

IDEAS & VISION GROUP NOTES OF THE MEETING OF TUESDAY 9TH SEPTEMBER 2014

Present: Adrian Brown, Adrienne Davis, Derek Bodey, Dick Silson, Helen Haywood, Iain Hawthorn, Ian Bowns, Janet Miller, Janine Morris, Jean Todd, John Faulkner, Lee Fairbrother-Adams, Lindra Baldry, Louise Potter, Marc Haywood, Pat Chapman, Pat Hobby, Philip Barton, Rachel Hoodith, Richard Lower, Sarah Fairbrother-Adams, Tina Heathcote, Veronica Hawthorn, Zena Bishop

Apologies: David Carlisle, John Estruch, Roddie MacLean, Sarah Rawlinson, Steve Caddy, Sue Mellor

Introductions: Dick Silson chaired the meeting, which started with a round of introductions.

1. NOTES OF THE MEETING ON 11TH AUGUST 2014

The notes of the last meeting were passed as a true record.

2. PROJECTS

2.1 Talking Signposts

Tina reported that during the eight weeks of the project, we have logged nearly 2,210 contacts with the public, so engaged with some 4,500 people in all. The self-managing Doodlepoll rota worked well in July but less so in August when far fewer shifts were covered. Tina will be circulating a closing report soon.

2.2 Street Art Phase I

Janet reported that another section of hoardings had been painted next to the Brasserie, and that staff there had been inspired to say that they would do the length behind the bar themselves, which is good news.

2.3 Vox Pops

A project proposal had been circulated earlier. The aim is to record on video people's feelings about Buxton and what might be done to improve it. Interviewees would include residents, visitors, workers and students. The recordings would be edited proportionally to provide a snapshot in time and could be used at the Buxton conference (if approved) and also on the website and the Facebook page. The exercise could be repeated at some future date to gain an idea of how attitudes are changing.

A number of suggestions and comments were made:

- we could interview people beyond the town centre (Burbage, Fairfield, Harpur Hill) or in neighbouring towns; the team expect to include people from a wide area coming into the town centre but will monitor this
- concern was expressed that similar exercises had been carried out before, through public meetings; interviewing people on the street, however, would reach a very different group of people
- we could invite people to post their own videoed responses to the Facebook page, this would need monitoring
- we could possibly involve University students with the analysis
- we could possibly include the schools, so long as appropriate permissions can be sorted out

The project team will consider these suggestions and present an amended proposal to the Directors for approval.

2.4 Buxton Conference

A project proposal had been circulated earlier. The aim is to bring together all those individuals and organisations who have plans for Buxton, and share these and identify conflicts and overlap, and develop some synergy.

It is accepted that we need to work closely with other organisations, on an ongoing basis. We already do this through shared membership, via the HPBC Community Forum and by sending representatives to other groups' meetings; it was suggested that these arrangements could be more formal, possibly by all the organisations sharing 'abridged' minutes. It was pointed out however that the Town Team have acquired a well-deserved reputation for actually getting things done and we would not want to lose that by becoming mired in bureaucracy. It was agreed that it was essential to involve HBPC in the proposal at an early stage. If they were supportive, the general consensus was that the proposal should be presented to the Directors for consideration.

2.5 Greening Buxton

Helen presented a proposal for planting bulbs in various sites around the town, including Sylvan Park, Bridge Street, Wye Street, The Slopes and Palace Rd. Janine has been working on ideas for sowing windflowers to encourage pollinating insects, and identifying sites for fruit trees and other plantings. It was suggested that they could work together to develop a combined proposal, and also possibly involve Mike, who offered to investigate planters on the Market Place. Richard can advise on any conflict with the space needed by the July Fair.

2.6 Street Art Phase II

Janet presented some ideas for artwork on the blacked out windows of the Arts Centre, it was agreed we should discuss the idea in principle with HPBC conservation and heritage officers and if they are supportive, develop a project proposal for approval by the directors.

Janine has some ideas for the hoardings at the front of the Crescent. It was suggested these need to be developed in parallel with plans that the developers might have for information boards, Janine will investigate further.

2.7 Railway Station Improvements

Sue had emailed to say that they were still attempting to arrange a meeting with Northern Rail, and would report back as soon as this had taken place. Derek advised that the A6 Relief Rail Improvement Scheme has been published and does include for major improvements, including that the strip between the fan wall and the platforms be either landscaped or rebuilt as a useable building.

2.8 Illustrated Map

Philip advised that we have now sold 80 of the 200 maps printed, and now have printed fliers, so the next phase of

marketing via retail outlets and hotels etc will begin.

2.9 Town Team Merchandise

Philip and Tina have found a supplier for the tea-towels and are working out the numbers, assuming a selling price under £6, and the level of investment required. They are also in discussions with jigsaw makers, it was agreed that the size should be A2. Ideally both items would be available before Christmas, it was agreed they should draw up the project proposal and present it to the directors as soon as possible.

3. ARTISAN MARKET TRIALS

The results of the University survey were presented and discussed in detail at the last directors' meeting. Reactions to the market were overwhelmingly positive, and no good reasons have been put forward for a change of date. As regards location, the survey showed that for visitors, the artisan market traders and the lower Buxton shops, there was little to choose between the Market Place and Spring Gardens; there was a very clear benefit, however, to higher Buxton traders from the artisan market being located on the Market Place. Our recommendations to HPBC therefore were that the artisan market should continue, on the first Saturday of each month, on the Market Place. We have no reason to suppose these recommendations will not be accepted.

Trading at the start of the market on 6th September was disappointing but it did pick up, this was probably the effect of the weather, and it was noted that Spring Gardens and the Pavilion Gardens were also very quiet that day. Denise (Market Co) carried out a survey of all the traders and found that their views on location were very mixed, some preferring Spring Gardens and others the Market Place.

Longer term we are still committed to regenerating the regular market. A representative from the National Federation of Market Traders was in Buxton on Saturday, and has agreed to help with this.

4. PROPOSALS FOR THE NESTLE STATION ROAD SITE

Dick presented a drawing of the proposals from newly appointed developers CPG - a budget hotel along with a number of small retail units near the road, a separate single storey food store at the back of the site, and car parking in between. CPG have been advised by HPBC that they must consult with the town before submitting an application, and have set up a public meeting on the 25th of the month. They have also emailed the Town Team (among others) suggesting a meeting to discuss the proposals, but have not so far responded to our request for a date. Meanwhile their press release says they intend to submit an application by the end of the September.

In discussion, the following points were noted:

- Under the old Local Plan this area was scheduled for retail use, but under the new one, for mixed residential and small business. The new Local Plan is now with the Inspector, so a long way along the process which carries some weight, but any applications are still considered under the old plan. The exception to this is housing, where the National Framework Strategy applies instead.
- If CPG do submit an application at the end of September, it would be at least 16 weeks before being determined, but this is still likely to be before the new Local Plan is approved. However, the planning officers are apparently still waiting for a lot of the detail of the proposal, and CPG are still negotiating with the rail interests, so a September submission does seem unlikely.
- Although said to be smaller than previous proposals, there is no indication yet of the size of the supermarket. The likely occupier of this unit, and of the hotel, have not been named.
- The developers will have to submit a report demonstrating that they will not adversely impact the vitality of the town centre. We will need to study this document, and how the figures are being presented, with great care.
- There is no requirement for a similar assessment of the impact on hotels and other accommodation providers. A chain hotel however could bring additional visitors to the town.
- We already have a problem with two distinct retail areas, adding a third would make this even worse.
- The general consensus was in favour of the new Local Plan, with the possible addition of leisure activities if these can be commercially viable. Land used for retail however is still far more valuable than housing land.
- The issue of the design being appropriate to the location could be key.

We would encourage the Development Control Committee to lend as much weight as possible to the new Local Plan when reaching their decision. Meanwhile members are encouraged to attend the various public meetings and make their views known to the developers and to HPBC. Dick will produce an information note summarising the relevant planning issues.

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

5.1 Venue for Ideas & Vision Meeting

We may need to find a new venue by the year end, any suggestions are welcome.

5.2 College Students

Janet, Tina and Andy had made a presentation to 41 Public Service students this morning, and it is hoped that they will take up a number of Town Team projects as part of their course work. We are looking for suggestions for a prize for the team who produces the best project.

5.3 Green Man Gallery

The Green Man Gallery have relocated to the Hardwick Hydro and will be open to the public this weekend.

5.4 Crescent Development

There is a public meeting in the Octagon at 6pm on 10th September.

6. FUTURE I&V MEETINGS

The next meeting will be on: **Wednesday 8th October at 7:30pm in the Buckingham Hotel.**