

HARROW TOWN CENTRE FORUM (MOVED FROM 27 MARCH)
NOTES
MONDAY 12 MAY 2014

PRESENT:

Councillor Sue Anderson
Councillor Bill Phillips

Harrow Council
Harrow Council

BUSINESS MEMBERS

Howard Bluston

North West London Chamber of
Commerce

Pieter Strombeck

St Ann's Shopping Centre

COMMUNITY MEMBERS

(None present)

SERVICE MEMBERS

Sergeant Marlise Davies
Inspector Tanya Sprunks
Anthony Wood

Metropolitan Police
Metropolitan Police
Harrow Public Transport Users

OFFICERS

Sarah Hall

Harrow Council Communications Team

ALSO PRESENT

Andy Stubbs
Louise Baxter
Shaun Wall

Harrow BID
Harrow BID
Operations Manager, St Ann's
Shopping Centre

36. Apologies for Absence:

Apologies were received from Pat Carvalho, Darren Harman, Barry Hingston, Bernard Segal, Gary Stevenson, Kunjal Sutaria, Esther Warren and Councillor Simon Williams.

37. Declarations of Interest:

AGREED: To note that no interests were declared.

38. Minutes of Meetings:

AGREED: That the minutes of the meeting of 17 October 2013 be deferred to the next quorate meeting of Harrow Town Centre Forum.

39. Matters Arising:

AGREED: To note that there were no matters arising.

40. Police Update:

A Police Officer provided a verbal report. The following comments were made:

- 8 officers were assigned to the Town Centre area;
- At a local Anti-Social Behaviour meeting, matters were raised pertinent to the Town Centre, such as anti-social behaviour in St Ann's Centre;
- The new team for the Town Centre were to participate in a big event at Harrow Vue, with the Borough Commander and service providers;
- Police Officers had been trained in social media, including Twitter, and were willing and ready to embrace this method to engage with the public.

After taking questions from Members, a Police Officer commented:

- Theft person was the most reported crime in Harrow. Steps that were being taken by the police to tackle this included increased uniformed Officer visibility, and the presence of plain-clothes officers with radio contact;
- The Greenhill and Town Centre teams would be working very closely;
- The Town Centre team would comprise two Designated Ward Officers: a Police Constable and a Police Community Support Officer, who would not usually be abstracted out to other areas;
- The uniformed police presence in Harrow Bus Station could be part of the Safer Transport Command or the British Transport Police;
- Although currently Harrow had fewer rough sleepers than in the past, particular attention would be paid to the area near the junction of Sheepcote Road, Station Road and Greenhill Way;
- Dispersal zones had been proving an effective tool to deal with anti-social behaviour, and did not have to keep being re-issued, unlike Anti-Social Behaviour Orders;

A Member of the Forum also commented that Harrow Safer Neighbourhoods Board were currently looking for members, and that they had mentioned to the

Borough Commander that it may be beneficial to have a presence from Harrow Town Centre Forum on the Board.

AGREED: That the report be noted.

41. Outer London Fund Round 2 Projects Update:

A Member of the Forum reported that:

- Most of the Outer London Fund Round 2 Projects had been completed;
- The funding for Lowlands Recreation Ground had been carried forward into the 2014-15 financial year, and the project should be completed in 2015;
- The temporary lamps on St Ann's Road would be replaced with new lamp columns;
- Variable Message Signs for the town centre car parks should be installed at the end of May 2014;
- Legible London Signs had been installed in the Town Centre;
- The results for the BID vote had been announced on 13 December 2013, and the BID had secured the majority 'yes' vote required;
- Members of the former Town Centre Management Team had been appointed as staff, and Debenhams were providing office space;
- Both the BID and Harrow Council were keen to agree to a Service Level Agreement for activities in the Town Centre.

After taking questions from other Members of the Forum, a Member commented:

- That currently, no license was required to busk in Harrow, but a Member of the Forum was willing to propose a Street Entertainment Licensing Scheme to Harrow Council;
- It may not be necessary to introduce byelaws against spitting and littering, as these were covered by the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005;
- There were restrictions concerning playing amplified music on St Ann's Road as it is a residential road, and designated areas where amplified music was allowed to be played at certain times may be beneficial.

AGREED: That the report be noted.

42. Harrow Business Improvement District (BID) Update:

A Member of the Forum gave a verbal report regarding the Business Improvement District (BID) in Harrow, which included the following:

- The BID had been put to a vote and had passed, and a plan had been laid out in line with the BID proposal;
- Approximately £350,000 should be realised as an annual levy from over 200 businesses;
- This increase in revenue for the Town Centre would be used for marketing, events and other activities;
- This marked the beginning of a programme that would last five years.
- The BID board is expected to comprise 10-12 people, a number of which have been recruited from the Development Group working alongside the BID Staff Team. The final membership numbers of the Board were as yet undecided.

A Member of the Forum also commented that:

- It was of the utmost importance to include a Police Member on the BID Board.

AGREED: That the report be noted.

43. Where does the Town Centre Forum go now?:

Members of the Forum discussed the role of Harrow Town Centre Forum. The following comments were made:

- Although the Business Improvement District was important for Harrow, the role of the Town Centre Forum extended far beyond the BID;
- It would be a good idea to include a few residents and shoppers in the Forum to get feedback from people who use the Town Centre, and to give them an opportunity to put questions to representatives from the Council, businesses and the Police;
- The Marketing and Events team of the Business Improvement District would benefit from engaging more with Town Centre customers and finding out why people come, or don't come, to the Town Centre;
- People are interested in what is going on in their local area and Harrow has a lot to offer;
- It would be beneficial to continue the Forum and give it a wider scope, and to include representatives from Harrow Council's Communications Team and the Business Improvement District;
- Harrow Town Centre Forum could arrange their meetings so that they fall between meetings of the BID Board.

AGREED (to recommend): That these points be considered by Members for further discussion at the next quorate meeting.

44. Other Updates:

An Officer from Harrow Council Communications Team presented a verbal report, which included the following:

- The Christmas Party and Food Festival events had been successful;
- Free Wi-Fi hotspots had been launched in Harrow;
- The Town Centre was a good place to engage with residents, and spread awareness of borough-wide initiatives such as Weeks of Action and sporting events.

Members of the Forum offered the following comments:

- Local businesses could be reluctant to display posters about pickpocketing and dipping as this could lead to their customers feeling unsafe;

After taking a question from a Member of the Forum, an Officer also commented that the first time an individual uses a free Wi-Fi hotspot, they will be required to register their details.

AGREED: That the report be noted.

45. Any Other Business:

AGREED: That there was no other business to be discussed.

46. Date of Next Meeting:

Members commented that:

- a start time of 15:00 was preferable to the current start time of 16:00;
- 11 and 16 of September 2014 were offered by Members of the Forum for possible dates of the next meeting, subject to the chair's agreement.

The Meeting having started at 4.05 pm, finished at 5.30 pm.