

Newmarket Retailers Association



Minutes of the Retailers Meeting held on 31st March 2010

at the Bedford Lodge Hotel

1) **Present**

Please see attached Attendance Register

2) **Apologies**

Sarah Witham – Scotts Opticians

James O’Doherty

Jamie Mansfield – Sherington

John Thacker – Sandwich Mill

David Berry – Marks & Spencer

Peter Smith – Busy Bee

Kim – Kitchen & Things

Pat Cowle – Treasures

Tolly – Tolly’s Flowers

Iam Clemsen – Best of Newmarket

Esther Massot – Jose Hair

Alexa – Ann Furbank

Scribbles

Hair Flair

Newsagent

3) **Matters Arising**

It was agreed that more Retailers needed to be involved in the Association especially Retail Managers. Ben explained that he had approached a number of Retailers to encourage them to attend the meetings. Equal representation was needed to ensure that the Retailers Association would be able to represent the views of at least the majority of the Retailers in the town. Ben agreed to keep on spreading the word and to encourage more Retailers to attend.

4) **Action Plan – Prioritising and Setting Targets**

The Committee noted that only 9 out of 160 questionnaires had been returned. The Committee expressed their disappointment at the low number of responses received. Joanne Rodgers injected some optimism by pointing out that although a low number of responses had been received, the Retailers in attendance at tonight’s meeting spoke volumes about their willingness to engage.

Members of the Committee agreed that the lack of response might be due to the fact that the questionnaires had been mailed out on Town Council letter headed paper, which might have put some retailers off. The Committee therefore agreed that the Retailers Association was in need of their own letter headed paper.

In addition, Members agreed that the Retailers Association is in need of a project that is affordable and deliverable and has a positive and visible impact on the town. Committee Members agreed that such an action would assist the Association in gaining more Members.

The following actions were agreed:-

- That Members should think of a suitable project and report back at the next meeting.
- To design the Retailers Associations own letter headed paper including the relevant contact details of the Chairman and Vice Chairman.
- That any future letters to Retailers should be addressed personally to the individual Managers. Ben agreed to work on the list.
- That the Retailers Association take over the distribution of the Minutes and Agendas.

4) **Sub-Committees**

The Marketing Sub Committee reported that they had met last Tuesday. Ben reported that the Associations E-mail address was up and running and that he was currently collating all Retailers e-mail addresses to enable him to mail out the Minutes and Agendas via email. He was also in the process of inputting all the relevant Retailers contact details onto a database.

5) **Parking in Newmarket**

Cllr Hirst reported that FHDC were releasing the Car Parking Strategy report in April. In addition, FHDC had committed themselves to present the proposals to the Retailers Association as well as consult with them.

The Members advised Cllr Sadler that the short stay car park only permitted visitors to park their cars for 3 hours, which is not long enough. In addition, there are not enough long stay car parks nor enough signage to direct the visitors to the various car parks located in and around the town. Members felt that paying a fee to stay in the car parks was not an issue but the 3 hour rule placed on the short stay car parks was as it prevented visitors from staying longer in the town. Members agreed that FHDC should increase the car parking fees in return for longer hours in the short stay car parks.

Members agreed that a Retailers Association Sub Committee should be formed to undertake a consultation with all the Retailers in the town to gain an

understanding as to what other Retailers feel about the car parking arrangements in the town.

Committee Members unanimously agreed that a Car Parking Sub Committee be formed with immediate effect and the following Members would be part of the Committee:-

Jose Hair Design
Julie - Coffee and Co
Ross McKindrick – Manager of The Guineas Centre
Andy Yallop – Hughes

Joanne agreed to find out when the FHDC Car Parking Consultation would take place.

6) **Setting of Annual Meeting Schedule**

It was agreed that the Retailers Association should meet every first Wednesday of every month at 6.00pm.

7) **Any Other Business**

Isabelle agreed to enquire with the Town Councils contractors whether the Hanging Baskets could be fed three times as opposed to twice to see whether this would improve the life span of the plants.

Cllr Uney advised that the Retailers Association should consider writing to all our local National Retailers to advise of the Association.

Ben advised that the Association needed to think about how they could get involved with the July Festival in the hope that it might increase the footfall in the town.

Andy advised that he had been invited to attend the Vision for Newmarket Working Group meeting on 13th April.

In addition, Andy advised that Mr Critchley Waring would like to attend the next Retailers Association meeting to present his proposed plans for the new Arcade in the High Street. The Committee agreed that Andy should confirm the invite with Mr Critchley Waring.

Meeting closed at 20.50 hrs.

Andy Yallop
Chairman

5th May 2010