

BID For Galashiels

Meeting minutes - 1st July 2025, The Salmon Inn

Present:

Lewis Roden, Jay Hogarty, Andy Hay, Angela Buglass Kelly, Debbie Fuller, Lauren Jamieson, Tam Denholm, Helen Calder, Euan Jardine

Apologies:

Luigi Catterino, Sebastian Janus, Mags Fenner

Next Meeting:

5th August 2025, Location TBC

With thanks to Helen and The Salmon Inn for hosting this month's meeting. Special mention for the cookies and cream fudge!

1. Review of June's Minutes

- No questions raised.
- meeting admin feedback:
 - **AP** – Actions and Minutes to be issued within 7 days of future meetings
 - **AP** - Action Log to be created and issued. (ABK)
 - **AP** – MF to update calendar invites with meeting location.

2. Administrative

- The Board discussed the need for some additional training to help set best practice and ongoing governance and strategy. Agreed to mandate a session on Board Training.
 - **AP** – ABK to source and arrange.
- Board discussed the Accountancy and Financial Director Vacancy. A suggestion was made to create a role profile for the Finance Director and to issue to Levy Paying Businesses for expressions of interest. CA preferrable. EJ raised that the council also have an internal volunteering programme, could be someone there.

Re Accountancy, LR updated the group that two firms have responded with quotes so far, Borders Accounting & Admin and Douglas Hume/EQ. Others have been chased for response.

- **AP** – MF to create role profile and issue, AH has sent a template

- **AP** – LR to collate additional Accountancy proposals (JRW) and bring to board for final decision 08/25
- **AP** – LJ to speak with Jim Carey and Allan Brown re FD role.
- TD gave us all a demo of the CRM he is building. All agreed it looked great and would add a lot of value to the group and our projects.
 - **AP** – TD to continue build, liaising with MF

3. Communications

- LR, JH gave short update on meeting with John Lamont, great supporter of the work BID is doing. Encouraged us to look beyond the Galashiels border when thinking about the work we will be doing.
- The Board discussed and agreed the formation of a Marketing Subgroup to liaise with McGM. Members – MF, LR, TD, LJ. First actions around gathering good data from MM and setting clear metrics, defining what good look likes for social engagement.

Engagement with levy businesses was also discussed and how clear the benefits were of joining Heartland. Lots of great incentives, can McGM create a more detailed invite and “new member” email. Another point was made around visibility of drop-in sessions, should we get a WhatsApp broadcast set up or an email group.

- **AP** - Marketing Subgroup to meet post 8th July McGM regular catch-up
- **AP** – Request engagement data from McGM, socials, websites, newsletters
- **AP** – Consider best way to communicate regularly, and directly, with levy payers
- Volunteer engagement was raised by LR as part of his update on meeting with Kenny Harrow. The Board agreed that the creation of a volunteer group was an action. HC described the group she created previously, currently dormant but with 35 – 40 volunteer members. This could be relaunched in collaboration with EGT, Town Council and other relevant groups. We also discussed a Volunteers Awards and the “Rejuvenation Days”.
 - **AP** – HC to investigate relaunch of Volunteer FB Group with new launch comms and name. E.G. Rejuvenating Gala – Volunteer Group. (action also linked to CSSWE)
 - **AP** – Ongoing plans for rejuvenation day(s) (MF)

4. Creating a Safe, Secure and Welcoming Environment

- JH and AH gave update on discussion with the Vacant Shops Academy. Positive conversations ongoing with Iain from TVSA. MF and JH to liaise with Ripon BID to see a successful project in motion. Other case studies to be shared.
 - **AP** – Iain from TVSA to be asked to join next board meeting for Q&A and discussion on way forward. (JH/AH/MF)

5. Increasing Footfall and Spend

- Highlighted new businesses to connect with as new levy payers. B&M, Bob & Rita (Channel Street), Galashiels Nails (Bank Street), Big Dog Diner (High Street).
- EJ raised new cameras that will be installed in town, with AI capabilities. Could help with monitoring footfall. Other ideas were discussed around monitoring footfall and spend but no decisions made, to be revisited.
 - **AP** - EJ will bring further details and timescales to next meeting
- The board has a continued discussion on promoting Galashiels as a visitor destination and the collateral that currently exists, or doesn't exist, in places like SSDA, Visit Scotland, SBC etc. It was noted that SOSE has withdrawn funding for SSDA/SSH and they will now be supported by Visit Scotland. LJ shared more information about her blog and her "Top 20 Things To Do". LR shared update on Destination Tweed, River Tweed Trail and the exclusion of Galashiels, LR has contacted them to discuss inclusion.
 - **AP** – LJ to share Top 20 document for review, add as agenda point again next month for decisions/next steps (LJ)
 - **AP** – Lobby SSDA re the Gala entries on website (MF)
 - **AP** – LR to follow up with Destination Tweed
 - **AP** – Lobby Visit Scotland and SBC/SoSE regional tourism teams re raising profile of Gala. (MF)
 - **AP** - Connect with social media bloggers and influencers to promote certain themes, Architecture, History, Fashion and Textiles etc. (Marketing Subgroup & McGM)
 - **AP** – consider a one page "Gala Story" to be used in place-making and funding applications(MF)
- Christmas was discussed at length. There are two distinct workstreams here for us. Christmas Lights and Christmas Event(s). TD and MF to keep on top of arrangements to gather, test and store all Christmas lighting that currently belongs to the town. Blanchere have offered to review and quote on full support package as an alternative.

We revisited the conversation on using a living tree currently in Bank Street, agreed in principle, on a living Christmas tree for future years. Aside from Christmas it would give an opportunity for future storytelling, events and merchandise linked to “The Tree” could be very exciting. Could also decorated for Halloween, Easter, Valentines, Braw Lads etc.

Christmas Event(s) and Light Turn On will be taken forward by HC, LJ, TD and MF at the moment. HC will update previous event costings based on a 10k spend. HC and LJ to garner other local support for a “Christmas Committee”/Subgroup.

The board discussed crowdfunding and fundraising to support our festive endeavours. Is there opportunity for splitting costs with EGT, SBC etc? With crowdfunding we could incentivise donators. Needs further discussion and investigation.

- **AP** – TD and MF to follow up re lights
- **AP** – HC to revise costings proposal for A Gala Christmas, based on 10k spend
- **AP** – HC and LJ to pull together new community sub-group members
- **AP** – HC, LJ, MF to draft proposal for crowdfunding, including storytelling and technical requirements

6. Business Support

- The board discussed the lack of clear access to good quality support and training, an example was made of a new business in town who has been asked to contact Business Gateway who then had nothing of relevance or appropriate timing. EJ stated he would connect Business Gateway to LR and MF to connect with BCC re their offer, and to avoid duplication. Also linked discussion to comms re awareness for all Heartland business members on benefits and support that come as part of their membership.
 - **AP** – MF/LR to connect with BCC & Business Gateway
 - **AP** – ABK to draft a list of additional development events, courses, apps
 - **AP** – set up business support page on website (MF/ABK)
 - **AP** – curate list of regional and national awards, funding opportunities etc to share via email and socials for member businesses (MF)

ENDS