

Newport {Shropshire} Town Team

Notes of the Business Meeting held on 11th March 2014

Present: Karen Woodcock (vice chairman), Margaret Woodcock (director & Newport League of Friends), Maria Sindhu (director & Daisy Chain), Cllr Roy Scammell (rep NRP), Tim Pryce (The Pop-Up Shop), Ellen Windsor-Crewe (Duignan & Phelps), Ashley Corrigan (Artworx), Barrie Kay (Nova News), Cllr Terry Spooner (rep NTC & Ultimate Taxis), Amanda Simpson (Appleby & Shaw), Cllr Tim Nelson (guest), Mike Atherton (Town Team Manager)

1. Apologies: Mark Freeman (chairman & Henshalls Ins), Nigel West (Five-Ways Ins), David Parker (treasurer), Sue Tranter (director & The Cookshop), Hannah Tranter (The Cookshop), Sandra Ayres & Julie Watkins (What Women Want), Alison & Gareth Masters (G&A Cards), Nicolette Payne & Sue Nagington (Number 45), Emma Barnes (Daisy Chain), Nicola Paget (Aragon Paper), Fiona Ward (Cups & Wands)

2. Commercial Opportunities for Fund Raising

MA provided an overview of finances for 2014 including potential income sources and projected expenditure. An imperative to identify and secure income from sources other than public sector grant were noted.

Potential income sources include: membership subscriptions, local Cllr funds under the T&WC programme "Pride in your Community", project management fees of an HLF bid, section 106 planning agreements (relating to edge-of-town developments), revisiting NTC / NRP / Newport Chamber of Commerce, running events on a commercial basis, and possibly an HLF phase 2 bid.

Alternative commercially based income initiatives were considered. MA described an offer made by one local business to income share from the 'My Locality Card' provided NTT actively promote the card. Potential sensitivities were discussed should another similar venture be initiated.

Cllr Nelson suggested sponsorship of the newsletter to off-set production and distribution costs. Another option suggested by EWC was distribution of advertising flyers during major events including Newport Carnival.

It was asked if Waitrose had been approached for funding contributions and MW raised a similar question regarding the Coop. Noted that MA has approached Waitrose previously – they are willing to offer volunteer time and prizes, etc. but less willing to provide direct funding. NTT has registered for the green token scheme.

Agreed: that the Town Team has little option but to pursue commercial opportunities to raise income.

Agreed: MA to contact the manager at the Coop to explore funding / support options.

3. Brief Updates

(i) 'town team' advocates

MA explained the process for introduction of a membership scheme and of a membership subscription during the coming weeks and asked for those in attendance to act as advocates i.e. promoting the town team, encouraging membership, explaining achievements, setting out future aspirations, etc.

EWC asked if advocates could have a 'script' for display in their business premises.

Agreed: MA to draft and distribute a 'script' as soon as possible including a poster explaining benefits and encouraging membership.

(ii) Rolling forward marketing & promotions initiatives

Agreed: MA to recirculate and members to provide comments as appropriate

(iii) Community engagement / consultation process for potential HLF bid

MA briefly explained initial content of a developing package bid for heritage lottery funding under the HLF 'Our Heritage' programme. Essentially, a number of smaller schemes are brought together to help expose and explain Newport's rich heritage.

Contact has already been made with NTC, NRP and Newport Chamber of Commerce plus the History Society and the Civic Society.

Suggestions were made for wider promotion of the proposals via local media including Newport Advertiser, Nova News and Nova Radio. Direct links to local schools was also suggested, and with the Shrewsbury & Newport Canals Trust.

(iv) Calendar of forthcoming events

MA circulated an initial draft calendar of events for 2014/15. The calendar includes all bank holidays, dates of significant public events in Newport, an updated schedule of dates for the farmers market, and examples of some national promotional events.

Agreed: attendees to review and feedback any additional events for inclusion.

Agreed: MA to copy to the Town Clerk

(v) 'town team' hosted website

Issues had been raised with the chairman about the process and fairness of the town team enjoying the benefit of a hosted website (free of charge) from one company when there may be a number of others interested and willing to offer a similar service.

MA explained that directors had now discussed this issue in detail and assessed options. They had agreed not to open this up to a competitive tendering type situation but instead to

extend an opportunity for locally operating companies to each have equal access to relevant information to display on their sites.

MA indicated that even if having its own website was a high priority for the town team that the current financial situation would preclude this. MA quoted estimates of £3,000 to £5,000 to have a good website developed for the town team.

It was asked where these figures had been derived and whether Waitrose (or other large companies within Newport) had been approached to assist. MA indicated that previous discussions with Waitrose suggested this was unlikely but that he would ask the question again. The budget figures quoted were from a project that MA is working on with a client in Cheshire.

It was also suggested that greater use of facebook would be invaluable and that links with local schools should be explored in order to develop further this free resource for marketing and information dissemination.

(vi) 'town team' AGM - arrangements

MA reminded all present that the business meeting on 8th April would be preceded by the AGM.

He also advised that Mark Freeman (chairman) would be standing down and that a new chairman would need to be elected.

4. Finance Report

The treasurer had provided a written statement of account. At 18th February 2014 NTT's balance was **£5,371.58**

NTC has pledged £1,000 grant contribution.

In a worst case scenario - without any further funding being secured the 'town team' may continue operating until October 2014. A small provision has been set-aside for wind-up costs.

5. Any Other Business of an Urgent Nature

None

6. Future Meeting Dates

AGM followed by a Business Meeting	- 8 th April 2014	The Phez
Business Meeting	- 13 th May 2014	ditto