and support since the BID was planned in 2016 and came into effect in 2019. The current directors in office are:

1. Carl Bird of Tall Guy Coffee

2. Nick Ducatel of Eastbourne Borough Council

3. Christina Ewbank of Edeal Enterprise Agency and Eastbourne *UnLtd* Chamber of Commerce

4. Simon Groves of PRG Marketing and PR

5. Alexsandra Gatta of Gianni’s and Victoria Place Traders

6. Denise Harwood of the Enterprise Shopping Centre

7. Paul Hill of Complete Financial Planning

8. Ashley Pugh of W Bruford

9. Mark Powell of The Beacon

10. Maxine Reid-Roberts of Quantuma

11. Shoes Simes of Evol Empire Inns

12. Phil Simpson of Primark

The Directors seeking re-election are:

1. Lucy King of the Eastbourne Framing Centre

2. Ian Lucas of Handpicked

3. Tom Meggison of Metro Bank

Short biographies of the above three directors were made available at the meeting.

DH thanked Denise Greaves and Keith Ridley for all their hard work as advisers.

The directors were proposed by Ashley Pugh; Seconded by Penny Ratcliffe of Gallery 42. Unanimously agreed.

As per the Articles of Association, the Board must approve any nomination from BID members to the Board. We have asked for any nominations to be made where they will be discussed at the next full Board meeting in September. Anyone interested can use the nomination forms available. Board members can be appointed at any time throughout the year.

**7. Chair’s Report**

This was delivered by Stephen Holt as CEO of Your Eastbourne BID who had some slides on display to support his presentation.

Thanks to Denise Harwood for chairing the meeting today. One of the major things the BID does are our events and competitions which bring in the footfall. We monitor this through our newly installed camera in Terminus Road. The Pop-up park in Victoria Place, which is in its third year closes on Monday. We also have the Festive Fun and Fireworks Christmas Event at Little Chelsea as well as their food and craft event in the summer.

Thanks to Caroline Ansell MP. Also Eastbourne Youth Market, which has a 20% increase footfall. The bike night at the seafront end of Terminus Road invites bikers to enjoy the atmosphere and we readily receive 400 bikes.

One pilot event that took place this year was the tennis Grand Slam where we had temporary tennis courts in Eastbourne town centre. Thanks to the Lawn Tennis Association, Tom Meggison and others for their support. What’s really important is the variety of people who came down for the event, including students and disabled spectators who love tennis but couldn’t play. The Lawn Tennis Association is keen on supporting us again next year.

Dressing the Town – There were 122 sites around the town centre for the coronation and 1.5K of bunting installed. It will be coming down in Little Chelsea to be replaced with the festive lighting. We are looking at installing lighting in other areas. Although expensive it is good for the town.  There are 50 planters in the town at present being used by various businesses and the wooden planters are mainly in the Pop-up park. We’ve recently had a planter request from Beanzz and are happy to supply some. Once the park closes, we will be going round to businesses to ask if they would like to have a planter for a year until the next Pop-up park takes place.

We are doing more with window vinyl displays. We know that empty shop windows have an impact on the town and its appearance. As soon as Closs & Hamblin left, we spoke to the team. It takes a lot of work with the agents, owners and occupiers, but it is something we are passionate about and keen to do. The good news is we have occupancy rates as opposed to vacancy rates, which is more positive. We are now at 93% occupancy rate. This is higher than the national average. The challenge we have is 3-4 in clusters. Thanks to Simon Groves, we are working closely with Simon Hunt of Hunt Commercial and are trying to find a way to streamline that process so that we can put vinyls up. We take the risk that they could be up for 6 months, or taken down in a week or two’s time.

I am excited about Eastbourne Alive, which is the major project for the Turner wraparound prize. Sarah Dance, Liis Hirvoja and the team are looking at a 100K footfall for this event. Next Tuesday we are having a major art installation in the form of a pink container unit installed at Bankers corner. The idea is to get people to go inside it, enjoy it, take a look at it, photograph it and then shop in the town centre. The idea is if you’re coming to Towner for the day, we want you to be seeing these artwork installations as well. More temporary pop-ups are happening in The Beacon. We are also having an attractive artistic map designed. We will also have 67 lamppost signs as well as cross street banners.

I went to Liverpool to see the Turner Prize; something I’ve never done before and I’ve never been to Liverpool either. When I got out of the station I didn’t know where to go or the fact that the prize was on. I want everyone to know what’s going on in Eastbourne and how to get there. That is something we are really strongly pushing and we are working closely with businesses to maximise that.

I am also working very closely with Caroline Ansell re: security. Four CCTV cameras are presently in the town centre. Terminus Road has a footfall camera, there are two in Cornfeld Road by the old Tourist Information Centre and one in Langney Road. We work closely with the police and agencies. Not everyone knows where the cameras are and if we see a spike of trouble in a certain area, we can then move the cameras. Since August last year Jason in his role as ambassador returned £5,270 of stolen goods to businesses [round of applause]. There were also 11 arrests of prolific offenders resulting in custodial sentences. Jason knows the town centre well and the undesirable people like the back of his hand. Jason, and the BID is not the police, and we do not have Police powers.

Every year we focus on Christmas. The biggest activity of course is the ice rink. This year Feastival Events are running it, which is very exciting. We are a limited/small team and with only two full members of staff to run it, it is very time-consuming.

We are working with Maybugs on the light display. What’s really exciting is the Inspiring Angels trail. We are working closely with Father Danny Pegg who has contacts with all the other churches. There are 10-15K people on the database. This year we are looking at an angel trail. It is not church focused but is something that people can buy into. I want to set a world record. If we get 1500 people in the town centre dressed as angels, you will immediately see the impact. Part of that will be the Xmas market and Little Chelsea event.

All this is generated by BID panels. All the directors are part of one, two or more panels where we look at what’s going on and what we can do. You don’t have to be a director to be on the panel. The team don’t lead the panels: we ask the directors or a member of the business community to run them. The panels are: finance and governance, retail, security; Xmas, Dressing the town; Ad hoc events panel.

If you’re looking at closing the road, the BID can liaise with the necessary people. An event is far more successful if businesses are brought in and get involved, rather than the team imposing.

If you have any questions, please speak to me or the team afterwards.

Paula Ratcliffe stated she is working with Emma Mason in compiling a database re: the map. She is also working with Sarah Dance and Liis Hirvoja. Paula’s gallery is open to outside artists. It’s the only place in Eastbourne that does this. SH will talk to Sarah and Liis to get the process moving.

**8. Any Other Business which the Chair may allow**

Denise Harwood stated she had not received any other business items to discuss. She thanked everyone for attending and Andy Spirou again for Urban Ground’s excellent hosting. She then declared the formal business closed at 6.55pm.