

## **HARROW TOWN CENTRE FORUM**

**WEDNESDAY 26 APRIL 2006**

### **PRESENT:**

#### **CORE FUNDERS**

Steve Kent (Chair)	St George's Shopping & Leisure Centre
Councillor Keith Burchell (Vice-Chair)	Harrow Council
Councillor Howard Bluston	Harrow Council
Councillor Rekha Shah	Harrow Council
Mike Frost	McDonalds Restaurant
Bilal Arzouni	McDonalds Restaurant
Sanjeev Popat	Boots the Chemist
Suzy Wood	St Ann's Shopping Centre

#### **PERMANENT MEMBERS**

Giovanni Caloia	North West London Chamber of Commerce
-----------------	---------------------------------------

#### **ORDINARY MEMBERS**

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

#### **NON-VOTING ADVISORS**

Sergeant Kate Rogers	Metropolitan Police – Greenhill Ward team
PC Mick Milner	Metropolitan Team - Greenhill Ward team
Anthony Wood	Harrow Public Transport Users

#### **OFFICERS**

Linda Arlidge	Harrow Town Centre Manager	Harrow Council
Graham Jones	Director of Strategic Planning	Harrow Council
Gareth Llywelyn-Roberts	Group Manager, Community Safety Services (Urban Living)	Harrow Council

### **ALSO PRESENT:**

Lekshmi Baburajan  
Emily Flynn  
Bilal Arzouni  
Simon Legg  
Sara Mirza

Arts Culture Harrow  
Arts Culture Harrow  
McDonalds Restaurant  
Brant and Harrow Trading Standards  
Harrow Council

**46. Apologies for Absence:**

Fergus Egan (St. George's Shopping and Leisure Centre), Maureen Payne (Marks and Spencer), Barry Bone (McDonalds Restaurant), Alan Emm (G E Money Home Lending), Amin Lalljee (Orient Rice and Foods Ltd), David Taylor (Fat Controller PH), Rev Bob Gardner (Churches Together), Inspector Aidan Gibson (Police), Joy Lamina (Reed Employment), Steve Rogers (London Borough of Harrow), Brian Kerby (Harrow Agenda 21).

**47. Minutes:**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2006 be confirmed as a correct record of proceedings.

**48. Matters Arising:**

Minute 37 (1) – Harrow on the Hill Station Masterplan

The Town Centre Manager informed the Forum that a letter of objection had been sent on behalf of the Forum to Harrow Council's Planning Department.

**49. Harrow on the Hill Station Masterplan:**

Graham Jones (Director of Strategic Planning, Harrow Council) provided a verbal update on the Harrow on the Hill Station Masterplan. He informed the Forum that negotiations with potential developers were underway. Developers had given a presentation a few weeks ago, which had received a positive reception, and a further presentation had been requested to take place in June 2006.

In response to queries, the Forum was advised that due to confidentiality, the names of the developers could not be mentioned. It was further reported that the proposals included the bus station and the area covered in the Masterplan, and they were working on the assumption that requests from transport operators would be met. A public statement would be made when the report was published.

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

**50. Draft Harrow Town Centre Management Strategy - 2006-2008:**

Linda Arlidge (Town Centre Manager) tabled a report on the Harrow Town Centre Management Strategy 2006-2008. She informed the Forum that local elections had prevented public consultation on the plan to date. However, public consultation would commence on 5 May 2006. This would include the sending out of a leaflet with reply paid card to relevant community groups and over 600 businesses in the HA1 1\* and HA1 2\* post code areas. The Forum was advised that the full plan would be available on the Council's website from 5 May 2006 onwards with a facility for e-mail replies. Any comments should be

received by 30 June 2006, and the result of the consultation and any proposed changes to the strategy would be presented to the next Forum meeting.

**AGREED:** That (1) the above be noted;

(2) Members of the Forum submit any further comments on the draft Harrow Management Strategy 2006-2008 to the Town Centre Manager by 30 June 2006; and

(3) The Town Centre Manager provide an update on the consultation and any proposed changes to the Harrow Town Centre Management Strategy 2006-2008 at the next meeting of the Forum.

**51. Safer Neighbourhood Policing in Greenhill Ward:**

Sergeant Kate Rogers and PC Mick Milner provided a verbal update on neighbourhood policing in Greenhill ward. The Forum was informed that their basic core team was currently smaller than normal and subsequently stretched.

Sergeant Rogers advised that violent crime in Greenhill was down by six percent, and that the main concern was pick pocketing, which had increased by a significant amount during the last year. Further points were made about robberies, which had gone up by 22 percent and mainly targeted school children, and theft from shops, which had decreased. The officer advised that before 4 June 2006, the police would be asking people if they had any specific concerns in the lead up to the football World Cup.

Attention was drawn to the fact that figures related to reported crime only, and as not much reporting was done, police relied upon other means including surveys.

In response to a query, the Forum was advised that it would be difficult and time consuming to have separate statistics for the town centre and the rest of Greenhill ward, although it was noted that the area of Greenhill outside of the town centre had less reported crime.

Sergeant Rogers advised that the new licensing laws had not had a huge impact, and police had not received more calls or violent drink-related reports.

During the discussion that followed, the following comments were made:

- It was important to have a visible police presence in Greenhill including outside of the town centre and around side streets;
- It was important to extend CCTV, to act as a deterrent and make residents feel more secure, although the officers noted that they were not aware of any plans to do this and it would require additional staff to monitor CCTV footage;
- Regarding theft of mobile phones, there was a free website, MEND, on which mobile phone users could enter data and police could then check if their mobiles were stolen;
- It could be useful if PC Weir joined the Harrow Business against Crime Partnership;
- It would be useful if crime statistics could be broken down for one quarter only, to provide a sample;

- The possibility of the Crime Reduction Manager and the police presenting a joint report to a future meeting could be considered.

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

**52. Illegal DVD Campaign:**

Simon Legg (Senior Investigating Officer, Brent and Harrow Trading Standards) provided a verbal report on the illegal DVD campaign. He advised the Forum that progress had been made over the last few years, but organised gangs continued to operate, with perpetrators working door-to-door as well as in car parks and on the streets. He highlighted that the problem was not restricted to Harrow, and advised that as Trading Standards was a small unit, it was difficult for them to target a large number of bodies.

He advised that issues when dealing with perpetrators could include language barriers and difficulties in proving their identity, as some were illegal residents.

Regarding prosecutions, he noted that disappointing penalties had been awarded in the past, but Magistrates were becoming increasingly aware of the issue. He advised that some other boroughs issued Anti Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs), but this could displace the problem.

The Forum was shown a clip from a London Tonight bulletin, which dealt with the issue of illegal DVDs, and featured Trading Standards Officers, the Police and Immigration Officers undertaking an operation in Harrow Town.

In the discussion that followed, the following comments were made:

- The issue was one of national policy, and a special national task force was needed to deal with the problem.
- It was not an offence to buy illegal DVDs, but door-to-door or on-street sales were illegal.
- Businesses should be made aware of comfort spots to make it more difficult for perpetrators.
- There was a need to increase publicity regarding this issue.

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

**53. Harrow Arts Festival - Events in Harrow Town Centre:**

Emily Flynn (Contract Officer, Arts Culture Harrow), briefed Members on the Harrow Arts Festival, due to take place from 2 July 2006 to 16 July 2006. She advised the Forum that:

- A street festival would take place in Harrow town on 8 July 2006.
- A community advisory group including smaller organisations had been involved with the planning to try to ensure a broader response.
- There would be seven areas across the town, including St. George's and St. Ann's shopping centres.
- Local groups would showcase, including many street based performers.
- A drama group would go to several areas.

- There would be an arts project opposite Debenhams – shop owners' feedback had indicated that they were happy for the loading bay area to be used.
- An orchestra would perform opposite the Rat and Parrot PH.

The forum was further advised that there was a good budget to work to, and publicity would be going out from mid-June. The Town Centre Manager noted that the Harrow Town Centre Forum gave £5,000 per annum in sponsorship money to the Festival.

During the discussion that followed, a request was made that residents be informed by being sent either a special leaflet or a programme. The Forum was advised of an insert publicising the Festival in Harrow People as well as advertising on 'Under One Sky'. It was suggested that local radio and 'Eggmeg' also be used.

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

**54. A Partnership Approach to Graffiti Removal:**

Gareth Llywelyn-Roberts (Group Manger, Community Safety Services, Urban Living) tabled a report, which summarised the Clean Neighbourhoods Act.

He advised that the provision of an alcohol exclusion zone around the town centre would enable anyone participating in antisocial behaviour and causing problems to be arrested. The town centre would be the focus of activity, but as this could displace the problem, he hoped that the zone would become Borough-wide. The Forum was informed that the proposed introduction of the alcohol exclusion zone would be subject to a consultation process with businesses would take place after local elections, around late May or early June. This would also include landowners, as their permission would be required in relation to private areas.

The Forum was advised that there was a significant amount of graffiti on business premises in the town centre. In collaboration with businesses, an enforcement regime would come in to place, and there was a legal allowance to enter properties, with an exemption from damage liability.

Further points were made about dog control areas, where fixed penalties could be issued for offences, waste disposal, and the requirement to have a license in order to distribute leaflets.

During the discussion that followed, the Town Centre Manager suggested that information regarding the Clean Neighbourhoods Act be included in the Town Centre Management Plan, and publicised in Harrow People. A representative of the North West London Chamber of Commerce commented that their website could also be used.

**AGREED:** That (1) the above be noted; and

(2) The Town Centre Manager incorporate information relating to specific projects covered by the Clean Neighbourhoods Act in the Town Centre Management Plan.

## **55. Town Centre Manager Reports:**

The Harrow Town Centre Manager provided brief updates on the items listed on the agenda:

- The French market held between 10 and 12 March 2006 had been successful.
- The Clarendon Road improvements were on target for completion.
- Regarding the water shortage, Councils had been asked by the water companies to lead in promoting water conservation. In response, Harrow Council had decided not to water floral displays this year. Accordingly, there would not be any hanging baskets. Some key areas should be planted with drought resistant bedding. If any business had spare grey water, using it to water these beds would be appreciated.

It was further reported that the area of Station Road between College Road and St. John's Road was in a poor state. Repairs would take place this year, which would mean a closure in summer for approximately two weeks with diversions. These would have particular implications for delivery vehicles.

Further points were made about the possibility of having giant screens for sporting events as a focal point, possibly on the Lowlands recreation grounds, although it was noted that this could prove expensive if used on a temporary basis.

The Forum had been consulted by Highway Engineers on the proposed addition of double yellow lines and the removal of two parking spaces in Bonnersfield Lane, to ease congestion and improve road safety. Following discussion, it was agreed that the Forum support the proposal.

**AGREED:** That (1) the update be noted; and

(2) The Town Centre Manager forward the Forum's support for the Bonnersfield Lane on-street parking proposal to Highway Engineers.

## **56. Transport and Access:**

Anthony Wood (Harrow Public Transport Users' Association) advised the Forum that in relation to transport and access, the 350 bus would be replaced by H18 and H19 buses. He noted that there could be problems with reliability and advised that consultation with London buses would take place.

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

## **57. Any Other Business:**

### Funding for Careers in Retail

Jeannie Cohen-Brand (Harrow College) advised that the College had £300,000 available to support careers in retail, and that if anyone wanted to access funding and training, they should contact her. In order to use the money, it would have to be accessed by the end of the academic year.

### Information on Trading Standards

A member suggested that a briefing note including information on trading standards in the Borough be provided and discussed at a future meeting of the Forum. It was also suggested that information on trading standards day be provided in Harrow People.

#### Training for New Members

A member commented that it would be useful if the training session for new Council Members could also be open to non-Council members.

#### **58. Dates of Future Meetings:**

**AGREED:** To note that (1) the next ordinary meeting of the Forum would be held on Wednesday 19 July 2006 at 4.00 pm, at Debenham's training room preceded by the annual Open Forum (3pm – Executive members only need attend) and AGM (4pm – all members); and

(2) a subsequent meeting would be held on Wednesday 18 October 2006 at 4.00pm, at Harrow Civic Centre.

**The Meeting having started at 4.09 pm, finished at 6.16 pm.**