



BRENTWOOD BOROUGH RENAISSANCE GROUP MEETING
30 January 2017

PRESENT:

Renaissance Group:

Clive Othen	CO	Former Chair of Renaissance Group
Alan Jefcoate (Vice Chair)	AJ	Federation of Small Businesses
Mike Hawkins	MH	Brentwood Chamber of Commerce
Cllr John Kerslake	JK	Brentwood Borough Council
Cllr Gareth Barrett	GB	Brentwood Borough Council
Kaye Thurgood	KT	Representative Central Shenfield Cluster
Carol Smith	CS	Representative Brentwood East End Cluster
Natasha Radford	NR	Representative Brentwood East End Cluster
Suzan Hearson Clark	SHC	Representative Brentwood West End Cluster
Laurie Edmonds	LE	Website Host and Media Coordinator
Dan Foley	DF	Representative Baytree Centre
Support group		
Elaine Richardson	ER	Brentwood Borough Council
Anne Knight	AK	Brentwood Borough Council
Nishat Amin	NA	Brentwood Borough Council

APOLOGIES:

Cllr David Kendall, Cllr Roger McCheyne, Cllr Mark Reed, Nish Patel, Tony Wilson (BBC Street Inspector), Sarah Sanctuary

		Action
1.	Welcome and introductions: AJ (Acting Chair) welcomed all present and all introduced themselves.	
2.	Minutes from 14.11.16: The minutes were agreed as a correct record.	
3.	To consider and vote on an extraordinary motion from the RG Management Team to vote in a new Chair	

	<p>CO reported on the hard work undertaken by the RG Management Team to replace the Chair and was delighted to propose, with the support of BBC, the appointment of MH.</p> <p>A vote was taken on a show of hands and it was resolved unanimously to appoint Mike Hawkins as RG Chair.</p> <p>MH accepted gratefully and pledged to do his best to continue the extraordinary achievements made under CO's Chairmanship and appreciated the continued support of AJ the Vice Chair.</p>	
<p>4.</p>	<p>Business Trade Clusters Update</p> <p>ER welcomed the new Brentwood Cluster Leads, Carol Smith of Marks and Spencer leading the East End and Suzan Hearson Clark from Granite Transformations leading the West End. CO expressed thanked all for the huge amount of work and support he had received from all the RG group, in particular the efforts of the previous Brentwood Cluster Leads, LE as webmaster and the Management Team.</p> <p>Action: arrange a clusters set up meeting on 20 February with names of previous cluster members to be given to CS and SHC for invitations</p> <p>Shenfield Central and Upper: KT reported on the Shenfield Christmas Fayre and the issues mainly around no road closure which caused complaints. A follow up meeting with the Leader and Deputy Leader was to be held by the end of March to agree 2017 plans.</p> <p>Plans had commenced to hold seasonal events, starting with Easter, a summer event and Halloween.</p> <p>AK suggested we market the trade cluster summer events, Children's Literary Festival, Brentwood Art Trail and Brentwood Festival as a Summer of Culture again. GB enquired about Art Trail funding which was no longer the remit of the BBC. LE responded that Heritage Lottery Funding had been applied for as part of an ECC arts bid for Essex to be advised at the end of March.</p> <p>Action: circulate list of planned RG and Council Events for 2017</p> <p>Feedback re Crossrail works that no communications received by KT or NP about the bus replacement scheme introduced until May which was causing gridlock, loss of parking bays, loss of business and health and safety issues from bus exhaust fumes.</p>	<p>CS/SHC/ EG/LH</p> <p>ER</p>

	<p>Actions: JK asked KT to email him with details to investigate AK suggested the businesses monitor any downturn in sales as a result of this re possible compensation</p> <p>LE suggested Crossrail was a regular item on the agenda</p> <p>Tescos was being refurbished in February to become a Premier Express Store. There were very few vacant commercial premises in Shenfield. Four Seasons Travel and Lloyds Bank were due to close once their leases had expired and HSBC was being re-developed.</p> <p>Crown Street: ER reported that works had been agreed to erect the Crown St Arch in March. The developers had been asked to try and re-instate a re-sized arch for Ropers Yard on private land.</p>	<p>KT</p> <p>ER</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>New Bid Funding Application</p> <p>Brentwood Children’s Literary Festival 22-29 July Bid: NR submitted a bid requesting £2k in support of the second festival following the success of last year’s event attended by 1300 visitors including from outside the borough. Many also visited the Town Centre and parks. Funding is required to help meet the costs of advertising in primary school targeted publications, Brentwood Theatre Hire as the main venue and who run the box office for tickets, and author/illustrator fees. Grant funding and private sponsorship were being progressed and media partners secured. Need for earlier marketing of the event acknowledged.</p> <p>Funding of £2,000 was agreed unanimously.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>Promoting Brentwood</p> <p>Discover Brentwood Website: ER introduced the place making website for visitors and businesses www.discoverbrentwood.co.uk launched at the Brentwood Business Showcase event. The website was developed in partnership with Visit Essex and is hosted and maintained externally. It was developed to promote Brentwood and its offer to visitors and businesses looking to visit, locate, spend and invest in the Borough. Work is ongoing with Visit Essex for a Spring launch event to the visitor economy businesses.</p> <p>Renaissance Group Website: LE introduced the site as a platform to inform about RG and promote RG events in the main as well as Council and wider events and initiatives, but hoping to rejuvenate the site with fresh content from traders and more Twitter activity. Have</p>	

	<p>tried to encourage cluster members to use the site to communicate news, events and offers but has been a poor response. Hopes the new clusters can use and promote the site and submit content to LE</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p>Business Support Update: AK reported:</p> <p>The February Business Newsletter has been sent to the 1400 business directory email addresses and is available as a link on the Discover Brentwood Business News and Events page www.discoverbrentwood.co.uk/business/news.aspx. Initiatives include:</p> <p>FREE Business Advice Workshops A programme of FREE business advice workshops and webinars is being delivered in February and March by the BEST Growth Hub, hosted at the Town Hall. Topics include: Customer Service and Selling without Selling; Funding; Project and Event Management and Practical PR and Marketing. For details: www.ignitebusiness.org/workshops</p> <p>Brentwood Apprenticeship Programme 2016/17 Adult Community Learning is working in partnership to deliver a BBC wage subsidy grant of £1k to recruit apprentices for 12 local businesses. To find out more visit: www.essex.gov.uk/adult-learning</p> <p>LOCASE – Low Carbon Across the South East business grants and advice The EU funded LOCASE project can provide businesses with match funded grants of up to £10,000 to help cover the cost of energy efficiency measures for any small or medium business. To find out more email: business@thurrock.gov.uk LOCASE information is also being sent out with the council business rates communications.</p> <p>AK expressed the hope that the ED team would be able to carry on business support, skills agenda, inward investment and a second business showcase event. MH felt the showcase was an excellent event and asked for the Council's view. JK felt it helped to support the generic growth of existing businesses but would like to see more businesses involved from outside the area and opening it up. Investigate the possibility for bigger developers eg St Modwen (Brentwood Enterprise Park) to attract prospective tenants. KT suggested approaching local businessman Jack Petchey for future showcase support as he is a passionate supporter of business innovation and development as well as charitable works with schools and community.</p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p>Environmental and Public Realm Update:</p> <p>ER reported that TW, the BBC Street Inspector, had made several visits to Brentwood Town Centre to inform businesses of the A Boards</p>	

	<p>Policy, hand out copies of the policy and serve notice of those sited incorrectly. After several warnings three A boards had been removed from the High Street. The Rangers were helping to tackle fly posting and TW was monitoring regularly. Blooming Jacks flower shop in Crown St was to be contacted re displaying goods outside their shop. Environmental Health would be informed of the pest control needed as reported in the land outside Sainsburys Car Park.</p>	
<p>9.</p>	<p>Any Other Business:</p> <p>JK gave thanks to CO on behalf of the Council for all his work with RG</p> <p>SHC asked about the Tescos Express problems of damage to cars from boulders around the pavement supporting promotional flags. Suggested SHC contacted the Brentwood West Councillors Karen Chilvers, John Newberry or Will Russell, for help. KT suggested going directly to the store manager or to TW if they were being positioned on the highway.</p> <p>DF reported that the Baytree Centre owners, Threadneedle, were looking at new retailers to replace B&M.</p> <p>SHC reported that Broadway Kitchens were moving to the High Street. Also raised the condition of the WHW Car Park as had been accidents at the Westbury Road end due to black ice. GB advised that any claims need to be made to Essex Highways. Also the new Town Centre Plan is under development as part of the LDP and WHW Car Park will be built on and host a major retailer in the future.</p> <p>LE asked for Council noticeboards to be cleaned and Love Brentwood Banner replacement discussions continue.</p> <p>Actions: request Council noticeboard cleaning via TW and continue discussions with Fast Signs to replace with fewer and smaller High St banners and sponsorship opportunities</p> <p>MH asked for PR to announce the new Chair and RG objectives.</p> <p>Action: contact Alan Woods re an article in the Gazette</p>	<p>ER</p> <p>LE</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p>Date of next meeting: Monday 13 March, 2017 in Committee Room 1, Town Hall, commencing at 6pm</p>	