



BRENTWOOD TOWN CENTRE RENAISSANCE GROUP MEETING

27 May 2015

PRESENT:

Renaissance Group:

Clive Othen (Chair)	CO	Chair of Renaissance Group
Alan Jefcoate (Vice chair)	AJ	Federation of small Businesses
Mike Hawkins	MHaw	Chamber of Commerce (Ch of C)
Laurie Edmonds	LE	Local By Social
Cllr David Kendall	DK	Brentwood Borough Council
Cllr Gareth Barrett	GB	Brentwood Borough Council
Natasha Radford	NR	Representative – Ongar Road Cluster
Cllr Keith Parker	PB	Brentwood Borough Council
Kaye Thurgood	KT	Representative – Central Shenfield Cluster
Cllr Louise Rowlands	LR	Brentwood Borough Council
Laura Williams	LW	Baytree Centre
Ian Page	IP	Representative – Crown Street Cluster
Nish Patel	NP	Representative – Upper Shenfield Cluster
Gerry Bender	GB	Assistant Environmental Auditor
Stanley Moses	SM	Representative – Ingatestone Cluster
Support group		
Gordon Glenday	GG	Brentwood Borough Council
Anne Knight	AK	Brentwood Borough Council
Simon Maidment	SM	Essex County Council
Elaine Richardson	ER	Brentwood Borough Council
Jean Sharp	JS	Brentwood Borough Council

Crown Street/Ropers Yard Traders in attendance A. Buckley (AB); G Collins; V Fuller; L Lowe; C Nunn

APOLOGIES:

Michael Hardy, Lin Heath and Neil Hornsby

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

	themselves.	
2.	Minutes from 1.4.15: The minutes were agreed as a correct record.	
3.	<p>Possible Conflict of Interest: C O had accepted the following positions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing Director – CustomsWrap Ltd (insurance sector) • Senior Partner – CustomsWrap Risk Services LLP (Risk assessors) and had requested that the RG consider any apparent conflict of interest with his duties as chair of the Renaissance Group. <p>After some discussion and questions, the RG agreed unanimously that there was no conflict of interest.</p>	
4.	<p>Business Trade Cluster Reports:</p> <p>Crown Street: LH had given apologies for the meeting but had provided a written update which was circulated.</p> <p>Several Crown Street traders attended the meeting and outlined their concerns regarding parking and the street being pedestrianised which they cited as reasons for a decline in trade. Action: CO and ER would meet with traders.</p> <p>Ongar Road: NR updated the group.</p> <p>Upper Shenfield: NP advised that the Bunny Hunt in Shenfield had been very successful and had increased footfall.</p> <p>A working group had been set up for the Christmas event, in conjunction with Central Shenfield traders. In total there were 80 businesses, mostly independents in the two areas.</p> <p>Central Shenfield: KT advised the two groups of Shenfield traders had different needs but collaborated when appropriate. A summer jazz event was planned and a bid was to be submitted to RG in this regard.</p> <p>Ingatestone: SM advised that traders were struggling but were focusing on holding a Victorian Night in December 2015 for which an RG bid was to be submitted.</p> <p>CO advised he had not had time to progress Clusters for Brentwood Town Centre or Woodland Avenue.</p> <p>It was suggested a non-retailer group be established and this could be mooted at the next business event. Action: ER/AK to include at next business event.</p>	<p>CO/ER</p> <p>ER/AK</p>
5.	<p>Environmental Audit Update: MH was unfortunately unwell therefore his update was deferred.</p> <p>GB advised he had undertaken the audits with MH and over 100 defects had been found in the Town Centre.</p>	

	LW requested the trees in the vicinity of the Chapel ruins be trimmed back.	
6.	<p>Appointment of Gerry Bender as member of RG street audit team: RG members agreed unanimously to appoint GB in the suggested role.</p> <p>CO advised he would pass over a list of environmental issues to GB and these would be included on the RG website.</p> <p>KP advised that a street inspector was to be appointed.</p>	
7.	<p>Business Support Update:</p> <p>AK advised that the Business Workshop event had been well received and had provided a good networking opportunity.</p> <p>It was hoped to run a business showcase type of event later in the year.</p> <p>CO requested all details be included on the RG website.</p>	
8.	<p>Review of Bids:</p> <p>CO declared a personal interest in bid no's 1 and 2</p> <p>1. Minibus: A bid of £5,000 was submitted in relation to provision of the Street Pastors minibus project. The minibus would be available for community use during the week and would be owned by Sawyers Church. It would also be used in Billericay.</p> <p>There was to be a press release when the bus was launched and an evaluation would be made when it was in operation.</p> <p>Funding of £5,000 was agreed unanimously with caveats about ensuring day time and weekday usage and contributions for Billericay and other sponsors being secure. The group was assured that the RG logo would be displayed on the vehicle.</p> <p>2. Brentwood Business Enterprise Centre Project Steering Group: ECC had agreed funding of £5,000 towards the £10,000 required for a viability study. The project would be self-funding once it had been set up and local schools were very interested in the initiative.</p> <p>It was suggested there be a caveat to the bid that the RG would approve the Terms of Reference for the project. The group was pleased to note that RG representatives would be included in the interview panel when tenders had been received.</p> <p>The bid for £5,000 was agreed unanimously. Action: AK would circulate the brief for the project to RG members.</p>	AK

	<p>3. Brentwood Children’s Literary Festival: A week-long literary festival arranged by the Chicken and Frog was proposed for the beginning of the summer holidays in 2016 and as an annual event subsequently. Shenfield High School and Brentwood Library had agreed to host the event and 14 authors were already on board. The purpose of the requested funding was to make the event affordable to all.</p> <p>Group members voiced concerns but the principle of the event and funding of £4,650 was agreed unanimously, but would be subject to available funds from the 2016/17 budget caveats. NR was to seek alternative funding streams for 2016 and longer term.</p> <p>4. Crown Street in Bloom: Funding for hanging baskets outside each shop was requested. There was some discussion regarding possible problems with watering the baskets but KP advised he would provide the means to water them if the traders agreed to do so.</p> <p>Funding of £450 was agreed in principle subject to the above.</p> <p>5. Ingatestone Victorian Night: Funding for a community Christmas event on 4.12.15.</p> <p>Since the meeting was running late it was agreed the bid would be deferred.</p>	
9.	<p>2015/16 Workplan project proposals discussion including Town Centre Ambassadors: ER advised that further to the January project planning meeting a second meeting with Cluster leads was planned to discuss outstanding and new 2015 projects in more detail..</p> <p>Action: ER would suggest some dates.</p>	ER
10.	<p>Crown Street:</p> <p>Proposed Arch – GG advised the original planning application for the development had included an arch but ECC had a problem with licensing the overhang. Issues with health and safety had led to the arch being withdrawn from the application for which GG confirmed a site notice had been displayed. AB advised no letter had been received by traders regarding these issues.</p> <p>Action: GG would establish relevant dates.</p> <p>GG advised that there was no longer a requirement for the arch to be erected and a further application needed to be made to ECC. The developer had confirmed he would provide the arch if the bureaucracy could be sorted out.</p> <p>Action: ER/GG would investigate previous issues, also the whereabouts and condition of the Ropers Yard arch which was believed to be being stored locally.</p> <p>Action: JS to include the Crown Street and Ropers Yard Arch on the agenda for the next RG meeting.</p>	<p>GG</p> <p>ER/GG</p> <p>JS</p>

11.	<p>Town Centre Planning and Research: A Gazette article claiming there were too many restaurants in the High Street was circulated and discussed.</p> <p>Action: RG members to come up with ideas of how to attract shops to the High Street and advise ER.</p> <p>Action: Enquiries regarding vacant premises could be included on the RG website so should be sent to LE. GG would liaise.</p>	<p>AII/ER</p> <p>LE/GG</p>
12.	<p>Any Other Business: There was none.</p>	
13.	<p>Date of next meeting: 29 July – 6.00pm in Committee Room 1.</p> <p>Future meetings for 2015, all commencing at 6.00pm in Committee Room 1:</p> <p>23 September</p> <p>18 November</p>	