

HARROW TOWN CENTRE FORUM

TUESDAY 1 MAY 2007

PRESENT:

CORE FUNDERS

Steve Kent (Chairman)	St George's Shopping & Leisure Centre
Councillor Marilyn Ashton	Harrow Council
Councillor Narinder Singh Mudhar (Vice-Chairman)	Harrow Council
Councillor Rekha Shah	Harrow Council
Rachel Bulford	Marks and Spencer
Sanjeev Popat	Boots the Chemist
Christopher Bloss	Boots the Chemist
Lawrence McKnight	Debenhams
Clive Ridgeway	HSBC, Harrow

PERMANENT MEMBERS

Giovanni Caloia	North West London Chamber of Commerce
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ORDINARY MEMBERS

Jeannie Cohen-Brand	Harrow College
Bernard Segal	Roxborough Residents' Association

NON-VOTING ADVISORS

The Reverend Bob Gardiner	Churches Together in Harrow
DI Ben Harris	Metropolitan Police
PS Kate Rogers	Metropolitan Police
PC Mick Milner	Greenhill Ward Team - Metropolitan Police

OFFICERS

Victoria Isaacs	Projects Officer	Harrow Council
Graham Jones	Director of Planning Services	Harrow Council
Fern Silverio	Business Development	Harrow Council
David Sklair	Regeneration Project Manager	Harrow Council

ALSO PRESENT: .

Russell Barr
Howard Bluston
Lawrence Conway
Arusha Sakadaran

Harrow Business Against Crime (HBAC)
Observer
Harrow Observer
Harrow College

29. Apologies for Absence:

Received from Alan Emm (GE Money) and Anthony Wood (Harrow Public Transport Users' Association).

30. Minutes:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 October 2006 be agreed as a correct record.

31. Matters Arising:

No matters were raised.

32. The Future of Harrow Town Centre Management Initiative - Business Improvement District:

The Forum received a report of the Director of Planning Services, Harrow Council, summarising progress on and setting out a timetable and issues related to establishing a Business Improvement District (BID) covering Harrow Town Centre.

Officers briefed the Forum on the concept of a BID and the work that needed to be covered during the projected 18-month preparation period. A business plan would be drawn up and voted on at the end of the period by all eligible businesses. The cost of preparing for the BID was estimated to be between £45,000 and £60,000 and would cover setting up the company, establishing a website, publicity and the cost of the ballot. The cost of any software needed to set up the ballot was likely to be borne by the Council.

Answering questions from members of the Forum, officers advised that:

- the security arrangements within the BID would be in addition to those already provided by the Council
- the cost of preparation was likely to be covered by the Town Centre Fund and projected income from core funders over the next 12 months
- while a BID could include non-contiguous areas and/or a larger overall area, the current proposal covered the four main shopping streets, but it would be for the BID company to make a final proposal based on what businesses wanted
- any BID proposal would be business-led, with the Council facilitating and helping.

Officers agreed to take things forward by:

- providing members of the Forum with information on successful bids by other London boroughs
- offering a presentation by an officer of the London Development Agency (LDA) and/or a representative of a successful BID
- organising the next meeting of the Forum within two months, with at least four weeks' notice.

AGREED: That the proposed approach set out in the report be endorsed.

33. Update on Town Centre budget position:

The Director of Planning Services, Harrow Council, reported that the end-of-year accounts were currently being prepared and would be ready to view at the next meeting. However, it was anticipated that the balance would be sufficient, when combined with the income anticipated from core funders, to support the BID proposal.

AGREED: That the accounts for 2006/07 be approved at the next meeting.

34. Update on Harrow Business Against Crime:

Russell Barr of Harrow Business Against Crime (HBAC) briefed the Forum on the work of this organisation, a crime-reduction initiative which included sharing information with businesses, the operation of 'pub-watch' with radio links and CCTV, a meeting on security, and participation in a multi-agency approach to dealing with illegal DVD sellers. Leaflets on the work of HBAC were available for the Forum, and there was a website (www.harrowbusinessagainstcrime.gbr.cc). HBAC had won several awards and was hoping to expand in the near future.

35. Any Other Business:

1. The Future of the Post Office Site

Asked about the future of the Post Office site, the Director of Planning Services, Harrow Council, reported that there now seemed to be a measure of agreement on the development of the site. Harrow College was being rebuilt and the College and the Council were working to ensure that this would fit in with any plans for the site. A report would be going to the next Harrow Council Cabinet meeting about this matter, and it was hoped that by the time of the subsequent Cabinet meeting in June there would be a scheme which everyone could support.

AGREED: That the above be noted.

2. Alcohol Exclusion Zone

Members of the Forum understood that the town centre was a designated alcohol exclusion zone, but were concerned that the signs indicating this might be inadequate. Officers agreed to ensure that the Community Safety Team contacted the Police to provide an update on progress.

AGREED: That the above be noted.

3. Retail Training Offered at Harrow College

The representatives of Harrow College drew the Forum's attention to the fact that the College was currently offering fully-funded training relevant to the retail trade. They encouraged businesses to take advantage of this Government-funded scheme.

AGREED: That the above be noted.

36. Date of Next Meeting:

AGREED: That the next meeting would be held within two months, to be arranged with at least four weeks' notice.

The Meeting having started at 4.05 pm, finished at 5.25 pm.