



BRENTWOOD BOROUGH RENAISSANCE GROUP MEETING

13 March 2017

PRESENT:

Renaissance Group:

Mike Hawkins	MH	Chair of Renaissance Group
Alan Jefcoate (Vice Chair)	AJ	Federation of Small Businesses
Cllr John Kerslake	JK	Brentwood Borough Council
Cllr Gareth Barrett	GB	Brentwood Borough Council
Cllr Mark Reed	MR	Brentwood Borough Council
Kaye Thurgood	KT	Representative Central Shenfield Cluster
Carol Smith	CS	Representative Brentwood East End Cluster
Suzan Hearson Clark	SHC	Representative Brentwood West End Cluster
Laurie Edmonds	LE	Website Host and Media Coordinator
Colin Barber	CB	Brentwood Chamber of Commerce
Sarah Sanctuary	SS	Essex County Council
Support group		
Elaine Richardson	ER	Brentwood Borough Council
Nishat Amin	NA	Brentwood Borough Council

APOLOGIES:

Cllr David Kendall, Cllr Roger McCheyne, Nish Patel, Dan Foley, Anne Knight, Tony Wilson, Phil Drane

		Action
1.	Welcome and introductions: MH welcomed all present and all introduced themselves.	
2.	Minutes from 30.01.17: The minutes were agreed as a correct record. Discussion re Item 9 replacement of Love Brentwood High St banners ER was progressing replacement with fewer, smaller banners and possible sponsorship. MR requested removal of upper lamp post fixings. SHC requested if banners and Christmas lights could be	

	<p>installed beyond the Kings Rd junction to support and include shops in the lower High St.</p> <p>MR Asked for adaption or replacement, possibly with brown signs, of the Town Centre boundary signs to reflect Brentwood as an ancient market town.</p> <p>Action: research responsibilities and costs with ECC</p>	SS/ER
3.	<p>Chair's Report</p> <p>MH thanked the group for electing him as Chair and for AJ's help as Acting Chair at the last meeting. MH would try to ensure RG continues to be a potent force in the borough.</p> <p>At a meeting with the Leader Cllr Louise McKinlay, established keen support and that of the Council for RG and their commitment to its long term future.</p> <p>Despite severe financial constraints facing the Council, RG could carry forward revenue reserves of £33k and £39k capital to next year. 2018/19 grant to be discussed in the autumn at start of annual budget cycle. The Leader would like to see more self funding initiatives such as a Christmas hamper draw scheme suggested by KT.</p> <p>Improving PR with piece in Gazette about the new Chair and editor's commitment to quarterly articles about RG's work and achievements.</p>	
4.	<p>Brentwood Town Centre Design Plan progress update</p> <p>Paulette McAllister, BBC's Principal Design and Conservation Officer, presented progress on the Town Centre Design Plan and consultation events planned by the Council. These included a private launch event at the Town Hall on Thursday 16th March and a pop-up shop open to the public in the Baytree centre on 17 and 18 March. RG members were encouraged to come along to these events.</p> <p>The project encompasses all that is special about Brentwood and the conservation area to manage how it grows and evolves. The plans were considerate of people, buildings, public spaces, different areas and how they connect. Plans for the William Hunter Way site were to be considered as part of the whole Town Centre, uplifting historic areas such as Chapel Ruins and opening up closed alleyways for easier and open access to the high street. Further details can be viewed at www.brentwood.gov.uk/towncentre</p>	
5.	<p>Business Trade Clusters Update</p> <p>Brentwood East End: CS reported a well attended Brentwood clusters launch meeting on 21 February securing many new members from all parts of the Town Centre. Had a great response to the Easter</p>	

Egg Hunt event with 20 businesses confirmed and no charge to businesses to build trust as the first event. Good family prizes secured including from the Brentwood Kitchen, Rockys, Chicken & Frog, Baytree Centre and Blooming Jacks.

Brentwood West End: SHC stated that many businesses in the West End have never been approached to join RG or events such as Egg Hunt before and although some less child friendly businesses, a good number agreed to take part.

Parking issues raised by businesses re high costs, lack of awareness of business parking schemes and usage of Westbury Rd car park being nearly empty on Saturdays and needing better signage.

Actions:

Discuss business parking rates and availability with Car Parks Manager.

Report issues to next month's parking review committee

JoJo's Sandwich Bar asked about commercial waste disposal as cost of Council collection scheme expensive. GB reported these were the agreed Council refuse collection costs and suggestion they could look for a private scheme.

LE commended the hard work of CS and SHC on taking the time out of their working week to meet and recruit cluster member businesses and set up the Easter event.

Shenfield Central and Upper: KT reported a bid funding application for the Easter Egg Hunt would follow and this year's event would include golden eggs to find in upper and central Shenfield and trivia questions for older children.

Reported traffic and parking chaos due to Crossrail works, more contractors and replacement bus service. Only 20 spaces available in Friars Avenue plus Crossrail workers parking all day and Tesco's re-fit contract workers parking, leaving very limited spaces for public. Parking enforcement officers are short staffed and cover other parts of borough so cannot monitor all day. Crossrail worker rest coaches also parking in customer spaces and on double yellow lines.

Many complaints from traders and customers resulting in decreased footfall and loss of business.

Actions: contact Cllr Jon Cloke as our representative on SEP, plus Alan McBean Car Parks Manager and Crossrail/sub-contractors. Also enquire re installing CCTV camera from depot so can monitor and issue parking tickets.

Thanks to AK for invitation to KT and NP to meet with Jacobs re development plans for frontage of Shenfield Station.

ER

JK

GB

	<p>MR advised of Essex Big Weekend 1st-2nd April with thousands of free tickets for popular attractions.</p> <p>Also outcome of the Go Essex bid for the National Lottery funded Great Place Scheme to promote art and culture, due end March</p> <p>If successful would help towards projects such as new video of Martyrs Walk and support for the Arts Trail</p>	
6.	<p>New Bid Funding Applications</p> <p>None submitted</p>	
7.	<p>Business Support Update: ER reported</p> <p>March Business Newsletter sent via Zoho to 1400 business directory emails. Monthly newsletters can be viewed at: www.discoverbrentwood.co.uk/business/news.aspx</p> <p>Funding opportunities for businesses include: Brentwood Apprenticeship Programme - BBC are working with ACL to deliver a wage subsidy grant of £1k to recruit apprentices for 12 local businesses. For information: www.essex.gov.uk/adult-learning</p> <p>LoCase Low Carbon match funded grants for businesses to help with energy efficiency measures. SHC had received funding for Granite Transformations business premises through this scheme towards new heating and air conditioning. For information visit www.lowcarbonbusiness.org.uk/latest_news</p> <p>FREE Business Advice Workshops at the Town Hall delivered in March through BEST Growth Hub. Topics included Practical PR and Marketing. Free ongoing online webinars also available. Good feedback from delegates and more workshops planned for April/May.</p>	
8.	<p>Environmental and Public Realm Update:</p> <p>ER reported that TW was continuing to enforce the ECC A boards policy for locating these immediately outside business premises and not chained to posts on the highways or obstructing public pathways.</p> <p>LE requested Council notice boards needed cleaning. GB stated BBC Ward Councillors look after public realm issues and the neighbourhood action team (NATS) was responsible for cleaning different wards in a 13 week cycle.</p> <p>Action: issue a timetable of NATS ward rotas.</p> <p>CS raised Town Centre problems with homeless. LE advised of drop in sessions on Fridays at the Brentwood Centre for support of homeless, and near homeless, residents GB advised any issues be reported to Ward Councillors and the of difficulties finding accommodation as currently have 55 families in temporary accommodation.</p>	GB

