



BRENTWOOD TOWN CENTRE RENAISSANCE GROUP MEETING

26 March 2014

PRESENT:

Renaissance Group:

Clive Othen (Chair)	CO	Chair of Renaissance Group
Michael Hardy (Vice-chair)	MHar	Brentwood Resident
Dominique Keogh	DK	Essex County Council
Cllr Mark Reed	MR	Brentwood Borough Council
Sue Page	SP	Representative – Brentwood Traders
Kaye Thurgood	KT	Representative – Shenfield Traders
Paula Clark	PC	Chamber of Commerce
Cllr Nigel Clarke	NC	Brentwood Borough Council
Cllr Philip Mynott	PM	Brentwood Borough Council
Cllr Will Russell	WR	Brentwood Borough Council
Laura Williams	LW	Manager – Baytree Centre
Support group		
Kim Anderson	KA	Brentwood Borough Council
Ashley Culverwell	AC	Brentwood Borough Council
Anne Knight	AK	Brentwood Borough Council
Elaine Richardson	ER	Brentwood Borough Council
Jean Sharp	JS	Brentwood Borough Council
Guests		
Dr Jennifer Ward	JW	Local Historian
Fr Colin Hewitt	CH	Vicar of St Thomas of Canterbury Church

APOLOGIES:

Adrian Tidbury, Alan Jefcoate, Fran Brabham-Neil, Crispin Downs, Cllr Chris Hossack, Cllr Louise McKinlay, David Miles, Gloria Passannante, Mike Hawkins, Cllr Mike Le-Surf, Prajay Patel, Tony Pierce, Roy Ormsby, Suzan Hearson-Smith and Natasha Radford

		Action
1.	Welcome and introductions: CO welcomed all present and everyone	

	introduced themselves to the group.	
2.	<p>Minutes from 29.1.14 and matters arising: The minutes were approved as a correct record.</p> <p>Matters arising:</p> <p>2. Minutes from 29.1.2014 and matters arising: Shenfield Environmental Survey: This was out of date and Shenfield Traders had now invited CO and MHar to join them in undertaking an environmental audit in Shenfield.</p> <p>3. Cluster Groups (trade representative groups): CO confirmed he anticipated one representative from each cluster group would attend RG meetings and feed back relevant information to group members.</p> <p>5. Paul Jenner from Ixion: PJ had produced posters and information and had sent them to FSB and Chamber of Commerce. Action: PC to check with MHaw that they had been received.</p> <p>6. Perry Ashby from Urban Network: ER had been unable to contact Laurie Edmonds of Local by Social regarding attendance at this meeting to discuss a new RG website but LR had agreed to attend the 14.5.14 RG meeting.</p> <p>7. Street Audit: Issues had been referred to ECC Councillors and forwarded to ECC. A response was received from Chris Stoneham, ECC Highways Liaison Officer, which indicated the High Street was inspected once a month. There were further issues with subsidence and granite in the High Street. Action: CO and MHar would meet and follow up on the problems.</p> <p>8. 2014/15 Workplan: The leaflet requested to show parking provision in Shenfield would be produced to include the free parking agreed at the Council's Budget meeting on 20.5..14. Action: Leaflet to be produced.</p> <p>9. AOB: Terms of Reference for RG: CO advised he awaited comments from the Council and the RG Cluster Groups regarding the revised ToR.</p>	<p>PC</p> <p>CO/ MHar</p> <p>ER/KT</p>
3.	<p>Dr Jennifer Ward – translating the Medieval Market Charters: Dr Ward had translated Brentwood's market charters and explained their history and relevance relating to Brentwood's claim to being a market town, which was now proven.</p> <p>CO suggested Brentwood signs could include the phrase 'Ancient Market Town' and Dr Ward agreed his request to permit quotes from her book 'Brentwood – A History (2004)' to be used in the Borough's tourism offering.</p>	

	CO proposed this as an agenda item for the 14.5.14 RG meeting. Action: To be included in agenda as above. Action: ER to obtain quote for a presentation version of the translation.	JS ER
4.	Area Trade Representative Appointments, Guidelines and Feedback: Details of nominations had been included in minutes from the 29.1.14 RG meeting. CO and MHar were to meet with each representative to request that they arrange to meet with their Cluster Group to discuss local issues and tourism. It would be anticipated that they manage funding and projects for their patch. NC reported that he had met with licensing officers regarding putting on events in Crown Street and suggested this would be beneficial for other Groups Action: ER to speak to Licensing Officers to obtain a bullet-point list of the presentation to give to the Cluster Groups.	CO/ MHar ER
5.	2014/15 Work Plan, Budgets And Project Leads: RG members were pleased to note that the Council's contribution for 2014/15 had doubled to £30k. ER circulated a breakdown of the Group's Capital and Revenue spend and advised that the budget for 2014/15 was assumed to be £39702 (Revenue) and £15073 (Capital). CO advised that the bid form was to be updated to ensure it followed the workplan. Prospective bids: MHar and ER had undertaken a tour of fingerposts, seats and noticeboards noting which needed to be replaced, re-furbished or repaired and had received a quote of £20k which would be scrutinized before a funding bid was submitted. KT had been requested by Shenfield traders to bid for funding for the Christmas Fayre.	
6.	Update on Visit Essex Brand Brentwood Workshop: ER advised that she had been working with Visit Essex to get footfall into Brentwood and to encourage input from members of the community. An event was to take place on 8.4.14 at the Holiday Inn but RG members advised they had not received the invitations which had been sent out for this. Action: Invitations to be re-sent Action: AK to request Laurie Edmonds to tweet details of event Action: CO requested that PC promote the event via the C of C twitter site.	ER AK PC
7.	Proposed RG website: CO had requested costing for a website and twitter account for the RG and members were supportive of the proposal going forward. It was agreed that Local by Social should prepare a detailed bid for RG members' consideration then a comparable bid should be obtained.	

	<p>The domain name 'Brentwood Renaissance Group' was available and it was agreed unanimously that a website should be set up for two years, subject to re-negotiation at the end of two years by tender if appropriate. It was noted that Local by Social had been commissioned to work on the CoC website, therefore CO declared an interest.</p> <p>Action: CO would forward the detailed proposal to RG members for consideration.</p> <p>Action: Declaration of interests to be requested at future meetings.</p>	<p>CO</p> <p>CO</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Any other business:</p> <p>i) Fr Colin Hewitt advised he had attended the meeting to clarify rumoured plans for the Chapel Area in the High Street. However, the RG had no involvement in any plans currently and no bids had been made for RG funding.</p> <p>Action: CO proposed that MHar should liaise with Fr CH to ascertain any proposals for the site.</p> <p>ii) ER advised that at the Council's Ordinary Council (budget) meeting on 5.3.14 it had been resolved that there should be 30 minutes free parking and a charge of £1 for one hour within the Council car parks borough wide and free parking in the car parks in Shenfield during Crossrail construction.</p> <p>KT emphasized the importance of having some parking restrictions in the car parks fearing that free parking would lead to commuters rather than shoppers using the car parks.</p> <p>Action: ER to feed back this information as appropriate.</p> <p>iii) CO gave a summary of some of the headline points coming out of the Future High Street Summit in Birmingham:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offering free wifi throughout the town • Organising/creating a co-ordinated plan to attract independent brands to High Streets • Encouraging traders to stay open up until 8pm (this is the only period of time for which footfall is rising nationally for 2014 and the time most local retailers are closed) • Encouraging relevant traders to open much later on a Friday or Saturday night to take advantage of night time/TOWIE footfall • Be aware of impending threat of lease expiries: nationally, 37% of all leases are due to expire in 2015 • Promoting click and collect, especially for indie retailers • Encouraging/supporting local retailers in having multiple channels for their shop/restaurant; e.g., website, social media, apps • Creating a Brand Brentwood app; in exchange for giving up your email, you get app for free. Email database is then used to contact targeted group with special offers, new products, events, discounts, etc • Exploring option of rate relief for selected independent shops <p>CO advised that this had happened in Croydon and he would obtain further</p>	<p>MHar</p> <p>ER</p>

	information.	
9.	Date of next meetings: Wednesday, 14 May 2014, 4.30pm, Meeting Room 1 (Ground Floor), then all Wednesdays and commencing at 4.30 in Committee Room 1, 16 July, 10 September and 5 November 2014.	