

BRENTWOOD BOROUGH RENAISSANCE GROUP MEETING
16 March 2016

PRESENT:

Renaissance Group:

Clive Othen (Chair)	CO	Chair of Renaissance Group
Alan Jefcoate (Vice chair)	AJ	Federation of Small Businesses
Mike Hawkins	MH	Brentwood Chamber of Commerce
Laura Williams	LW	Baytree Centre
Cllr Keith Parker	KP	Brentwood Borough Council
Cllr David Kendall	DK	Brentwood Borough Council
Sue Page	SP	Representative – Crown Street Cluster
Nish Patel	NP	Representative – Upper Shenfield Cluster
Kaye Thurgood	KT	Representative – Central Shenfield Cluster
Emma Green	EG	Representative – Kings Road Cluster
Laurie Edmonds	LE	Local by Social
Michael Hardy	MH	Environmental Auditor
Support group		
Elaine Richardson	ER	Brentwood Borough Council
Cimi Hysenaj	CH	Brentwood Borough Council

APOLOGIES:

Anne Knight, Cllr Louise Rowlands, Cllr Gareth Barrett, Gerry Bender, Natasha Radford

		Action
1.	Welcome and introductions: CO welcomed all present and all introduced themselves.	
2.	Minutes from 03.02.16: The minutes were agreed as a correct record.	
3	Business Trade Cluster Reports and New Cluster Information: Crown Street: SP reported that of the 50 businesses in Crown St and	

Ropers Yard only 7 were cluster members, footfall has fallen even further and sales were down for all retail businesses. This has made traders non-communicative to SP's request for them to get involved in events such as Easter. The developer's response to the suggested advertising on the new shop hoardings was the shops would need to pay for the ads which they felt was not viable.

DK suggested a marketing campaign to promote Crown St. NP and KT offered to help to promote Crown Street shops in Shenfield and suggested they could hand out flyers to their customers.

SP

Action: Consult cluster members and all retailers on a marketing campaign

SP requested an update on the request of change of name for 'Chatham Way' car park to 'Crown street' car park. KP said this had been discussed at previous meetings and would not be possible as it needs to go through County Highways, who would not want to change it or fund the high costs involved. Improved signage to Crown St shops could be arranged through Car Parking

KP

Action: New Chatham Way Car Park signs directing shoppers to Crown Street and Ropers Yard to be developed with Car Parking.

ER updated that Crown Street Arch was waiting on a Renaissance Group bid to fund a planning application and possible maintenance costs.

AJ

Action: Submit a bid funding application for planning costs and, if approved, a planning application for the Arch

Upper & Central Shenfield: KT and NP reported 64 businesses are participating in the Easter Egg Hunt with only some larger multiples and banks not taking part. The Co-op donated 400 Cadbury Cream Eggs (used as an incentive to complete the application form) Two sets of prizes, including free donations, had been arranged for older and younger age groups. Interest has been gained from other surrounding businesses such as Tesco and new law firm Mullis and Peake for future events.

Brentwood Town Centre East End: NR had sent in a report of projects for 2016 including a suggested back to school Autumn Nature Trail family event in September which could include all clusters and NR was happy to lead.

Kings Road: EG reported Harlequin fancy dress shop had closed and Loulabelles was to close soon. A party planning shop was to replace the Dressing Room and a children's boutique shop was due to open.

EG reported footfall was down on Saturdays due to Crossrail weekend works and station closure. Shenfield report that they have felt the same negative impact on their sales and footfall on Saturdays.

	<p>EG suggest using new map boards for to help the public find lesser known shops in Brentwood eg from the station.</p> <p>Action: Investigate new shopping maps/noticeboards to signpost less well known retail areas and shops such as Kings Road.</p> <p>Baytree Centre: LW reported the loss of shops due to the affordability of business rates. Also difficulties of letting empty units until they are re-configured as the Baytree has potential clients who are not moving in due to the shop size.</p> <p>KP stated mixed reports on shop performance in the Town Centre as some retailers were doing well eg Laura Ashley through online sales and M&S has the best performing store of their 16 in the Eastern region.</p>	<p>KP</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Cluster Project Plans and Budgeting 2016</p> <p>ER asked all cluster leads to plan projects and budgets for the remainder of 2016/17.</p> <p>Action: To submit cluster project proposals and budgets to CO</p> <p>KT proposed a second Summer Jazz/Music event in Shenfield on Sunday 12 or 26 June in addition to Halloween and Christmas Events.</p> <p>LW gave the dates of the Baytree Summer Weekend Event 11-12 June to coincide with the Strawberry Fair on 11 June.</p> <p>LE reported sales of the Brentwood Festival were going well and suggested organising promotional coupon booklets with special offers and vouchers to be handed out to visitors and encourage shopping in the Town Centres.</p> <p>Action: Proposal for Brentwood Festival Coupon Booklet promoting local shops.</p> <p>LE advised that £1k sponsorship for the Art Trail had been secured from Bennetts Funeral Homes, helping to celebrate their 125th Anniversary.</p> <p>ER suggested that Brentwood Town Centre Clusters work more collaboratively on projects, sharing project leads and increasing membership from interested traders in surrounding areas notably in Kings Road as the Four Vintners had insufficient interest to form a Warley Hill cluster. CO stated that the Leader of Brentwood Council had also requested that no new clusters were formed and we should expand and collaborate more with existing clusters.</p> <p>Action: Expand the Kings Road Courtyard Cluster to include</p>	<p>Cluster Leads</p> <p>LE</p>

	previous trade members in Kings Road and new members in Warley Hill.	EG
5.	<p>New Bids</p> <p>Marketing Support for Business Showcase LE submitted a bid for local marketing, networking and social media support of the Brentwood Business Showcase Event by Local by Social and Brightsky Marketing.</p> <p>Funding of £1000 was agreed unanimously.</p>	
6.	<p>Environmental Audit Update</p> <p>MH advised:</p> <p>Update on Sainsbury's car park waiting on proposals to demolish and build an improved car park and hopefully improve the area visually.</p> <p>MH pleased that barriers have been put up around Lion and Lamb Court to largely stop the free parking.</p> <p>The car wash site remains an ongoing issue. KP clarified that there had been a miscommunication with officers and was being resolved.</p> <p>The Love Brentwood banners need to be renewed or removed. KP suggested using for potential advertising as very costly to replace.</p> <p>Action: Contact Essex Highways to discuss new banners with advertising or sponsorship that could benefit both ECC and BBC.</p> <p>ER reported that a successful meeting had taken place with the new Street Inspector Tony Wilson who had offered to support RG with environmental audits.</p> <p>Action: Contact Tony Wilson to accompany on next audit</p> <p>Problem with Essex Property A board outside Pepperell House</p> <p>Action: Ask enforcement officers to remove</p> <p>NP and KT recognised the daily hard work of the Shenfield street cleaner who should be acknowledged and thanked.</p> <p>Action: KT to email KP details of the cleaner, so can put him forward for a BBC Staff Award.</p>	<p>KP</p> <p>MH</p> <p>KP</p> <p>KT/KP</p>
7.	Business Support Update: ER advised:	

Reminder of the **Brentwood Business Showcase** planned for 2 November 2016 at Brentwood School.

The next **Pro-actions free business briefing on Cash or Profit** is 12th April 2016 in the Town Hall to learn about the importance of generating, managing and understanding business cashflow and profits.

8. Any Other Business: CO gave the following updates:

Bid Funding Changes to RG/business contribution:

- i 2015/16 – no change to the 80/20 weighting
- ii 2016/17 – weighting changed to 75/25
- iii 2017/18 – weighting changed to 60/40
- iv 2018/19 – weighting changed to 55/45
- v 2019/20 – weighting changed to 50/50

2016/17 BBC Funding:

A BBC grant of £10,000 for RG has been agreed

RG are permitted to carry forward 100% of 2015/16 capital and revenue funding.

Update of RG and Chamber Chairs:

CO will be stepping down as RG Chair on 31 January 2017.

CO will retire as Chair of Brentwood Chamber of Commerce in May 2016 and be succeeded by Colin Barbour.

Brentwood's 1225 and 1250 Market Charters:

The replica charters have been delivered

Mike Allen (Essex Farmers Markets Ltd) has agreed to change the name of Brentwood's Friday and Saturday Markets to 'Brentwood Charter Market'

It has been discovered that Brentwood has an earlier market charter granted by King Henry II. CO hopes that a borough school will take up a project to get a copy from the National Archives, arrange for a translation and replicate as per the 1225 and 1252 charters.

The 1225 and 1252 replica charters will be presented to BBC at the forthcoming Civic Dinner.

KP advised we could promote Brentwood as being an Ancient Market Town on new entrance signs to the town. The charters would be on permanent display in the Town Hall with the exact location to take account of the refurbishment.

	SP suggested the charters could be exhibited at the Brentwood Business Showcase Event.	
9.	Date of next meetings: Monday 9 May, 4 July, 7 September 2016 in Committee Room 1 Town Hall. NB Change to Monday evenings due to the Town Hall being used for wedding ceremonies from Wednesdays.	