



## Minutes of Board Meeting 19.01.24

Attending: Luke Heydon (LH), Dennis Murray (DM), Guy Mathias(GM), Matthew Abercrombie (MA)  
Apologies: Lauli Moschini (LM)  
In support: Anna Fielding-o-Farrell; Anne Nelson

### 1) Approval of Minutes from meeting 03.11.23

- 1.a) Board agreed that MSD council members should receive the minutes from meetings that they attend.
- 1.b) There was a discussion about approving minutes before the next meeting in order for the minutes to go out earlier. GM suggested planned dates for Board Meetings as we only book one meeting in advance, to facilitate attendance.

### 2) Matters arising from Minutes of meeting 03.11.23

- 2.a) Further opportunities for funding – MA said we will discuss this in audience research. AFO made an application to Living Well in Winter for a coffee machine for the shop but it was rejected as not meeting criteria.
- 2.b) AFO had an email from Abbie who runs the Bank in Eye but no dates set for a site meeting yet.
- 2.c) Zoey Banthorpe put AFO in touch with 'Kickstart' regarding apprenticeships; AFO felt Wingfield Barns has no office space or IT, and WB staff require teaching marketing rather than the other way round. LH said the apprentice would have the knowledge but not the skills. AFO said that it was a good thing for the future. MA said it would put a strain on our resources to manage the reporting and managing an apprentice.

### 3) Barclays Bank account closure

- 3.a) Barclays Bank account is now reopened, and new Lloyds Bank account also opened. Barclays have admitted their error in closing our account.
  - i. Complaint was made and compensation offered of £225. Barclays do not compensate for loss of business or indirect charges, only direct charges.
  - ii. The standard compensation offer does not cover the hours and costs which AFO did. Barclays Bank consider the matter closed. Any amendment to the complaint means it is reopened which takes another 8 weeks.
  - iii. A report to the banking Ombudsman has been submitted.
- 3.b) A few invoices are still outstanding with Barclays Bank and AFO is adding all suppliers to the Lloyds account and will run down the Barclays account. AFO has transferred £10,000 as an initial balance to the Lloyds account. LH said to future-proof against a repeat of this Wingfield Barns should have a second account with instant access. AFO said she wants to open a deposit account and £5,000 kept in another account (not with Barclays Bank).
- 3.c) MA thanked DM for handling payments in the interim, however queried whether the auditors would be concerned. All agreed that they will be sympathetic and that a clear paper trail is present.
- 3.d) AFO said due to the banking issue December accounts are not yet complete.
- 3.e) GM suggested the business resilience plans need looking at.



- 3.f) AFO asked if we need to make a public statement and the initial feeling was not to.
- i. LH said if people don't read things correctly it could be misinterpreted. MA said there was a lot of information about Barclays Bank on social media. DM felt we should make a statement as there is power in every business who has had similar treatment coming together.
  - ii. AFO said it should be highlighted was that Wingfield Barrns had done nothing wrong, it was the bank's error. AFO explained that Barclays Know Your Customer Team had been requesting information (changing mandate after Diana Kearsley stepped down as Chair), and they did not allocate a piece of information to our account. They also failed to warn us of impending action. MA added the error was compounded by giving us wrong information about transferring money.
  - iii. GM said it could be quirky enough for a *Watchdog* type programme, or *You and Yours* on Radio 4. Or *The One Show*. MA suggested *Private Eye*.

Action – MA to do press release to email relevant bodies.

AN Business resilience plan to be updated and circulated.

#### 4) Shop Progress

- 4.a) AFO updated board that Wingfield Barrns will be receiving a visit from Pippa Fry, Communications Officer from Royal Countryside Fund on 8<sup>th</sup> February. Pippa is aware of the bank issue. The shop will be laid out for the visit with the aim of opening by March.
- 4.b) Wingfield Barrns has made a variation to the grant application to accommodate the glazed front doors. AFO has chased the manufacturer and installer to try and get them fitted by February 8<sup>th</sup>.
- 4.c) The kitchen upgrade supplier is being looked at again, and the plan is to do the strip out and project manage it ourselves.
- 4.d) AFO advised that Wingfield Barrns is due for second instalment of the funds on Monday 22nd January.
- 4.b) DM asked if WB was planning to come to Parish Council meeting to spread the word & answer any questions regarding the site boundary and car park update.

Action: AFO to attend Parish Council Meeting 31st January 7:30pm.

#### 5) Car park update

- 5.a) AFO reported the car park is still a big issue for parking.
  - i. LH updated that he had not heard from the Council. LH had approached the Council via the planning portal and is communicating with Sian Bunbury. He has added more information, but a site visit was not offered. LH advised them that Wingfield Barrns would not be doing a planning pre-application. LH explained to the Council planning department that Wingfield Barrns are just revamping the initial plan as the project is too expensive due to the planning department's demands on the initial plan.
  - ii. LH concluded that he must submit another plan which MSDC Planning might be able to approve without further paperwork. This will be delayed as Sian is away next week.
  - iii. LH said that if the revised plan meets obstacles the next step will be to go to Peter Isbell, Head of Planning. AFO said she knows Head of Planning and will make the contact with him, referencing Sian. MA asked if we need to use our MSDC contacts? LH feels the only person who would have authority to approve to proceed is Phillip Isbell.
- 5.b) The car park funding is only available until the end of March and AFO said the work must be done before we invoice. GM asked if we need to push for action. LH said it will be tight for the contractor as it is 10 days' work, with car park unusable for 4 days, so AFO said she would need to check the diary when this can happen.

Action: AFO to contact Phillip Isbell, Head of Planning, AFO to check grant status and if we can go over AFO to advise LH of suitable diary dates for work/car park to close (contact St Andrews also).



- 10.c) AFO advised that Andrew Pilling (Toxpath) has handed in his notice on his office and is leaving at the end February or March. His office is on the market (advertised on Rightmove), there have been two enquiries. With demand we hope we can choose a suitable/matching candidate.
- 10.d) Working practices – with the shop opening soon AFO is doing a monthly rota similar to The Apex. MA asked AFO to monitor hours worked carefully.

## 11) Marketing/Weddings

- 11.a) AN reported this year wedding enquiries are down, although we hope for one more booking for 2024 to bring us into line with 2023 business. AFO said this was the trend across the industry. AN said that it is hard to define whether enquiries come via aggregator websites (which we are using less); clients may then visit our site and make the initial enquiry from our website.
- 11.b) The Board discussed a license for funerals or linking with funeral directors to attract that business more. MA mentioned Green burials. AFO asked who to contact – a celebrant and/or partner with an undertaker. AN assumed a local market, (due to crematorium location) but board felt that we could attract bookings from a wider geographic location.

**Action: AN to investigate funeral and wake market**

## 12) AOB

- 12.a) AFO had a meeting with The Audience Agency and Zoey Banthorpe. Spoke about our challenges here and data collection issue. They were interested in helping Wingfield Barrs.
- i. Zoey said she needed to run this past Emily Attack as she commissioned it. AFO said they have a proposal, but this has to be circulated. They talk about a business plan.
- ii. AFO does not want to commit to a rigid business plan, focus is on ticket sales and visitor numbers. AFO would like the help but not by MSDC design and being held to account. MA said we also want to keep the good relationship. The costs are outlined. MSDC have asked for feedback.
- iii. Zoey asked for financial assessment, but AFO feels this is not relevant for their helping us. A marketing assessment is relevant, and they can provide secondary data. MA would like the Audience Agency to visit us, but not to do a business plan.
12. b) LH asked if lights on the driveway are on a sensor. AFO said the lights are on all night due to sensor (security purposes); LF felt in this sustainable environment we could challenge that.
- 12.c) AN thanked the board for allowing her time off for family in November/December. MA passed on his sympathies on behalf of the board.

**Action: Board to be circulated the Audience Agency report, then board to convene with AFO next week and AFO to draft a response.**

- 13) Date & time of next meeting Friday 16<sup>th</sup> February 10:00am

Meeting ended 2:00pm

Chair:  Date: 

Matthew Abercrombie

## 6) Sculptures Update

6.a) MA advised that he had spoken to Andrew Stringer who is coming to collect the wooden statue. MA asked that a concerted effort is made to move the other two pieces at the same time. GM asked why we are keeping them and board said they cannot be scrapped despite lack of responses from producers. Granite sculpturer is still alive.

Action: MA to press A Stringer to come and remove piece. AFO to ask Roy Goodwin to assist with move of two pieces.

## 7) Maintenance - Progress update

### 7.a) Intruder alarm

- i. The alarm has a serious fault, exacerbated by the cold as doors/contacts expand. It came to light that the company who manage it, SOS Security, are no longer overseeing the system as they report that they had not been paid. The permissions for log-ins are still with them.
- ii. MSDC building services could not be contacted through the normal channels. Ben Forsdick has taken over from Jack Glover in Building Services at the Council.
- iii. TNT are now the approved supplier, but they know nothing about the alarm. TNT came out following receipt of an order from MSDC and the system set off once they had disconnected each box. They said the system is not fit for purpose/old.
- iv. AFO has reported no alarm to our insurers, who have asked when it will be reinstated. WB are waiting on Ben Forsdick to "look into it".
- v. GM summarised that an obsolete system is a capex issue for a new system. The cancelled contractor also looked after the accessible automatic doors, so these are no longer covered. Arthur Charvonia, MSDC talked about a working party at the previous meeting, so maybe WB can meet to discuss this.

Action: MA to write to Arthur Charvonia and then ask for a Zoom meeting

## 8) Sponsorship/Events/Projects

- 8.a) AFO discussed site wide event *Wingfield at War*, which has potential to be something, but to do it properly requires funding & resource to be a decent sizeable event. There was a general discussion on it, how it fits with WB ethos and can the risk be borne. The outcomes were:
  - i. There is a desire to see WB develop events for future sustainability.
  - ii. The event should have a wider scope eg., relate to several historical periods as the barn is 400 years old.
  - iii. The focus is on dance, music & food to fit with WB objectives.
  - iv. The event should be deferred to 2025 and perhaps bought forward to incorporate October Festival elements in September.
  - v. The event is subject to use of the field opposite.
  - vi. Events like this must be risk-based and at present WB CIC cannot take the risk financially.

Actions: AFO/AN Work on October Festival into a living history event for September 2025

## 9) MSDC&B – News & Update

Carried forward

## 10) Ops Managers Report

10.a) AFO reported that November ticketed events did not sell particularly well apart from a few, yet financial figures were a pleasant surprise. The Christmas Market has made money, but figures not completed yet. Beginning part of 2023 looked challenging however 2024 looks really promising with many bookings this month.

10.b) LH said the model of small meetings works – daytime events produces income while staff are here, and these supplement the art activity.