



BRENTWOOD BOROUGH RENAISSANCE GROUP MEETING

11 November 2015

PRESENT:

Renaissance Group:

Clive Othen (Chair)	CO	Chair of Renaissance Group
Laura Williams	LW	Baytree Centre
Cllr Paul Barrell	PB	Brentwood Borough Council
Cllr Keith Parker	KP	Brentwood Borough Council
Cllr Louise Rowlands	LR	Brentwood Borough Council
Natasha Radford	NR	Representative – Town Centre East End Cluster
Sue Page	SP	Representative – Crown Street Cluster
Nish Patel	NP	Representative – Upper Shenfield Cluster
Kaye Thurgood	KT	Representative – Central Shenfield Cluster
Michael Hardy	MH	Environmental Auditor
Gerry Bender	GB	Assistant Environmental Auditor
Support group		
Gordon Glenday	GG	Brentwood Borough Council
Anne Knight	AK	Brentwood Borough Council
Elaine Richardson	ER	Brentwood Borough Council

Georgia Searle, Business Engagement Team Leader (GS) and Keith Powell (KPo), Business Advisor for BEST Growth Hub in attendance. Emma Green (EG) and Katy Green (KG) of planned Kings Road Cluster in attendance.

APOLOGIES:

Alan Jefcoate (Vice chair), Mike Hawkins, Neil Hornsby, Cllr David Kendall, Cllr Gareth Barrett, Laurie Edmonds, Stan Moses

		Action
1.	Welcome and introductions: CO welcomed all present and all introduced themselves.	
2.	Minutes from 23.9.15: The minutes were agreed as a correct record.	

<p>3.</p>	<p>BEST Growth Hub presentation</p> <p>GS presented the new Best of Essex, Southend and Thurrock business support organisation for business expansion, start-ups, funding and skills advice. KPo as the Brentwood area Business Navigator offered free business diagnostics to cluster businesses and potentially all businesses on the directory, subject to demand.</p> <p>Actions: Offer diagnostic sessions to businesses in January on an individual basis or explore drop in clinic at the Town Hall or suitable free venue. Send next Pro-actions business briefings information to BEST Growth Hub to include on their website BEST Growth Hub details to be added to Renaissance Group website</p>	<p>ER/AK ER LE</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Environmental Audit Update</p> <p>GB and MH presented the Environmental Audit Report updated in October. Many items were outstanding with a poor response from County. GB questioned what criteria Essex Highways used to assess actions. LR and PB recommended issues be raised through Ward Members to County.</p> <p>KP advised that a new BBC Street Inspector had been appointed to oversee and champion issues arising from the audit and maintenance requests with County and Head of Street Scene.</p> <p>Action: Meet with new Street Inspector and Head of Service to discuss</p>	<p>GG/ER</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Business Trade Cluster Reports and New Cluster Information:</p> <p>Crown Street: SP requested that Crown Street pedestrianisation be reversed as some businesses feel it is harming trade. KP said this would not be possible as had taken five years of lobbying to achieve, there were serious safety issues when it was open to traffic and the scheme was never a temporary measure.</p> <p>SP reported that at least 3 shops in the street were talking about closing due to low trade and the negative impact of TOWIE Tours when the street is mobbed.</p> <p>Action: Check with Head of Environmental Health if the tours need licenses or anything could be done to better manage them</p> <p>Upper & Central Shenfield: KT and NP reported Shenfield Christmas Fayre preparations were going well with private sponsors achieved, over 40 stalls booked, 6 school choirs, an ice rink hired, a Festive Pets Competition for charity arranged and event coverage by Phoenix FM.</p> <p>KT and NP are putting together a marketing strategy for Renaissance Group events. Action: Will discuss with ER and share as best practice at the next RG meeting</p>	<p>GG/ER</p> <p>KT/NP/ ER</p>

	<p>KT raised problems with obstruction, and negative impact on trade, when the Lighthouse Gospel Choir performs in Shenfield on Saturdays. Action: Discuss with Head of Environmental Health and Essex Highways to try and resolve</p> <p>Ingatestone: CO reported that a revised Victorian Evening Bid with full supporting financial information for £1k was approved by electronic vote.</p> <p>Brentwood Town Centre East End: NR reported on a successful Pumpkin Hunt in Town Centre cluster shops and Halloween Event in the Chicken and Frog and Café Essex, which had encouraged new families and customers to attend. The Santa Hunt in Town Centre cluster shops and a Lighting Up Brentwood Elves Grotto at the Chicken and Frog were also being planned.</p> <p>Kings Road: EG of Verde Vintage reported that the new Kings Road Business Trade Cluster was under formation and planning a Christmas Market in their courtyard of cluster members on 12th December.</p> <p>Baytree Centre: LW advised that due to the group ownership of 40 business units in the Baytree Centre and High Street, they would not be forming a cluster as their marketing and promotions were arranged by the Centre Management.</p> <p>Brentwood Town Centre West End: CO advised that discussions were taking place with the owners of Mannings Tea Rooms about forming a West End Cluster. MH advised that Marks and Spencer were making a substantial investment in repairing and expanding their premises and were interested in offering more community support. Action: Discuss Renaissance Group support at the Brentwood for Growth meeting with M&S.</p>	<p>KP</p> <p>KP/AK</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>New Bids</p> <p>Brentwood Town Centre East End Bid – Elves Grotto NR submitted a bid for the Brentwood Lighting Up Elves Grotto event. Funding of £260 was agreed unanimously.</p> <p>Brentwood Town Centre – Children’s Literary Festival NP presented the bid for a summer 2016 event managed by the Chicken and Frog under charitable status which had 18 authors booked and the Gazette as media partners. A range of author events in shops, libraries, Brentwood Theatre and local schools are planned. Over £3k private sponsorship funding had been secured. KT requested that Shenfield clusters help to promote. PB requested full access for children with disabilities. Funding of £3k was agreed unanimously</p>	

7.	<p>Business Support Update</p> <p>AK advised:</p> <p>The Brentwood Business Showcase is now planned for October 2016. Action: Contact AK with any suggestions for the format, speakers or workshops.</p> <p>The feasibility study report for a Brentwood Incubation Hub and Enterprise Centre was presented in October by Creative Space Management and funded by RG and ECC. The report identified the need for such a centre in Brentwood and venue options are to be explored next year including space in the Town Hall.</p> <p>The Essex Rivers Rural LEADER funding programme has been launched and is being promoted to businesses and parishes within the LEADER area of the Borough. Grant applications for a minimum project value of £25k are invited which are in support of the rural economy and services. Action: Include details on RG Website</p> <p>Beckett Keys School and the Endeavour School are to take part in Opportunity Brentwood in October 2016 in partnership with Thurrock Council/Opportunity Thurrock. Brentwood for Growth businesses are also being asked to support the event. It is hoped other schools in the Borough will become involved in the event following a presentation of the event to Head Teachers and a very successful visit to the 2015 event by Beckett Keys School who took 300 students.</p>	<p>ALL</p> <p>LE</p>
8.	<p>Any Other Business: SP advised Crown St were trying to secure £500 sponsorship of the Lighting Up Selfie Booth from MCC developers.</p>	
9.	<p>Date of next meeting: Wednesday 13 January 2016 – 6.00pm in Committee Room 1.</p> <p>Future meetings: 23 March, 11 May, 6 July 2016</p>	