



BRENTWOOD TOWN CENTRE RENAISSANCE GROUP MEETING

10 September 2014

PRESENT:

Renaissance Group:

Clive Othen (Chair)	CO	Chair of Renaissance Group
Alan Jefcoate	AJ	Federation of Small Businesses
Sue Page	SP	Representative – Crown Street Cluster
Nigel Clarke	NC	Representative – Crown Street Cluster
Laurie Edmonds	LE	Local By Social
Mike Hawkins	MHaw	Chamber of Commerce
Lin Heath	LH	Representative – Crown Street Cluster
Cllr Philip Mynott	PM	Brentwood Borough Council
Cllr Kendall	DK	Brentwood Borough Council
Cllr Reed	MR	Brentwood Theatre/Ongar Rd Cluster
Simon Maidment	SM	Essex County Council
Support group		
Kim Anderson	KA	Brentwood Borough Council
Ashley Culverwell	AC	Brentwood Borough Council
Anne Knight	AK	Brentwood Borough Council
Elaine Richardson	ER	Brentwood Borough Council
Jean Sharp	JS	Brentwood Borough Council

APOLOGIES:

Michael Hardy, Cllr Chris Hossack, Gloria Passannante, Cllr Roger Keeble, Cllr Will Russell, Fran Brabham-Neil, Natasha Radford, Julien Pritchard, Laura Williams, Roy Ormsby and Tony Pierce

		Action
1.	Welcome and introductions: CO welcomed all present.	
2.	Minutes from 16.7.2014: The minutes were agreed as a correct record.	

3.	<p>Items for discussion: The Group was advised that these items were to be considered at the 15.10.2014 Business and Town Centres Committee and therefore the discussion at the meeting was to remain confidential.</p> <p>Items discussed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Free parking days savings 2. Cash back parking scheme 3. Night Time Economy Research 4. Alternative Market Offerings 	
4.	<p>Proposed new committee position: Environmental Auditor: CO proposed this role be introduced which would encompass monitoring Crossrail, Brentwood Environment, Brentwood Infrastructure and undertaking Street Audits.</p> <p>MHaw seconded the proposal and the group agreed unanimously.</p> <p>CO advised that MHar had resigned as vice-chair of RG but was keen to take on the role of Environmental Auditor and AJ indicated his willingness to undertake the role of vice-chair.</p> <p>RG members agreed to both these appointments.</p>	
5.	<p>Update on Traders Group: CO advised that the Trade Group had been merged with the Business Trade Cluster Groups and therefore future invitations to attend RG meetings would be sent to Cluster Group leaders but other representatives were also welcome to attend.</p> <p>Action: JS to invite Cluster Group leaders to future RG meetings.</p>	JS
6.	<p>Business Trade Clusters: Updates were received on Business Trade Cluster Groups</p> <p>Crown Street: LH advised that she was Chair of the Cluster Group and other members were Crown Street Café rep. Sue Page and reps from Violet Hill, Audio T and The Hair Company. Minnies in Ropers Yard was also a member and there was concern in the group for the lack of light likely to be in Ropers Yard when the new development at the junction of Crown Stree/Hart Street was completed.</p> <p>MR advised that the Ongar Road Cluster comprised representatives from Café Essex, Chicken and Frog, Brentwood Theatre and Brentwood Bead Shop. The group had met once and the next meeting had been arranged.</p> <p>It had been suggested at their meeting that Sainsbury's be requested to remove their fountain and replace it with a 'town square' area. Also, concern was expressed that the area was neglected at Lighting Up Brentwood since it was 'behind' the main stage located at Wilson's Corner. It was noted that the bad state of the pavement at Wilson's Corner and the damaged railings needed to be addressed.</p>	

	<p>MR suggested that traders who were Cluster Group members should display a sign indicating their membership in their shop window.</p> <p>CO was very pleased with the progress of the Clusters to date and advised that he and ER were communicating with traders in order to launch the other Cluster Groups. It was felt that the Cluster Leader needed to be representative of the area rather than a minority trader.</p> <p>The Wilson's Corner Cluster Group was under construction and other proposed Clusters were Brentwood Town Centre (East End), Brentwood Town Centre (West End), Ingatestone, Kings Road, Brentwood, Pilgrims Hatch, Brentwood, Prospect Way, Hutton, Shenfield and Warley Hill, Brentwood.</p>	
7.	<p>Review of Bids: ER circulated details of bids completed this year, approved and not completed and new bids.</p> <p>In relation to signposting in the Town Centre, AK advised that she and ER met with SM (ECC) monthly in relation to Economic Development and quarterly meetings were to take place in future with ECC officers and members. Lack of signage to the MSCP would be included in the agenda for the latter meetings for consideration.</p> <p>Mounting and displaying the Market Charter: CO advised of a potential sponsorship arrangement.</p> <p>Shenfield Lighting Up – KA advised she had met with KT and two Ward Members to discuss arrangements. A small road closure was to be pursued with Christmas trees at either end of the shopping area. KA would discuss ideas with Shenfield Traders.</p> <p>AC reminded the Group of the proposal that Traders should contribute 20% of the cost of the event which would include the nominal £10.00ph 'earned' by volunteers.</p> <p>Regarding the planned Victorian evening in Ingatestone, ER advised that she would liaise with the Ingatestone Trade Cluster in this regard since the Parish Council had withdrawn their support.</p>	
8.	<p>New Bids:</p> <p>1. LH gave details of a proposed bid from the Crown Street Trade Cluster to support setting up the Crown Street Community Market through a contribution from the RG of £2,000 to purchase 8 matching gazebos. The total cost was £4,100. Sellers of local produce and crafters would occupy the gazebos at a cost of £25.00 per week, including electricity. The market would open every Saturday at first then possibly evenings and weekdays in future.</p> <p>AC advised that although no license was needed for a market in Crown Street, it would be sensitive to advise High Street traders. ER advised that</p>	

	<p>the Market Organiser had been informed.</p> <p>AC also advised that, as the Highway Authority, authorization should be sought from ECC for this proposal. Action: LH would send details to DK who would pursue with ECC. LH would also forward the estimate for the gazebos to ER.</p> <p>2. LH gave details of a second bid from the Crown Street Trade Cluster to support activities and entertainment on Small Business Saturday on 6.12.2014. A grant from RG funds of £550 was requested and agreed. Action: LH and ER to liaise re funding.</p> <p>3. LH gave details of a third bid from the Crown Street Trade Cluster to support Lighting Up Brentwood on 29.11.2014. RG funding of £150 for flyers to publicise Crown Street and Ropers Yard was requested, also £350 for Christmas wreaths and decorations. The funding was agreed. Action: LH and ER to liaise re funding.</p> <p>In relation to Lighting Up Brentwood, KA advised that, as the Council's media partner, the Gazette was to publish an 8-page pullout section. Action: relevant information needed to be forwarded to KA for inclusion in the pullout.</p> <p>4. MR gave details of a bid from the Ongar Road Trade Cluster for buying advertising helium balloons for Small Business Saturday on 6.12.2014. A grant of £500 was requested from RG and agreed. Action: NR and ER to liaise re funding.</p> <p>AC reminded RG members of the importance of giving event details to BBC Comms department. Action: LE would be the RG media contact and would liaise with Leona Murraygreen (BBC Comms).</p>	<p>LH/DK</p> <p>LH/ER</p> <p>LH/ER</p> <p>LH</p> <p>NR/ER</p> <p>LE</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Business Support Events in October and November: AK advised of the event to take place on 29.10.14 at Hutton Poplars in two sessions - at 2-4pm and 4-6pm – ‘Business Advice for Businesses’. This was to be jointly hosted with Invest Essex and was aimed at existing and potential businesses. The event was to be promoted through the BBC business directory which was soon to be published, also via RG, Chamber of Commerce and FSB.</p> <p>Also, a series of free business support workshops had been arranged with Pro-actions, the first of which on Marketing for Growth and An Introduction to Social Media would take place on 11.11.2014 at Merrymeade House. This was to be promoted through the new BBC Business Directory and via Partner Organisations</p> <p>A Business Needs Survey was being undertaken for the whole of Essex. Growth Hubs were to be set up in relation to the resulting identified needs. A report was to be prepared for Brentwood particularly highlighting skills</p>	

	<p>needs.</p> <p>Low carbon grants were to be presented by Groundworks – it was anticipated that £60,000 worth of grants would be awarded to Brentwood businesses.</p> <p>Superfast broadband was now in the Borough.</p> <p>AK was meeting with Visit Essex on 11.9.2014 to discuss a potential visitor website for the Borough and would report back on this initiative.</p> <p>Action: AK would liaise with LE to ensure business information was included on the RG website.</p>	AK/LE
10.	<p>RG Website Update: LE reported that the RG website was progressing well. A working group comprising LE, CO, ER and AK had been formed and were ensuring that the content of the site was accurate, up to date and relevant. A draft schedule of work had been created and it was hoped to launch the website in mid-October. Events coming up in Brentwood would be included, also press releases. Each Trade Cluster would have its own page on the site.</p> <p>RG members would have an opportunity to view the website and comment on it before it went live.</p>	
11.	<p>Made in Brentwood: This initiative had been proposed previously but had not been progressed due to staff changes. At the last RG meeting it was decided to resurrect the idea and the Group supported progressing it.</p> <p>A professionally designed logo would be commissioned and a definition of what constituted 'Made in Brentwood' needed to be agreed. Companies would need to sign up to this to be able to use the labels/stickers.</p> <p>Action: AC would check the legal situation with Trading Standards, also whether the agreed design needed to be copyrighted.</p> <p>CO requested previous designs and information be forwarded to him for circulation and he would design an application form.</p>	AC CO
12.	<p>Any Other Business:</p> <p>There was none.</p>	
13.	<p>Date of next meeting: Wednesday 5 November 2014 at 4.30pm in the Committee Rooms, Brentwood Town Hall. at 4.30pm in the Committee Rooms</p>	