

## Ideas and Vision Group Notes of the meeting on Wednesday, 28<sup>th</sup> August 2013

**Present:** Janet Miller, Tina Heathcote, Suzanne Pearson, Rachel Clarke, Sarah Rawlinson, Linda Baldry, Liz Mackenzie, Roddie MacLean, Adrian Brown, John Estruch and Mike Bryant

**Apologies:** Janine Morris, John Hudghton, Mike Mirams and Alan Thompson.

**Chairman:** John Estruch was asked and agreed to chair the meeting.

**Introductions:** The meeting started with a round of introductions.

### 1 Notes of the meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> July

1.1 **Approval** The notes were approved as a true record.

1.2 **Matters Arising** None.

### 2 Marketing Buxton

2.1 **Introduction** Liz Mackenzie explained how the Vision Buxton Marketing Group (formerly chaired by Louise Potter) and the meeting of the principal tourism stakeholders had been brought together recently under the joint chairmanship of herself and Sally Potter.

They were working to

- raise the profile of the town
- fill the quiet months of March and September
- carry forward the Town Guide
- re-launch the Visit Buxton website (with a new design)
- develop a new branding for Buxton

It was hoped that the new town branding would be chosen soon and then used by all the stakeholders. Tina was to represent the Town Team at a meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> September to take this further.

2.2 **Buxton Digital High Street** Liz had come to the meeting to introduce this proposal (championed by David Mulholland and supported by Visit Peak District) to promote Buxton and its businesses through **Voucher Cloud**. This mobile voucher platform is an award winning business already being used by companies like Hilton Hotels, Debenhams and McDonald's. It provides brand awareness and promotional vouchers delivered via SMS or Smartphone app. The merchant dashboard allows businesses to directly manage their offers.

The current proposal would provide a "Digital High Street" (or Main Street) in which the participating traders could share the cost of a package to promote both Buxton and their businesses. Thus visitors to the town could quickly access all the possibilities for local shopping, refreshment and accommodation through a dedicated local channel. This would appear automatically when consumers open the app within a selected radius of Buxton.

This provision for a local channel is new. In the past, channels have been brand based and have promoted their products across the company's whole geographical spread. The traders of Buxton have the opportunity to be leaders in this field. There would also be local promotions through special targeted e-mail.

The next step was to engage Buxton's merchant community. The first meeting was to be on September 11<sup>th</sup>. Janet would forward details to the traders who she was in contact with.

2.3 **Other Marketing Opportunities** (A) It was agreed that there was a need to link the Totally Locally Project Team to the Marketing Group. (B) Liz encouraged the Town Team to work with Janette Sykes to arrange another visit for journalists, like those held in the past.

## **3 Retail and Markets**

**3.1 Buxton Market** Mike explained that the Directors had agreed to make Buxton Market the main business of the Ideas and Vision Group on October 14<sup>th</sup>. So that the discussion could be as informed as possible, he had invited presentations from Artisan Markets (as successfully run at Wilmslow) on 16<sup>th</sup> September and from Terry Crawford on 14<sup>th</sup> October before the main discussion.

Linda Baldry reported that the Borough Council's consultation about the market was delayed until all the various options had been investigated. She would feed any ideas from the Town Team into the council's process.

**3.2 Separate Retail Section** Alan Thompson had proposed a Retail Section within the Town Team. The Directors recognised the advantage of such a group, providing the initiative came from the Traders themselves. The Totally Locally Project Team had already indicated their willingness to run the Christmas promotion and possibly similar projects. This team might evolve into a Retail Sub-Group which the Directors see as being under the oversight of the Ideas and Vision Group. The Directors will encourage development along these lines. John expressed concern that opportunities should not be missed through administrative delay.

There was then some further discussion about the need to motivate the retailers to exploit the opportunities that arose, like the arrival of the new intake of University students on 16<sup>th</sup> September. It was noted that, of all those invited to the reception for the Academy of Urbanism visit, the retailers were the least well represented.

**3.3 Totally Locally** In the absence of anyone from the Project Team, there was no further update available.

## **4 Christmas**

**4.1 Follow up to Shopping Crawl.** This was to be managed by the Totally Locally Team. Mike reported that the national guidance was different this year. He had one or two copies available for anyone interested. Some of the changes would address the problems which we had identified last year.

**4.2 Sparkles Winter Celebration** Mike reported that this would take place on Friday, 22<sup>nd</sup> November. There would be a market alongside it in the Octagon. There would be more lights this year as some additional ones were to be hired in. The Sparkles Committee was too small to extend its reach beyond the Pavilion Gardens.

**4.3 Lights around the shops** This was a matter for the retailers. Lights were offered very cheaply to shops which wanted them put up. It was suggested that we might encourage the large multiples and nationally franchised businesses to take a lead in this.

It was pointed out that extended shopping hours would be beneficial to everyone and not only at Christmas.

## **5 Project Updates**

**5.1 Jack in the Box** John reported that the premises in The Springs Centre were still available but that fewer beneficiaries had attended the first meeting than were expected. Ten businesses were needed to share in the project if all were to take an equal part in the work, costs and benefits. Another attempt to rally potential beneficiaries was to be undertaken on September 12<sup>th</sup>. The Charity Commission did not seem to be making any progress with registering Jack in the Box as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. A website was being developed and the e-mail address [info@jack-in-the-box.org.uk](mailto:info@jack-in-the-box.org.uk) was already in use.

Following a question about the existence of a "Plan B", if the requisite number of beneficiaries was not forth coming, John stated that it might be possible to re-work the scheme with unequal shares but that smaller premises were unlikely to be available because Buxton now had fewer empty shops.

# BuxtonTownTeam

*All together, better*

**5.2 Great Town 2014** Following early preparation by the Borough Council; Trevor Osborne, the University, The Opera House, Vision Buxton and the Town Team were all called to an initial meeting. Trevor was keen to demonstrate the part played by voluntary groups within Buxton and so, although all played a part, the Town Team emerged as the umbrella organisation.

A varied tour of the surrounds and the town were provided for the visitors (2 assessors and 8 supporters), including a brief ride on the tram and a walk through the historic heart of the town (with Margaret Charlton acting as a Talking Signpost – Thanks Margaret). The University provided lunch and a brief presentation and the official visit ended with a presentation about the Crescent project and a visit to its interior. In the evening, the council hosted a reception for both the visitors and a huge number of volunteers and business people and later Trevor provided a dinner for a more select group of guests.

The assessors seem to have enjoyed their visit and were delighted to be shown round by volunteers rather than councillors and council officers. They commented adversely on all the a-boards and the poor provision for pedestrians. They will now produce a report which will be forwarded to Buxton for factual checking before being published to all the members of the academy. The result will be the outcome of the members votes based on the report. The result will be known on 8<sup>th</sup> November.

One of the long term benefits will be the Taking Stock leaflet which Tina is going to refine further. She is also going to produce a report on the completed project for the Town Team records.

The meeting recorded its thanks and congratulations to everyone who contributed to the success of the day.

**5.3 British Legion Building** There was little news at the moment but it did get three mentions during the Great Town visit, one of them by the Corporate Property Officer of Derbyshire County Council.

## 6 New Ideas and Other business

(a) Series of Festivals Sarah Rawlinson said that Peter Dewhurst had ideas of a series of festivals, spread throughout the tourist season, all in some way connected with health and wellbeing. These, and a festival of music for younger people in September, might be supported by finance from the LEP. Details of these were still to be settled and would then be communicated to the Town Team.

(b) Fairfield Road Clean-Up This was something which we needed to address but there were problems with implementing any scheme because of absentee landlords and the type of tenants willing to rent this accommodation.

(c) Spring Fair It would soon be time to start work on next year's Spring Fair.

(d) Newsletter A quarterly newsletter to all members was proposed.

(e) Facebook page This needed a regular update. Rachel Clarke undertook to work on this.

(f) Perceptions of the Ideas Group Some people who had come to the Ideas Group went away with the impression that it was just a "Talking shop". It was important that we communicated the fact that projects were carried forward by the Project Teams which the Ideas Group oversaw.

**7 Future meetings** The Ideas and Vision Group will meet at The Buckingham Hotel on the following Mondays, September 16<sup>th</sup>, October 14<sup>th</sup>, November 18<sup>th</sup> and December 16<sup>th</sup>, as arranged.

M F Bryant  
01298 213341  
[mf Bryant@btinternet.com](mailto:mf Bryant@btinternet.com)

3<sup>rd</sup> September 2013