

HARROW TOWN CENTRE FORUM (ORDINARY)

TUESDAY 21 SEPTEMBER 2010

PRESENT:

Councillor Sue Anderson
Councillor Ben Wealthy
Councillor Simon Williams

Harrow Council (Greenhill Ward)
Harrow Council (Greenhill Ward)
Harrow Council (Harrow-on-the-Hill Ward)

CORE FUNDERS:

Suzy Wood
Fran Pulford

St. Ann's Shopping & Leisure Centre
St. George's Shopping Centre

PERMANENT MEMBERS:

Howard Bluston

North West London Chamber of
Commerce

NON-VOTING ADVISERS:

The Reverend Bob Gardiner (Advisor)
Sergeant Tom Stag

Churches Together in Harrow
Metropolitan Police - Greenhill Safer
Neighbourhood Team
Harrow Public Transport Users
Association

Anthony Wood (Advisor)

OFFICERS:

David Sklair

Regeneration Project Manager,
Harrow Council

Philip Greenwood

Head of Major Development Projects,
Harrow Council

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillor Keith Ferry

Portfolio Holder for Planning
Development and Enterprise - Harrow
Council

8. Apologies for Absence:

Apologies were received from:

Chris Bailey - Marks & Spencer Commercial Manager, Harrow Central & North
London Region;

Sergeant Mike Windeatt Metropolitan Police - Greenhill Safer Neighbourhood
Team;

Pat Carvalho - Harrow College.

9. Minutes of Meetings:

AGREED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 9 December 2009 be agreed subject to the following amendments:

Item 9 - Apologies for Absence:

Apologies were received from:

Howard Bluston, North West London Chamber of Commerce;

Anthony Wood, Harrow Public Transport Users' Association (HPTUA).

10. Update on proposals for Business Improvement District (BID):

The Regeneration Project Manager introduced a report which provided an update on the progress made on the establishment of a Harrow Business Improvement District (BID).

The officer advised that:

- a Business Improvement District was a defined area within which local businesses would pay an additional fee in order to fund improvements within the districts boundaries.
- the Harrow Town Centre Company was formerly established in 2009 to promote, organise and agree how best to distribute funding for the BID;
- officers were working closely with managers of local businesses to construct a business plan that would detail the proposals for major investment, and development opportunities within Harrow;
- support had been received from businesses such as Blaser Mills and G.E Money. Local businesses were fearing a double-dip recession, and were sceptical of committing to the financial requirements of supporting the BID at this time;
- the BID Company was currently dormant as there was no income or requirement for it to trade at present;
- timing of the BID was essential, as it would be approximately eighteen months before the BID Company and local businesses would be in a position to proceed with the BID vote.

In response to questions, the officer advised that:

- officers were unaware of any new votes for BID's nationally. Due to the economic climate, there had been a dramatic fall in the number of proposed BID's.

AGREED: That the report be noted.

11. Oral Updates:

Police - Town Centre Team:

Sergeant Stag of the Metropolitan Police, Greenhill Safer Neighbourhood Team (Harrow Town Centre Team) introduced a report.

He advised that:

- 112 arrests and 80 fixed penalty notices had been issued in the past 12 months, for a variety of offences within the Town Centre;
- a current initiative by the Town Centre Team involved monitoring people who were targeting people that had made significant cash withdrawals. He advised that many offences were committed after victims had been followed from within the town centre;
- in March 2010, the Town Centre Team had invited local businesses to the Vue Cinema to view a police produced DVD named 'Operation Fairway'. The viewing was aimed at raising awareness of how the business community could detect, deter or disrupt terrorist activity. There was also a 45 minute briefing from the Terrorism Command Unit. The Town Centre Team were in the process of conducting another viewing, with a date yet to be determined;
- five months of complex investigations by the Town Centre Team and Federation Against Copyright Theft (FACT) resulted in a member of the public being charged with illegally filming 4 newly released films. The case was heard at Harrow Crown Court on 17 September 2010 and the offender was sentenced to six months imprisonment. This was a groundbreaking case as it was the first case where the Fraud Act (2006) had been used to secure a conviction;
- the Town Centre Team had managed the borough's response to high profile football matches played at Wembley Stadium. This resulted in all the major cup competitions, play off finals and the World Cup matches which involved England. All of which concluded with no incidents of note.

In September 2010, the Town Centre Team underwent a change to meet the new demands of the town. This resulted in the team working 10 hour days, 7 days a week with extended shifts on weekends. This coincided with a move to Kirkland House, Peterborough Road, Harrow, with West Street having been sold.

AGREED: That the update be noted.

Officer Updates:

The Head of Major Development Projects provided an update on a number of matters relating to the Town Centre:

Major Projects and Harrow and Wealdstone Intensification Area Action Plan:

Dandara planning application

- the 19 storey Dandara planning application that housed 400 units had been refused by the Harrow planning department and at appeal to the Secretary of State;
- the planning inspector's recommendation to the Secretary of State concluded that, 'in principle', a 19 storey development would be acceptable, but only if the quality of the architecture was "world class".

Station Road road works

- a major re-development that included new paving, road resurfacing and lighting of Station Road was underway. Completion of work was expected early in 2011;
- work would cease over the Christmas period to promote trade for local businesses.

Harrow and Wealdstone Intensification Area Action Plan

- planning for the Intensification Area Action Plan was in place;
- the Intensification Area covered approximately 150 hectares and included all of the Harrow town centre, a large part of Wealdstone, and sites such as Kodak, the Harrow Leisure Centre and the Central Mosque;
- the proposals sought to produce 2,500 new dwellings and 3,000 new jobs over the next 15-20 years;
- East, an Architecture and Urban Design practice, had been appointed to lead a consultant team in undertaking a masterplanning study of Intensification Area;
- a draft Area Action Plan would be prepared by the Council for public consultation early in 2011, based on the masterplanning study;
- it was intended to create "Engagement Forums" representing business and community groups to provide a "sounding board" for the consultants;
- there would be an opportunity for the Harrow Town Centre Forum to comment on the consultants proposals at a future meeting.

In response to questions, the officer advised that:

- the Intensification Area Action Plan was a robust framework that would encourage prospective development of a high standard;
- changes to existing sites were being considered. Sheridan House and Temple House had requested planning permission for a change of use.

AGREED: That the update be noted.

12. Any Other Business:

Christmas procession:

The Reverend Gardiner of the Harrow Baptist Church, advised that a Christmas procession was being planned in conjunction with Churches Together to take place over the festive period.

Christmas Market:

The Regeneration Project Manager advised that a Christmas market would not be held this year.

AGREED: That the items be noted.

13. Date of Next Meeting:

AGREED: That the next meeting of the Forum would be held on 25 November 2010.

The Meeting having started at 4.40 pm, finished at 6.20 pm.