

**Town Centre Partnership  
Meeting 15<sup>th</sup> October  
2010  
MINUTES**

**Present**

|                          |                            |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Liz Chandler (LC)        | Natures Corner (Chair)     |
| Peter Atkinson (PA)      | Chamber of Commerce        |
| David Blake (DB)         | Media (Newbury Sound)      |
| Malcolm Bull (MB)        | Property                   |
| Brian Burgess (BB)       | Newbury Retail Association |
| Una Carr(UC)             | Newbury College            |
| Patrick Griffin (PG)     | COC Property Group         |
| Jeremy Holden-Bell (JHB) | Newbury Society            |
| Jonathan Hopson (JJH)    | Camp Hopson                |
| Steve Brind (SB)         | Newbury Market             |
| Anthony Cox (AC)         | Donnington Valley Hotel    |
| Tom Rossiter (TR)        | Solicitor                  |
| Pamela Bale (PB)         | West Berkshire Council     |

**In Attendance**

|                     |                           |
|---------------------|---------------------------|
| Nick Carter (NC)    | West Berkshire Council    |
| Roger Hunneman (RH) | West Berkshire Council    |
| Jayne Mills (JM)    | West Berkshire Council    |
| Jeff Beck (JB)      | West Berkshire Council    |
| Keith Ulyatt (KU)   | West Berkshire Council    |
| Brian Kelly (BK)    | Standard Life Investments |
| Mike Nisbet         | Standard Life Investments |

**Apologies**

Ifor Sheldon , Julian Swift-Hook), David Milson , Norman Fryer-Saxby, Graham Hunt, Caroline Paus, David Appleton, Richard Stacey, Peter Bartlett, Michaela Briggs, John Hampson.

**Introduction**

PA explained that Liz Chandler would be taking back the chairmanship as from today 15<sup>th</sup> October 2010 and welcomed her back. Liz thanked the TCP for their warm welcome back into the Chair.

**Minutes**

September 2010 minutes agreed to be accurate and OK for publication.

## **Matters Arising**

**Michaelmas Fayre** – The ‘showmen’s children have been causing problems with local residents. The Town Centre Inspector and the Fire Service have given a warning and things seem to have calmed down. Access must be available at all times for residents and Northcroft Leisure Centre. Traffic is under control.

**Northbrook Multi-storey Lifts** – Both lifts are now operating. This car park will be open until 11.30pm during the Michaelmas Fayre.

## **Police Report**

No police report on this occasion.

Jonathan Hopson expressed thanks to the police for their proactive security training for retail store staff. PC Hayward and PC Sutherland should be thanked for their input.

## **Parkway**

Mike Nesbit from Standard Life Investments gave the following account of progress:

- Mike confirmed that he would now be on site at Parkway, taking an active role in day to day activities
- Basement is complete and concreting work has been completed
- Steel works are all but complete
- Main residential core is being completed
- 1<sup>st</sup> of 4 tower cranes has been removed
- In terms of lettings of retail space, large units have been taken and the smaller units are receiving interest
- Residential units will follow with a sales unit being present from October 2011 to March 2012.
- De-watering is being turned off. This needs to be staged so that the superstructure can settle
- Pamela Bale encouraged the TCP to attend the guided tour. Date TBC.\*
- Standard Life Investments are in the process of recruiting a Centre Manager. This person will liaise with the TCP and they should be in post at the start of 2011
- Jeff Beck stressed the importance of Integrating the Parkway security, CCTV and signage etc. with the existing town centre management methods. MN reassured the TCP that this would indeed be the case.

*\* The dates were sent by email on 25 October 2010.*

## **Finance**

PG reported that although the TCP has some surplus at this point, the finances would be tight in February & March 2011 as there are a variety of things to be paid for over the coming months.

Caroline Paus has given predictions for the costs of events in Newbury

## **Finance and Strategy Sub-Group**

PG reported that the main activity of the Finance and Strategy Group recently has been the Newbury BID (Business Improvement District), which has had an encouraging level of stakeholder support. PG gave an overview of the BID process as follows:

- 1% levy on rateable value of retail premises, not rates payable is proposed for discussion
- More than 50% of the businesses in the BID area need to vote in favour of the process
- It is proposed that businesses with a rateable value of less than £5000 will not be charged but any such exemption to the BID levy and the consequent minimum rateable value, will need to be formally ratified
- The funds would go to the BID Community Interest Company
- As part of the BID process, the views of businesses in the BID area have to be canvassed and taken into account, in order to devise a clear measurable business plan, stating what projects BID levy funds are to be used for on an annual basis
- This model is tried and tested and there are 114 successful BID towns across England
- It is hoped that Parkway will become involved, as soon as possible
- TCP is the facilitator of the new group which will put the BID proposal together
- The project is proving bigger than expected, so sub-groups have been formed
- A private meeting is planned in November, prior to a public meeting. Target at the moment is to deliver a statement to the TCP in December 2010

Brian Burgess expressed concern that some businesses have experienced a large increase in their business rates lately and that they may be less keen now to support the BID. Pamela Bale confirmed that the net effect of the business rates increase had been significant for some businesses even though they also received transitional relief.

## **Events and Communications**

**Events** - Caroline Paus is due to meet with Stuart Clarke to discuss work required in the market place prior to the Halloween Hullabaloo..

John Hampson has been discussing the option of a special pull-out feature for Christmas. Caroline and Liz have been involved in these discussions.

**Communications Committee Report** - The Communications Committee report was agreed by the TCP (as attached).

Keith Ulyatt is happy to continue to ensure that minutes are available at the Newbury Library.

Following each meeting a press release will be sent to the media.

RH expressed a concern that the minutes were not available on line and that the last set available was for October 2009. PG acknowledged this but stated that the group was voluntary and that people were very busy. BB agreed to put minutes (once agreed) onto the Newbury Town Centre website. JHopson added that there should be a link from this site to the Newbury Events website. BB agreed to do this.

Pamela Bale asked if Keith Ulyatt could attend the TCP Communications Group meetings. KU agreed to this.

**Destination Newbury Report** – AC reported on the development of a new Newbury Tourism website, 'Destination Newbury'. The site has cost £25K. The WBC Heritage department have been involved and there will be an online booking feature. There will be ample opportunity for advertising, events, conference promotions etc.

## **Vision 2025**

The group has not met.

## **Transport**

Minutes of last meeting agreed to be sent to Liz for distribution ASAP.

PA asked if parking could be free again this Christmas to encourage shoppers into Newbury Town Centre. NC agreed to look at dates and confirm with TCP.

## **Safety and Security**

Group have not met since 08/09/10

## **Newbury T.C. Report from Graham Hunt:**

- French Continental Market was successful. They have booked again for next year.
- Victoria Park – Hydrogeological survey report still awaited – it in turn is awaiting figures from Costain. Discussing Park Way wall issues with SLI direct. Meeting set with Nick Carter on both for next week.
- Parkway – initial discussions held with SLI re operational aspects leading up to opening (effective integration, signage, Xmas lights, competitions, market impact etc...)
- Christmas light switch-on planning in hand for 26/11/10. Slight changes from last year: Lights in Northbrook Street will be on for procession from 5:15pm from Methodist Church. Full switch-on of Tree / Market Place lights, with usual countdown, will be in Market Place at 5:30pm. Children from one of Mayor's chosen charities, Naomi House, will be pressing the plunger. Other usual and not so usual entertainment arranged. Rest of town lights will be manually switched on from 5:30m onwards. Full road closure from 4pm-8pm, but hope to lift by 7pm, as last year.
- Agree with proposed TCP Communication Plan, which doesn't look dissimilar from what the TCP Events and Communications sub-group should be doing.
- Have offered NTC resource to the TCP Finance and Strategy sub-group BID sub-group and await details of meeting on 19/10/10
- TCP Safety and Security sub-group press release I think still awaiting TCP top and tailing, before release. Next meeting set for 12/1/11, with an option on 10/11/10
- Special TCP Accessibility, Parking and Transport sub-group meeting being hosted in Town Hall on 21/10/10 – specifically to discuss Town Centre aspects of LTP3
- Pleased to see VisitNewbury progress – suggest Communications group look at links with Newbury events site.
- No relevant or significant progress in any other areas normally reported on

## **West Berkshire Report**

### **Gas works at Bartholomew Street**

The Gas network activities in Bartholomew Street have caused much disruption and WBC has been monitoring activities on a daily basis. JB reported that the public were blaming WBC as they think that it is a WBC responsibility to carry out this work, however, WBC's only responsibility is to ensure that the Highway is safe, accessible and that the re-instatement of the highway is satisfactory.

Richard Benyon has recommended that the traders should apply to Southern Gas for compensation for loss of income and to also to apply for a reduction in business rates. A co-ordinated approach to the claims is required.

The works are due to be completed on 29.10.10. A £2K per day fee has been applied for every day that the completion of work is delayed. The consequent £38K can be used to make improvements to Bartholomew Street.

BB added that there are 2 businesses that have already folded and a further 2 that have reported that they will be closing by the end of the year, due to loss in sales, particularly because the parking bays have been blocked.

### **Bath Road and Oxford Road**

Letters will be distributed to businesses shortly to explain the extent of the road improvements.

### **Clock Tower**

Work on improved lighting for this area will commence soon.

### **Newbury Footfall figures**

Jayne Mills distributed footfall figures for Newbury for 2003-10. Footfall is improving again after a reduction since the start of the recession in late 2007. BB suggested that these figures were not that useful until Parkway opens.

## **Newbury Retail Association**

Mostly already covered, but BB highlighted the positive news that Newbury has 3 new stores opening, Wilkinson's, M+S food and Matalan. There would also be a new steak bar opening at the market place a Break Bar opening by the cinema.

BB agreed to bring a representative from Newbury Night traders to the next TCP meeting.

**AOB**

Expo at Newbury College for SME's on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2010. This has been advertised on Newbury Sound.

LC asked for those who are able to host TCP meetings for 2011 to send dates to her.

**Next Meeting**

**Friday 19 November at West Berkshire Council, Market Street.**

**Proposed dates for future meetings (all Fridays 9.30-11.30am)**

- 21 January 11**
- 18 February 11**
- 18 March 11**
- 15 April 11**
- 20 May 11**
- 17 June 11**
- 15 July 11**
- 19 August 11**
- 16 September 11**
- 21 October 11**
- 18 November 11**