

# **HARROW TOWN CENTRE FORUM**

**TUESDAY 30 APRIL 2013**

## **PRESENT:**

Councillor Sue Anderson (Chairman)	Harrow Council
Councillor Bill Phillips	Harrow Council

## **BUSINESS MEMBERS**

Eric Diamond	North West London Chamber of Commerce
Sanjay Bhudia	St George's Shopping Centre

## **COMMUNITY MEMBERS**

The Reverend Barry Hingston	Churches Together in Central Harrow
Steve Porter	Harrow College
Bernard Segal	Roxborough Residents' Association

## **SERVICE MEMBERS**

Sergeant Gail Reinhart	Harrow Police
Inspector Aidan Whelan	Harrow Police

## **OFFICERS**

Louise Baxter	Town Centre Officer
Carly Brown	Marketing Communications Officer
Andy Stubbs	Harrow Town Centre Manager

### **11. Apologies for Absence:**

Apologies were received from Mark Billington, Howard Bluston, Phil Greenwood, Darren Harman, Gary Stevenson and Councillor Simon Williams.

### **12. Minutes of Meetings:**

**AGREED:** That the minutes of the Annual General meeting and the ordinary meeting held on 29 January 2013 be taken as a correct record, subject to it being noted that the number of telephone kiosks in the Town Centre would decrease from 13 to 6 and not from 13 to 8.

### **13. Matters Arising:**

The Forum was informed that a fingerpost sign was planned for Station Approach which would refer to Harrow on the Hill.

#### 14. Police Update:

The Forum received an update on the current issues for the policing of Harrow Town Centre which were being addressed. The police officers made comments including the following:

- An attempt to form a localised “Betwatch” had not been successful due to the lack of buy in from local shops, citing reasons that insufficient staff are available to allow attendance. The Police would monitor the situation;
- Despite approaches being made to 35 shops, the turnout for the “Shop Watch” meeting had been disappointing. It had been decided to create a buddy system whereby the two centre managers worked with smaller shops to encourage their attendance at meetings. The May meeting had been rescheduled to the end of May;
- The kiosk had been removed from St Ann’s Road. The pop up tent had been very successful and had also been erected inside the St George’s shopping centre;
- A 5 week shift pattern had been implemented which would provide longer coverage of 8, 9 and 10 hours. The Town Centre Police would be working alongside the Borough Tasking Team and Wealdstone Tasking Team. There would be the option to split the team if necessary for a full day such as a football match. School officers would continue to work in the present format;
- The SNT would continue to be based at Kirkland House. There was the possibility of 24 hour SNT services at South Harrow;
- A meeting with regard to anti social behaviour was due to be held on 15 May with the organised crime team for theft. The Safer Transport Team were working closer together. Crimes were being reclassified in instances where reported crimes were not actually crimes but a high probability that something had been left behind or lost;
- Consideration was being given to mapping crimes more specifically such as identifying the shop and then undertaking comparisons with the previous year;
- In the former dispersal zone, there had been a Section 60 isolated incident with violent disorder over three days the previous weekend. An initial record had been kept so if the situation escalated again the case for a dispersal zone could be re-examined;
- Four street drinkers had been identified for removal from the town centre and associated help. Details were recorded for Alcohol Referral Treatment.

Members of the Forum raised a number of issues to which the police officers responded as follows:

- Larger areas such as the Town Centre SNT had 5 PCs and 2 PCSOs;
- There was a Crime Prevention initiative regarding Smartwater which was also promoted via the neighbourhood link and twitter;
- There would not be a reduction in the size of the Safer Transport Team;
- A detective would be appointed to the ward teams;
- The report of a knifing and assault incident was linked to the violent disorder. However, the knifing had not been confirmed and information was being verified. The majority of the group involved in the violent disorder were not from Harrow.

The Chamber of Commerce representative offered to advertise Shop Watch agendas on their website

**AGREED:** That the update be noted.

#### **15. Business Improvement District (BID) development:**

The officers reported that the BID consultant appointment had been extended to the BID vote due at the end of November. Work was continuing in line with the planned programme and a consultation document had been finalised for discussion with businesses during April to July, with subsequent further refinement of the BID proposal.

A BID development group had been identified, including the two shopping centres, Debenhams, WH Smith, Brian Cox and an independent, and a meeting would be held shortly.

The HA1BID.co.uk website was now live.

**AGREED:** That the report be noted.

#### **16. Outer London Fund Round 2 project update:**

Officers provided verbal updates on the various projects and forthcoming events which were supported by Round 2 of the Outer London Fund.

The Forum was informed that the first year of the programme had been completed at the end of March. From the revenue funding award of £201,500 the town centre team had achieved a spend of 99% against target. Against the capital award the team achieved 95% of target but, as the remaining funds were allowed to be carried forward, effectively 100% of the funding was drawn down from the GLA.

#### **Lowlands Recreation Ground**

Landscape work had started in March 2013 and a large purple hoarding enclosed the site. In response to questions on the purple hoardings, it was reported that a board would be fixed with a project description and visualisation. Work had temporarily halted while a variation to landscape

planning approval is agreed. The trees required for the site had been paid for and lifted, and were now growing at a nursery in containerised form, with tree planting expected in November and completion of the project in December.

The final design of the building was being evolved and a pre-application submission was expected in the week. If project board approval was then forthcoming on 9 May, a final planning application could be submitted on 15 May. With tenders required, this implied a probable building start in October. Discussion had taken place with Harrow Colleges as part of the process to select who would run and manage the facility.

In response to a question, a meeting was scheduled with TfL regarding improving pedestrian access and maximising traffic safety.

### **St Ann's Road Public Realm Improvements**

Officers updated the Forum on the work programme which included new paving along the length of St Ann's Road, a better crossing at Havelock Place, new lighting and street furniture. The police kiosk outside BHS had been removed resulting in improvements to the sight lines along St Anne's Road. New tree pits had been created and temporarily filled with bitmac, until trees are planted in mid November. New lighting columns were replacing the old ones down the entire length of St Ann's Road pending installation of the catenary lighting scheme.

Outside St Ann's shopping centre, investigative work had been undertaken to provide information for a new canopy design, which was being worked up for a planning application by St Ann's architects. The architect design for a sloping ramp to replace the existing steps had been examined by Harrow Association for the Disabled and some final modifications were being made before construction.

The Harrow town centre team was providing regular updates for businesses, and contractors were providing advance notification of work taking place immediately in front of particular premises. Work in front of entrances to business premises was being undertaken outside of business hours wherever possible to minimise disruption. A vacant property which is delaying completion of paving on the North Side and the Chamber of Commerce representative undertook to follow up the position if it was not progressed soon.

### **Car Park Indicator Signs**

Initial design had been provided and quotations were being sought for manufacture and installation. One quote had been received and further quotes are awaited.

### **Legible London signs**

Fabrication of the 10 finger posts and 6 midiliths/monoliths will begin soon.

### **Bespoke Signs**

Selection of panel visuals for the bespoke sign was complete and manufacture was being undertaken. Discussion was taking place on the location of the sign, which measures 4 metres x 3 metres. It features signage identifying various locations and activities in Harrow borough.

## **Events**

The three-day continental market in February and a St Patrick's celebration in March had attracted good press coverage. The team is having discussions with a new market operator and other events are being planned for the summer and autumn.

## **Street activities and nuisances**

### **(a) Charities**

A draft Site Management Agreement had been offered by the PFRA, the umbrella body for face-to-face charity organisations. The agreement proposed 5 fundraisers on a maximum 3 days a week.

### **(b) Buskers**

A proposal for a busking scheme will be drafted, in line with the provision for licensing buskers under the London Local Authorities Act 2000 was being drafted.

### **(c) Pigeons**

Businesses and members of the public had commented on the pigeons. The key was to stop people feeding them, which seemed to take place several times each day by members of the public. Officers were investigating the introduction of signs and working with street cleaners and enforcement officers to target perpetrators. Feed is classed as littering under the Environment Protection Act. The Town Centre Manager would report back after he had spoken to Environmental Health, including consideration of the possibility of help from CCTV.

## **Lyon Road – St John's Road Public Square**

This would be funded largely by £450k of Section 106 from the Lyon Road residential-led development. It was noted that the project start date was uncertain as at least 30 months was remaining on the planning permission.

**AGREED:** That the report be noted.

## **17. Other Updates:**

### **Marketing/Communications**

An officer reported that:

- the Evening Standard had reported that Harrow was prospering. Councillor Ferry had spoken at the House of Commons regarding Economic Growth;
- updates on the St Ann's public realm improvements were provided locally;
- it was hoped that cashless shopping would bring in more customers;
- an online programme on how to start a business was aimed at encouraging new start ups;

- a draft communications plan for the year would support the Harrow Town Centre initiatives;
- there would be a 'shop local' focus.

**AGREED:** That the report be noted.

**18. Date of Next Meeting:**

The Forum would be advised of the date of the next meeting in due course.

(It was subsequently arranged for Thursday 18 July 2013 at 4pm in the Management Suite, St Ann's Shopping Centre.)

**The Meeting having started at 4.00 pm, finished at 5.30 pm.**