



**Halton** **BID**  
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS

**Halton Chamber Enterprises Executive BID Board Meeting**  
**29<sup>th</sup> September 2020**  
**Virtual Meeting**

**Present**

Ian Hayhoe (Chair)  
David Halton (Halebank Operating Group Chair)  
Jill Naylor (Astmoor Operating Group Chair)  
Adrian Fillingham (Astmoor Operating Group Vice Chair)  
Lee Brabin (Halebank Operating Group Vice Chair)  
Rachael Owen (Chamber CEO)  
Joanne Taylor (BID Manager)

**Apologies**

None

Agenda Point	Action Point
<p><b>Welcome</b> Everyone was welcomed and Joanne thanked everyone for attending and confirmed that there were no apologies given. Joanne mentioned that David Halton will need to leave the meeting at 12pm.</p>	
<p><b>Minutes of Last Meeting</b> Joanne confirmed that the only actions on the last minutes were for her and both the action to chase ITS in relation to the superfast broadband had been completed as well as the query of what happens to any assets if the BID is not successful at the next ballot. Joanne confirmed that this was covered as part of the recent governance training.</p>	
<p><b>Governance Training Follow up</b> Joanne explained that after the recent British BIDs governance training, although, it was reassuring that we appear to be doing most things correct, there was just a couple of areas we needed to follow up on. <u>Articles of Association</u> The Articles which were used when the new Company was set up by the BID Accountant appear to be standard Articles. Joanne has now amended the Articles of Association using the template provided by British BIDs and informed the group that these Articles appear to have simplified things as the current Articles are quite</p>	

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<p>detailed. Joanne wanted to query section 3 on page 1 with having more than one BID and not wanting to be limited it was agreed that we would state Halton and surrounding areas to avoid us having to alter the Articles. Ian Hayhoe as Member agreed these Articles of Association were adopted by special resolution during this meeting.</p> <p><u>Appointment of Members</u></p> <p>It was discussed about Members being included as the Governance training mentioned that currently we only have Ian Hayhoe as a member. There was some uncertainty about this as Rachael Owen’s recollection is the Halton Chamber of Commerce would need to be registered as a member. Ian confirmed that his understanding was that it needs to be himself as an independent person, Rachael from the Chamber and then one from each BID, as we needed to appoint one person from each of the BIDs to ensure consistency and balance. Joanne pointed out that number 4 on the articles states that nobody shall be appointed as a director of the company unless he is a member of the company. Rachael suggested asking Stuart from AGP. It was agreed that we firstly need to go back and check the recorded training to see what was decided. Action: <b>Joanne to check the recording and share this.</b></p> <p><u>Bank Accounts/Dormant Accounts</u></p> <p>Rachael is still experiencing problems with this, as the forms have been rejected for the second time and the Bank will not specify why. Ian offered to support where he could and Rachael confirmed that he will need to sign the forms again. <b>Action: Rachael to process this.</b></p> <p>Feedback of the Governance training for those that attended was all positive and Jill Naylor feedback that it was reassuring that we were doing a really good job.</p>	<p>JT</p> <p>RO</p>
<p><b>Astmoor Chairs Report</b></p> <p>Jill Naylor presented the following update:-</p> <p><b>Safe and Secure</b></p> <p>To eliminate our concerns about a reduction in footfall resulting in an increase in crime, Direct kindly offered to carry out day time patrols free of charge. They have now confirmed that they are just doing daytime patrols on a weekend.</p> <p>There was a report of antisocial behaviour at the start of lockdown, however, this appeared to have gone away again.</p> <p>Concerns were raised with the Council that the handback land under the bridge was not secure. This has resulted in teenagers accessing this land and incidents of fly tipping which has raised concerns that travellers may access the site. Jill enquired from Joanne what had happened with this and Joanne updated the group that the 2<sup>nd</sup> incident resulted in the trailer being used having a malfunction and being left. A vehicle registration and CCTV footage were obtained from the BID ANPR/CCTV system and, therefore, we’re optimistic for a prosecution.</p>	

The hand sanitiser has been greatly appreciated although we have not had as much of an uptake of face coverings. Jill mentioned that she had regularly seen Joanne on the estate delivering hand sanitiser to businesses.

The keyholding service uptake has increased with 48 businesses now utilising this free service.

PC Jeremy Frankell has moved on and we have PC Ellis Gresty as the new Astmoor Beat Manager. Unfortunately, Joanne and Ellis have not yet managed to meet.

#### **Image Enhancement**

During lockdown there was an increase in fly tipping, however, incidents were mostly on adopted highway. Jill reiterated that there's been the mase amount of fly tipping under the bridge already mentioned.

There was also an increase in pests during lockdown and, therefore, we had temporary bait boxes left on Dalton Court.

Overgrown unregistered land adjacent to the footpath leading to the busway on Brindley has been tidied up with the grass being cut and trees and shrubs cut back.

Neil Oxley at the Woodland Trust has agreed to arrange for the overgrown area of Haddock Wood at the top of Arkwright Road to be cut back. Jill enquired why the Woodland Trust are doing this and Joanne confirmed that it's the land near Pharmaserve car park near Tarmac which is part of Haddock Wood that they own.

The problem is the overgrown trees are covering the lampposts making it a vulnerable area with poor lighting.

There has been an unpleasant smell on the estate reported and this is being investigated by Environmental Health.

We have removed human waste and disinfected the area on Chadwick Road car park. Jill enquired if we knew who was responsible for this and Joanne confirmed that this is still unknown, however, the problem will hopefully be elevated as this car park has now been fenced off by First Investments. Joanne explained that First Investments with the parking issues on the estate are utilising the opportunity to let this area as a car park.

#### **Better Connected**

Occupancy has increased on Astmoor to 86% and Joanne has met with all new businesses that she is aware of. Utilisation of Joanne as a conduit has definitely increased since COVID.

We had an independent report carried out to establish the best way forward with the SFB project. The conclusion was to proceed with the offer from ITS Technology the network company who installed the infrastructure for the ANPR/CCTV system who have partnered with AVANDDA to install fibre 100/1000Mb Fibre Lite at no cost to the BID. Joanne updated the group that the go live date has been put back to November and confirmed that she has feedback after the Astmoor Operating Group meeting that it would be good to have cheaper options, chunking it up more making it more affordable for smaller businesses. They are looking to role it out to those businesses wanting the 100mb first. Joanne and Jill both confirmed that it was good to get the peace of mind of the independent report and reassurance of why ITS/AVANDDA were taking the financial risk.

**Training**

All BID training was cancelled in March to avoid having to pay cancellation fees due to lockdown. We have started to reschedule cancelled training with Fire Warden, Health & Safety, Forklift Novice and Refresher training booked back in. Mental Health First Aid level 2 training went ahead virtually although two full days on-line training was probably not ideal. The majority of trainers have agreed to deliver social distanced training; however, we have experienced difficulty getting venues for the training.

There hasn't been as much of an uptake on the trainings schedule so far which Jill thinks is due to Business priorities.

**Regeneration**

After feeding back to the Council in March, that BID Businesses had more pressing prioritise with COVID19, although, the Council were keen not to delay the project further they listened to our feedback and subsequently put everything on hold for twelve weeks.

BDP as the Consultants prepared an online presentation of the Masterplan and after we invited Diane to the Astmoor Operating Group meeting to do a Q&A session they set up their own phone in.

Having shared concerns about the narrowing of the road it was agreed that a focus group (mainly consisting of the Astmoor Operating Group who were on the call) would be involved with all future decisions about the road. Concerns were also raised about the lack of green initiatives and parking. Jill enquired if anyone had heard anymore about the Focus Group. Jill offered to chase this up. **Action: Jill Naylor to contact Diane Robinson to enquire further about this group.**

Joanne updated the group that the traffic survey had been completed. Jill commented that this would not have given a true record with many staff still on furlough. Joanne agreed and confirmed that the results are due back next week.

Joanne confirmed that the Council have now presented the Masterplan to the Council Executive Board earlier this month and it was well received, funding has been given so it's all systems go now with a start date of April 2021. Joanne has an update to share on the BID newsletter going out today/tomorrow. Joanne confirmed that she is hoping that their attention would now move to the focus group and the detail of the masterplan. Ian Hayhoe reiterated the importance of being engaged so we have involvement in the decisions.

A traffic survey took place along the east west road Monday 14<sup>th</sup> September to Friday 18<sup>th</sup> September 6.00am to 6.00pm each day and we're currently awaiting to hear the outcome of that.

Recently First Investments erected a fence and gate partway down Brindley Road, the Council are aware of this and have requested this to be moved. The BID has reported the issue with parking as AAK are experiencing problems with HGV's stacking causing problems for Highwood Consultancy.

Ian enquired how people are feeling on the estate and how businesses are feeling and if there's anything else we can do to support. Jill reported back that she's not seen personnel from neighbouring businesses and business still seem slow but

JN

doesn't know if there's anything else we can do to support. Jill said that Joanne had been very present on the estate with hand sanitiser, masks etc and said it's things like that that go along way and lets businesses know we're thinking of them. Joanne informed the group that she is feeding back the difficulties BID businesses are experiencing to British BIDs and feels that there's now additional support from BB with the newly formed industrial BID network group that Joanne is a part of who meet virtually.

### **Halebank Chairs Report**

David Halton updated the group as follows:-

#### **Safe and Secure**

There has been a couple of none related BID Business incidents whereby CCTV footage has been requested. One involved the thief of a bicycle the other an incident with knife crime. On both occasions good CCTV footage was obtained and provided to the police, despite having some issues with the transmission of images to Direct Security.

The only police issues in the area currently is not business related but there's concerns of some suspected drug activity and ASB along Foundry Lane. PCSO Stephen Marnick has already suggested that the BID business CCTV may help again if required in relation to these concerns.

There's been a good uptake on the hand sanitiser with 23 Halebank businesses but not a big uptake on face coverings. David said he felt this showed we were out there and cared whether businesses were using or not.

#### **Image Enhancement**

David informed the Group that there's been a litter pick of Stobarts land and the rest of Foundry Lane. There has been a problem with the mechanical sweeper spilling out dust on the estate and this was reported to Open Spaces without a response. There has also been a couple of incidents of fly tipping on Pickering Road. After concerns were previously raised about an increase of pests on Widnes Business Park, this has been monitored and despite reports of an increase in areas during lockdown, there hasn't been an increased reported by Pest Solutions on Widnes Business Park. Pest activity was reported to have stayed the same for Widnes Business Park showing medium for most and a low activity for one business. David mentioned that there were concerns that the pest problem isn't helped by a recycling business on WBP. David informed the group that Joanne has contacted the owner to discuss the issue with rats and to get his feelings about this. The business owner confirmed that he has had increased rat activity on the site. In discussion with the site owner/Landlord, they advised that it was a "time of the year" thing and coincides with high tides, as the site backs onto the Mersey. The business owner feels that there no sustained increase and the rats have dropped back to their normal levels, suggesting the outbreak was a one off. There was also speculation that less activity in the town/city centres has led to the rats venturing

away from city and town centres. The businesses at the bottom of Foundry Lane have gone from low activity to high and the overgrown grass at the bottom of Foundry Lane owned by Stobarts could be contributing to this.

**Better Connected**

There's been an increase in enquiry emails received and more businesses using the BID as a 'go to' and a conduit to contact other businesses and HBC, especially when Rates at the Council were difficult to get hold off.

Unfortunately, it has proven difficult for Joanne to contact some of the businesses at Foundry House as many have been working from home. Despite the Grant there has been reluctance to pay the BID levy as they have to pay the BID and then get the Grant monies. David reported that this problem is ongoing but we're aware of it.

**Training**

David confirmed that as Jill as part of the Astmoor report had already mentioned the training got cancelled but training is now being rescheduled. David also confirmed that he had staff attend the Mental Health First Aid Level 3 and said it was hard work being on zoom for two days solid but they both found the training helpful and useful. David feels that it's good that we're going back to face to face training as he doesn't think the training on zoom goes in as well.

David concluded that it's all pretty positive in what is at the moment a difficult time. Ian Hayhoe asked what more the BID could do to support and David mentioned that he can't see anymore that the BID could do at the moment. David feels that showing we care with the face coverings and hand gel is key and Joanne's "velvet glove" approach around the BID levy goes a long way.

**ANPR/CCTV**

Joanne updated the group that she had been seeking quotes from providers who can look after the whole system and resolve either camera, network or IT issues. Joanne also explained that she thinks it would work better if the same company looks after the whole system on both estates going forward. This would result in there just being one point of contact to report any faults to. Joanne briefly went through the quotes received from three companies. Joanne explained that she liked the company ethos of Lansafe as they intend to get the system working so well, that the cost for maintenance should remain low as they would not expect to receive callouts. However, Lansafe were the most expensive quote for the audit of the system as others had come with a low quote which included a diagnostic of the systems. Joanne enquired how the Board would prefer to make the decision. Ian confirmed that we should look to make a decision and for ease of management he would rather spend the money upfront making sure it's all fit for purpose moving forward, with a single provider and the rest of the Board agreed. The Board confirmed that with that in mind they were happy to go with Lansafe. Rachael Owen raised concern about the issues not being repaired as part of the audit and Joanne confirmed that they intend to send out a senior engineer out for three days and they will also look at the problems Direct Security are experiencing

<p>and are likely to come back with some recommendations that will have costings attached. <b>Action: Joanne to seek reassurance before committing with Lansafe</b> The CCTV/ANPR Policy was approved and the Board are in agreement to this being ratified with today's date.</p>	JT
<p><b>New Initiatives</b> <b>New Cameras</b> - Joanne mentioned that once the CCTV/ANPR systems are working as they should be that we would like to add camera on the systems. Both Systems have capacity for 32 cameras so we have room for manoeuvre. Joanne suggested that we could look at options to add to the systems and possibly invite someone from Lansafe to present all available options, once everything is working as it should be. <b>Signage</b> - Joanne updated the board that she has been researching digital signs. Halebank signage requires updating, however, there's now an issue with space on Introductory sign and it can be difficult keeping the sign up to date as businesses come and go. Joanne has contacted the BID Director at Manor Royal to make enquiries about their digital signage and costing and a large double sided unit cost them £24K. The risk is that we may get hit with up to £8K business rates costs if we use the sign to generate income for advertisements. However, we could use the sign for businesses to advertise free of charge. The Board liked the idea and were keen for us to work with a local business who may provide this service. Joanne mentioned that this may coincide with the masterplan for Astmoor as that proposing new signage. Jill is keen to see if the council can pay for or at least contribute to the signs. <b>Online Learning Portal</b> – Training is not getting booked up as quickly as pre-covid so Joanne explained that she was considering online training packages. Ian suggested we look at skills or wellbeing training. It was thought that staff returning from furlough might create more capacity for training and it would be a good use of their time. <b>Action: Joanne to make enquiries with businesses about training requirements and also to look at costing and training available within online training packages.</b></p>	JT
<p><b>Accounts/Budget</b> Joanne enquired if everyone had had chance to look at the SAGE account reports and budget spreadsheets circulated and confirmed that she had had a separate conversation with David Halton about the Halebank budget. Ian suggested that rather than go through the budget line by line that Joanne highlight anything of concern. Joanne explained that the difficulty is knowing what levy we will receive, however, as we were fortunate to have surplus on both BIDs there is currently no concerns to raise.</p>	
<p><b>A.O.B</b> Joanne informed the group that we had recently advertised and interviewed for a Business Administrator and had Daria Spencer starting next week. Daria will split her time supporting the Chamber and the BID.</p>	



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