



Food and Drink Focus Group – Tuesday 18th September 2018, 9.30am

Grace Murrell Suite, RICC

Present: Nathan Hoare, Sarah Hemingway, Carolyn Custerson (ERBID), Gayle Farrell & ? Bettesworth (Below Decks), Paul Feasey (Pierpoint), Jamie ? (Green Ginger), Alex Foley (Guardhouse Café), Katy (The Elephant), Linda (The Vigilance, Weatherspoons), Charlie (Cantina), Ash Hamilton (Curious Kitchen), Nick (Revolution Bars), Annette Hunts (Hunts Cider), Pete Salmon (Bays Brewery), ? (Prestige & 21, Victoria Parade)

Apologies: Angie Wright, Simon Jolly, Martyn Strange (Babbacombe Inn), Adrian Crabb (Park Lane), David (Rock Garden)

Chair: Kelly Widley (Pierpoint)

Meeting Notes and Action Points

1. Carolyn Custerson (ERBID) provided an update:
ERBID's key objective is to continue to extend the season with destination marketing activity aimed at inspiring domestic and international tourists. SW Research group reports that the Staycation trend continues to grow and this is predicted post Brexit. There has been an increase in international visitors, particularly from Germany, as a result of targeted marketing to German, Dutch and American markets.
ERBID has become a project partner for Mayflower 2020 events linked to Plymouth and Visit England's, US Connections project.

May to July survey results show that the resort is 1-2% up compared to the rest of the South West region. Indoor tourist attractions have been negatively affected by the good weather this summer. Food and Drink Focus Group partners are encouraged to look at the ERBID website for further information.

There has been good national and international media coverage of Seafood Feast in The Guardian with overseas journalists visits planned. The Top 10 beaches campaign has appeared in Daily Telegraph. Further investment in mini films is planned to highlight business activity.

96% of BID levies have been raised, 86% is the national average. Enforcement proceedings will begin over next few months. ERBID planning activity is underway for 2021 BID work.

2. 2019 Draft Marketing Plan, Budget and rationale

Kelly Widley provided an overview:

£15k has been allocated for F&D marketing with a campaign focussed on locals. Research into the viability of the app showed that there would need to be additional funds for advertising it and it was not worth the investment. The group agreed to leave the app idea and focus instead on broadening digital marketing activity for 2019 with businesses engagement to build content. There will be a local produce focus aligned to national campaigns such as National Pie Week, Afternoon Tea Week, Farm to Fork, Brewery to Bar themes.

Hunts Cider and 'making it local' will be the first campaign.

There is a need to build digital content through film footage and still images which will also be available to businesses for use.

3. Review of Food & Drink sector to date/ Round the table – season to date

Round the table feedback showed that overall there had been a different level of tourism this year with more international visitors (predominantly German and Dutch). International visitors are looking for an authentic experience, using quality local and regional produce is key.

There had been greater customer spend on full menus, enjoying a whole dining experience and good quality products, rather than an increase in visitor numbers. Increasing prices and removing cheaper menu options had not had a detrimental effect. Generally, from May to August business had been good, with the excellent weather having a positive impact on outdoor F&B facilities, with many experiencing a change in trends with quieter day time trade and busier evenings.

4. Performance Monitoring and Evaluation – How's Business Survey (T-Stats)

Currently only 11 out of 350 businesses report regularly via the How Are We Doing Survey.

£4.5k investment in a new real time platform, T-Stats, will enable more data to be available: ability to compare performance with national figures and see trends, airB&B data and how it impacts on local accommodation providers, requests for guides. ERBID needs 5 businesses to share their data as part of a trial project during the initial phase. Only those who input data will be able to access the resource. Beneficial for all businesses to take part as this is a useful business management tool.

5. Promoting your business / social media / website

Nathan Hoare provided an update:

There has been over 1m unique visitor views on ER website with Food & Drink pages having good engagement levels. Local filming and new website content is being developed.

A Digital Marketing toolkit has been created. It is a free service for businesses to use to maximise content on business pages, upload events, increase website traffic.

A Digital Marketing workshop providing 12 hours of free inhouse support is available to businesses, delivered by digital experts, Cosmic. Businesses are encouraged to sign-up to the service.

A TDA funded business event will be taking place at RICC on Wednesday 26th September with a short digital marketing workshop delivered by Nathan.

The most practical way for ERBID to engage with the group is initially via email with the suggestion to also create a private Facebook or Whatsapp group.

Action: F&D members to provide Nathan with their email addresses

6. Update & views on the current and planned campaigns for 2018/19

Kelly & Nathan provided updates on:

- I. **Pub & Bar Guide**
The guide has been produced and distributed widely. Additional copies are available upon request.
- II. **Café & Restaurant Guide**
Work on the next publication will begin soon with an Easter 2019 launch planned.
- III. **English Riviera website**
Covered in point 5 above
- IV. **Seafood FEAST campaign**
Covered in point 1 above
- V. **Digital Marketing**
All F&D businesses are encouraged to follow English Riviera website which has over 40k followers and to use #englishriviera tag to reshare posts.

An ERBID new initiative underway to sponsor Torquay, Brixham and Paignton Tripadvisor pages in a bid to raise profiles and manage content, with promotional videos for each town. Filming will be taking place on 19th & 20th September highlighting places to eat and drink and B&Bs.

7. Suggestions as to how we promote our sector / thoughts and ideas for 2019. APP / What's on for locals / Digital campaigns

Covered in points 2, 5 & 6 above

Any Other Business

- The Purple Flag award has been retained. The only town in Devon to have this to promote a safe environment and support the late-night economy. Need to advertise this accolade.
Action: Nathan to add the award logo so that F&D partners can access and share this.
- The theme for Christmas 2018 will be 'Christmas lights' with Dartmouth Steam Railway Company planning a train of lights from November. Businesses are encouraged to enter into the spirit of the 'lights' theme.
- There is a growing opportunity to offer dog friendly venues. 41% tourists in the over 50s market & 1/3 of the population looking for these facilities, integral to shoulder season business.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 6th November, 9.30am

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