



BRENTWOOD BOROUGH RENAISSANCE GROUP MEETING
22 May 2017

PRESENT:

Renaissance Group:

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| Mike Hawkins | MH | Chair of Renaissance Group |
| Alan Jefcoate (Vice Chair) | AJ | Federation of Small Businesses |
| Cllr John Kerslake | JK | Brentwood Borough Council |
| Cllr David Kendall | DK | Brentwood Borough Council |
| 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 |
| Support group | | |
| Elaine Richardson | ER | Brentwood Borough Council |
| Nishat Amin | NA | Brentwood Borough Council |
| Phil Drane | PD | Brentwood Borough Council |

APOLOGIES:

Cllr Gareth Barrett, Cllr Mark Reed, Cllr Roger McCheyne, Kaye Thurgood, Nish Patel, Dan Foley, Anne Knight, Tony Wilson, Colin Barber

| | | Action |
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| 1. | Welcome and introductions: MH welcomed all present and all introduced themselves. | |
| 2. | <p>Minutes from 13.03.17: The minutes were agreed as a correct record. Updated actions discussed as follows:</p> <p>Item 2 replacement or adaption of Town Centre Welcome to Brentwood boundary signs to reflect Brentwood as an ancient market town:</p> <p>ER contacted ECC Highways who stated BBC had sign locations and format but BBC Assets department not in possession of these. ER and MR therefore drove around the Borough to do an audit - found inconsistencies and missing signs. Planning Policy had suggested</p> | |

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| | <p>including this within the LDP or Town Centre Development. DK suggested asking for a review of borough signs to get a uniform look. ER stated Maldon and Chelmsford had new boundary signs and need to find out who paid for these.</p> <p>Action: request if review and replacement of boundary signs possible through the LHP as a potential scheme</p> <p>Item 5 West End cluster update on parking issues.</p> <p>ER raised business parking issues with Car Parks Manager who was looking to start a campaign to attract more business parking. Specific issues on Crown St and High St to be sent to ER to discuss further with car park colleagues. SHC reported a good response to advising of weekend availability at Westbury Rd Car Park. Better signage awaited from BBC Car Parks. SHC had secured the removal by ECC of damaged edging bricks in the traffic island at the junction with Weald Rd and the High St as were a cause of accidents.</p> | DK |
| 3. | <p>Chair's Report</p> <p>MH thanked all those involved in the successful Easter Egg Hunts and reported on the outcomes of the RG Management Committee meeting:</p> <p>1. Revisit RG ToRs so clear aims and objectives (Strategy Meeting will address this); consider rebranding RG and review strap line; research other town centre groups and perhaps learn lessons; agreed the need to align with Town Centre Redevelopment Plan; discussed the need for a marketing plan; review RG website and consider merger with 'Discover Brentwood'; present budget updates at each RG meeting; review RG membership (RG subsequently felt it was about right now with the cluster structure); invite other business leaders etc. as guest speakers; agreed the blue sky session; align with other business organizations - subsequently agreed I should accept an invite to represent RG on the Brentwood Chamber of Commerce Executive Committee, which I will do from September.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <p>Arrange special Blue Skies Meeting Tuesday 27 June 6pm Committee Rooms</p> <p>Speak to Phil Ruck re BBC Car Parking Review final report issue so RG involved in meeting to discuss</p> <p>Contact Cllr Jon Cloke, BBC rep on Parking Partnership, re issues with overzealous car park attendants affecting West End High St businesses</p> | <p>ER/MH</p> <p>JK</p> <p>SHC</p> |

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| | <p>2. Met with TW on street inspections, who is keen to help and become very involved with RG as a key programme initiator but could not currently attend Monday night meetings. Consider RG meeting dates Tuesday or Wednesday after move from Town Hall. TW had met one of the two ECC new Street Inspectors based in Childerditch who covered Brentwood.</p> <p>Action: check roles and responsibilities of County Highways Inspectors and if can help with A Board enforcement</p> <p>3. Brentwood Business Showcase 1 November 2017 – discussed RG becoming a prominent player in the Showcase event.</p> <p>Action: apply for exhibitors stand and commission a pop up banner through a bid</p> | <p>DK</p> <p>LE</p> |
| <p>4.</p> | <p>Brentwood Local Development Plan update</p> <p>PD – Offered to attend future RG meetings as a consistent voice between Brentwood Council/Planning and the group, as used to be the case for the former Head of Planning role.</p> <p>Provided an update on two key projects; new Local Development Plan (LDP) and Brentwood Town Centre Design Plan (TCDP).</p> <p>LDP – Presented the challenges of being a green borough (89% Green Belt coverage) with high development needs, especially housing. A balanced approach is required between meeting development needs and retaining local built and green character. Key elements of the Plan relevant to RG include economic aims and policies - employment land, policies for business and retail land. The changing nature of high streets (market demand, retail trends etc) mean that decisions need to be made about getting the right balance between traditional rigid retail policy and letting the market lead. Intention is for a consultation document to be published over Summer focusing on strategy, housing & employment need, and site allocations.</p> <p>TCDP - Very successful recent Pop-Up Shop event, lots of interest from business and the public. The Council is very grateful to the Baytree Centre for accommodating us and look to do similar projects in future. Intention was to share concepts and drawings of ideas so people can respond on the key issues and challenge us. Final Design Plan report is due to be published soon along with a report on the launch and pop-up shop events. Next stage will be to produce specific planning guidance using the Design Plan work so the planning team can manage current issues that we face regarding businesses, signage, development sites and changes. Design briefs for each key (Council-owned) site will then be prepared, starting with William</p> | |

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| | Hunter Way. PD will update on progress at future RG meetings | |
| 5. | <p>Business Trade Clusters Update</p> <p>Brentwood East End: CS praised the Easter Egg Hunt and plans to email thanks to businesses taking part.</p> <p>Action: thank cluster members who took part and donated prizes and ask for future event suggestion.</p> <p>M&S refurb update: coffee shop due to open 30 June and official shop launch 6 July. Consulting with Head Office PR re launch event so not able to become a RG summer event. Liked the idea of a local college to help put on a fashion show. Also liked idea of jazz band outside but no budget. Brentwood School jazz band was suggested or MR may have contacts. Will be mailing local customer database to join in celebrations. New regional manager was Carl Cornish and have joined North East London region and their Simply Food stores. Lost 5 stores to the previous Eastern Region but had gained 3 outlet stores</p> <p>.</p> <p>Brentwood West End: SHC stated Egg Hunt had gone well and good exercise in engaging over 60 businesses in the Town Centre, including for the first time chain stores, but a few teething problems with distances to travel to visit shops with clues. Also needed more difficult questions for older children. Shops taking part used the RG engagement with cluster leads to feedback issues to BBC so useful that they felt they had their voice heard within the Council.</p> <p>Interest in something with ‘foods around the world’ theme for the next event. Approach to celebrity chef Rosemary Shrager and Bennetts were willing to open up their yard to provide a venue. Baytree Centre hosting a charity event to support Great Ormond St Hospital 10 June – may be opportunity for RG businesses to have pop up shop.</p> | CS |
| 6. | <p>New Bid Funding Applications</p> <p>Brentwood Arts Trail 15 - 30 June 2017 Bid: LE submitted a bid requesting £1.5k in support of the Brentwood Arts Trail which provides an opportunity for local visual artists to be showcased in local venues, primarily independent shops and visitor sites around Brentwood.</p> <p>The Brentwood Art Trail forms part of the Essex Summer of Art. 2016 saw 72,000 visitors enjoy the art and culture on offer across Essex.</p> <p>The Art Trail is an established event in the Borough's community events calendar, and was previously funded by Brentwood Borough Council. The bid funding application is to support Local By Social in</p> | |

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| | <p>organising, running and promoting the Art Trail on behalf of the community.</p> <p>The Project helps promote localism and works towards creating additional footfall to local shops, parks and visitor sites and helping to create a more prosperous Borough.</p> <p>Funding of £1,500 was agreed unanimously.</p> | |
| 7. | <p>Business Support Update: ER reported</p> <p>Brentwood Business Showcase 1 November 2017 Brentwood Borough Council has agreed to host the second showcase at Brentwood School on 1st November 2017. Building on last years success when 400 businesses attended, the event will provide a great opportunity for businesses to network, exhibit and enjoy free business workshops and keynote speakers.</p> <p>2017 website planned launched 17th July. LE will be helping with securing sponsors and exhibitors for the event and we are working on a sponsorship package to attract different levels of sponsors (gold, silver, bronze).</p> <p>Good progress is being made with securing keynote speakers, workshop leaders and programme planning. Thanks to M&S who have agreed to provide the exhibitors lunch again and will be taking a stand.</p> <p>May 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 have continued during April and May with good feedback and attendance. Further workshops are planned on Pitching & Presenting, plus Building a Powerful Business Plan workshop hosted by Pro-actions on 11th July. BEST Growth Hub also continue to offer free online business support webinars. Please refer to the monthly Brentwood Business Newsletters.</p> | |

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| 8. | Any Other Business: ER reported a new meeting location would be needed for RG meetings once staff are relocated from the Town Hall in the early Autumn period and we will await further updates from the transformation team. | |
| 9. | Dates of next meetings: Tuesday 27 June special Blue Skies meeting Monday 3 July RG meeting Committee Room 1, Town Hall, commencing at 6pm. | |