

Newmarket Retailers Association



Minutes of the Retailers Meeting held on Wednesday 1st December 2010 at 6:15pm at The Bedford Lodge Hotel, Bury Road, Newmarket

Attendance:

Andy Yallop, Hughes (Chairman)
Tolly Considine, Tolly's Flowers (Vice Chair)
Marion Green, CC (Secretary)
Denis Ferguson, My Fotoshop
Simon Batey Palace House (TIC)
Bev Beak, The Dressing Room
Christine Lister-Gilder – Moons Toymaster
John Thacker – The Sandwich Mill
David Hopper – Goldings
Julie Eden – Coffee & Co.
Noel Byrne – Bedford Lodge
Noli Shelala – Newmarket & District Chamber of Commerce
Sgt Mark Shipton - SNT
Joanne Rogers, Town Centre Manager (FHDC)
Cllr. Joy Uney (NTC)
Ross McKittrick – The Guineas
Mr David Burnip – Chief Executive (FHDC)

Apologies:

Ben Pym – Corney & Barrow (Treasurer)
Amy Setter – Peacocks
Chris Garibaldi – National Horseracing Museum
Richard Goss – Venus Hair & Beauty
Audrey Lewis – Audrey's
Patrick Cowell – Treasures
Carolyn Frost - Squiggles
Cllr. Warwick Hirst (NTC)

Minute	Actioned by
<p>1. Introductions and apologies. The Chairman welcomed Mr. David Burnip, Chief Executive of Forest Heath District Council.</p> <p>The Chairman also mentioned that he was pleased that the word about the Retailers Association now seemed to be getting out and more people seemed aware of the Association.</p> <p>2. The Minutes of the Retailers Meeting held on 3rd November 2010 were received and approved.</p>	

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3. Matters Arising.

None raised.

4. Shop Watch Scheme Presentation.

Postponed until the January 2011 meeting.

5. A-Boards Removals.

David Burnip and Joanne Rogers confirmed that letters had been sent out to all retailers regarding the removal of their A-Boards/applying for a licence on 29.11.2010 and that they were moving forward and it was being actioned. Retailers have been given 21 days to remove their A-Boards or apply for a licence, failure to comply will result in the FHDC Enforcement Officer removing the boards, where they will be stored and disposed of if not collected by their owners. Retailers also face possible prosecution should they fail to adhere to the licence regulations.

FHDC

Several retailers confirmed they had received a letter, but some have not yet received a letter. It was reported that the A-Boards at Sun Lane were not on the High Street today.

The Association raised the point that the letters should only have been sent to those retailers with an illegal A-Board and not to those who have signed up for the new signage. The Assistant to the Town Clerk (NTC) stated that there were 1 or 2 retailers who had panels on the new signage, but also still had their A-Boards displayed illegally, hence why the letters were sent to all to make sure. Namely Treasures and Unique. IT was noted that Treasures and Unique had still failed to pay for their panel on the new signage.

David Burnip confirmed that the licensing regulations applied to the whole of Newmarket and not just the High Street.

6. Reports from Sub Committee's.

Report from Christmas Sub Committee:

It was confirmed that 24,000 leaflets for the Christmas events had been distributed.

'Spot the Santa' competition is now in motion.

The committee is just finalising points for the Carolling Day to be held on 11th December 2010.

Late Night Shopping on 7th December 2010 has been finalised. Although the possibility of the Mail Coach being cancelled due to adverse weather conditions affecting the transport of the horses was raised and it was asked that any contingency suggestions be put forward to the committee.

Ross McKittrick suggested a classic car form the Newmarket District Car Club and Simon Batey suggested he may have a contact who could possibly acquire a vintage tractor.

It was confirmed that the FHDC newsletter went out to 59,000 homes and that on Page.9 there was an article dedicated to the Newmarket/Mildenhall Christmas events

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for 2010.

It was agreed that the Christmas lights in the High Street and the Christmas trees looked good and feedback was very positive. Thanks were given to Cllr. Warwick Hirst and NTC's Events Manager, Kay Dawson for organising the trees and lights.

It was agreed that the Chairman would write to the Newmarket Weekly/Journal to pass on the Retailers Association positive thoughts about the Christmas lights etc.

**Andy Yallop/
Marion Green**

Report from Empty Shop Scheme :

It was confirmed that the committee had so far received 40 requests for applications for the "Strictly Come Newmarket" competition.

The Information Day at the Bedford Lodge on Tuesday 7th December 2010 10am-4pm was confirmed. It was also confirmed that the application deadline would be 24th December 2010 with the Pitch Day taking place on 19th January 2010 at the Bedford Lodge.

Winners would receive the Money and support package, with runners up receiving the support package.

The committee has had a letter from Downing Street expressing their positive thoughts on the project. There was also the mention of possible Cabinet Office help.

Inter Shop Support Scheme:

Voucher exchange trial (Coffee & Co, and Venus Hair & Beauty) is currently taking place and footfall is reported to have increased already.

A meeting will be scheduled for January for other shops to join the scheme and to be partnered up.

The suggestion of the scheme coinciding with the map/leaflet launch was suggested.

7. Q and A – David Burnip – Chief Executive FHDC

Q1.) Taking into consideration the efforts of the Retailers Association in raising the profile of the empty shops in Newmarket and our strenuous effort to encourage new business, the proposed extension to Tesco, whilst creating new jobs is bound to have a detrimental effect on the footfall to the Town Centre. What plans, if any, does the District Council have to seek and encourage new business development in the Town Centre?

A.) Mr. Burnip stated that he could not comment on a proposed/pending planning application. He explained that it would be up to the Planning Committee to judge the merits of any planning applications based on material planning considerations.

He commented that the Retailers Association efforts to enhance the Town Centre were excellent and he hoped that the FHDC/NTC Vision for Newmarket would work alongside the Associations plans. He confirmed that the NTC initiated Vision for Newmarket was in motion and that FHDC were

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working closely together with NTC.

Following the release of the Vision document it was hoped that several possibilities would be considered for the Town Centre/High Street and retail enhancement, although nothing was definite at this stage. It is hoped that FHDC would have tangible results to report to the Association upon receipt of the Vision document.

Mr. Burnip advised that if the Planning Committee agreed planning consent for the Tesco expansion, then they could possibly include a Section 106 agreement. This would be a legal agreement alongside the planning permission which allows the developers to do allocate monies for community needs. This would allow the possibility for funding towards a wish list or towards the mitigating impact/detrimental effects on the retail industry, due to the expansion.

Mr Burnip suggested and encouraged that the Association send its written opposition to the expansion to the planning committee. He advised that the committee could take this into consideration regarding the overall impact of the expansion.

He explained that upon receipt of a planning application, the statutory public consultation period could take 6-8 weeks, following this Council Officers would compile a comprehensive report which would be forwarded to the Planning committee. The planning committee has freewill, although its reasons must be sustainable, and give accurate planning terms.

It was discussed as to whether the Association objected to the Tesco expansion selling more variety of stock or just a larger amount of the same stock. It was agreed that a conglomerate was a concern.

The suggestion of a Park & Ride to take shoppers from Tesco into the Town Centre as part of the proposed plan was raised.

The character of the town was discussed and it was stated that FHDC endorsed some large stores in Newmarket to increase footfall and to encourage further niche businesses. The suggestion of uniformed fascias and signage was discussed, with substantial dialogue from the retailers. Mr Burnip agreed that this was a possible way forward, but explained that current regulations and planning permission made it difficult to be enforced without achieving an 'above and beyond' agreement with retailers. It was agreed that FHDC and the Town Centre Manager would look into how other town's may have managed an agreement/policy.

FHDC/Joanne Rogers (TCM)

It was also agreed that the Retailers Association would invite Tesco to put their proposal to the Association at the next meeting.

Marion Green

Q2.) The new Premier Inn Hotel is now a fact of the town, the most common statement from the general public is; Where are they all going to park? Have the District Council entered into any discussion with the owners of Premier Inn to discuss

DRAFT

the logistics of their visitor's parking and the service vehicles their business will generate?

A.) Mr Burnip confirmed that yes FHDC had embarked upon discussions with Premier Inn. He confirmed that the Planning Inspector had granted planning permission for the hotel with the view that parking would happen in the Guineas car park. Following FHDC's decision to agree to let the Retailers Association have the top floor of the Guineas car park for permit parking, FHDC are in discussions with Premier Inn regarding usage of the ground floor of the Guineas car park. Security and financial commitment from Premier Inn were items to be discussed.

Mr Burnip did confirm that FHDC were not obligated to provide parking facilities or solutions for the Premier Inn.

Members of the Association voiced their opinion that it was ridiculous that planning permission was granted at all without parking provision being agreed. Suggestions were also made that charges could be made to Premier Inn visitors for overnight parking to fund the car parks, instead of increasing parking charges.

Mr Burnip advised that it was agreed at a meeting last night that the FHDC decision regarding parking charges was being put off until June 2011. It was agreed that they should let the current fee regime run for a trial period in order to reflect a true deficit figure. It was also agreed that waiting until VAT and coinage changes had happened, would be better to coincide with the change of the machines and fees etc.

Home of Horseracing Project:

Mr Burnip reported that the project was still going ahead but that timescales had been extended due to a shortfall in funding that was still needed to be secured. He congratulated Chris Garibaldi on his work so far and the progress which had been made.

He confirmed that so far FHDC had spent £1,000,000 on preserving the stables and that they had committed £713,000 to the proposed project.

The Association confirmed their support for the project, with the understanding that an arcade (as proposed by Angus Critchley-Warring) was not pre-requisite or desirable element within the project.

8. Newmarket Town Council Report

Vision for Newmarket:

Cllr. Uney confirmed that the Vision for Newmarket consultation which was carried out via questionnaire (postal and at the Carnival 2010) to residents and businesses of Newmarket, for which we had received over 500 replies, was now closed and the data is currently being compiled into a draft document, which would be reviewed at the 13th December Town Council meeting.

The draft document will be available to the public on the NTC website in the New Year and will be forwarded to local authorities for review and opinion. It was stated

DRAFT

that NTC would very much appreciate the Associations opinion of the draft once it has been released.

'Horse about Newmarket' Competition:

Cllr. Uney confirmed that 12 schools had been contacted and so far 10 had committed to the project. The horses are due to be ordered and delivered in January 2011. It has been confirmed that Suffolk County Councillor's, Cllr. Sadler and Cllr. Chambers have agreed to fund the schools horses out of their Locality Budgets.

6 Large horses have been confirmed with another possible 2 to be confirmed. Sponsors are still being sought. The competition for the designs and painting of the large horses will be held in the New Year.

Suggested locations for display of the large painted horses so far are as follows:

- Jockey Club
- Memorial Gardens
- Palace House
- The Guineas
- Clocktower Plaza
- And possibly a shop – Goldings??

9. Any Other Business

Association Christmas Party: Friday 10th December 2010 at the Bedford Lodge.

July Festival:

Bunting packs for the July 2011 Festival are available – 5m = £15, includes window sticker and an A4 poster.

The Festival will hopefully have a Tea Dance, Food Festival and Fashion Show next year. It was also mentioned that Patrick Cowell and Anne Furbank were working on a Town Centre Village with the Guineas for the Festival week.

Newmarket & District Chamber of Commerce:

Noli Shelala attended the meeting as a representative from the Newmarket & District Chamber of Commerce. The Chairman welcomed him and thanked him for coming.

The business of the meeting concluded at 8:15pm.

Next Meeting: Wednesday 5th January 2011 at 6:15pm at the Bedford Lodge Hotel, Bury Road, Newmarket.

The following was suggested for the agenda for the next meeting:

- Shop Watch Scheme Update
- Invite Tesco for presentation on proposed store expansion

Signed : _____

Date : _____

Andy Yallop, Chairman