

IDEAS & VISION GROUP NOTES OF THE MEETING OF MONDAY 12TH JANUARY 2015

Present: Derek Bodey, Gerard Ryan, Helen Haywood, Janet Miller, Janine Morris, John Estruch, Lois McGill, Marc Haywood, Mike Badman, Mike Bryant, Mike Monaghan, Mike Williams, Pat Hobby, Phillip Barton, Roddie MacLean, Richard Lower, Richard Silson, Simon Fussell, Steve Caddy, Zena Bishop, Denise Valente (for Item 4)

Apologies: Andy Parker, Dave Carlisle, Jean Ball, Jean Todd, Karen Beresford, Linda Baldry, Rhiannon-Jane Raferty, Sarah Rawlinson, Sue Mellor, Tina Heathcote

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

1. NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The notes of the meeting on 10th December were passed as true record, with no matters arising.

2. NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS

New Year's resolutions are typically things we say we'll do, and then often fail to do, every year. With that in mind, we shared our own personal resolutions and suggested ones that the Town Team might adopt.

PERSONAL	TOWN TEAM
Take up music	Talk less & do more (as if!)
Do that painting & decorating	More big community events - good for attracting new people
Drink less, exercise more	Recruit more <u>active</u> members
Go to Africa	By January 2016 - have a damn sight better market than now!
Reduce carbon footprint	KEEP ON GOING!
Lose weight	
Write a daily 250 word blog	

3. PROJECTS

3.1 Buxton in Bloom 2015

A project proposal had been circulated. Janine and the team had been giving a lot of thought to assessing priorities and value for money. Last year a large part of the £1,450 spend was on things with no lasting value, such as prizes. The proposed expenditure for this year was therefore significantly lower at £1,000, with at least £300 of that to be spent on plants, troughs and the like. While some keen gardeners did what they would have done anyway, the project did gain a high profile in the town last year, and certainly encouraged people to do things they wouldn't have done otherwise; further community involvement is expected to build over time. It was agreed that last year's Buxton in Bloom had been good for the town and should be repeated, albeit with more focus on community effort rather than individuals. The meeting recommended that no cash prizes should be awarded; it was suggested that a local garden centre could be approached to donate cash or discount vouchers instead. The meeting supported the proposal as presented and recommended it to the directors for approval. Anyone wanting to get involved in the project should contact Janine.

3.2 Welcome to Buxton Station

The previous proposal has been overtaken by events; Friends of Buxton Station is now to all intents and purposes up and running, and submitted the three major funding applications before Christmas. A new form of proposal, with the Town Team in a 'Supporting Role', had therefore been circulated. FOBS will run the project, but are asking Buxton Town Team to help in specific ways: to authorize reproduction of the Illustrated Map for decorative purposes; assist with the planting schemes in association with Buxton in Bloom; assist in recruiting Buxton College students for the art work; assist in recruiting volunteer effort generally. The meeting supported this approach and agreed that the revised Supporting Role proposal be sent to the Directors for approval.

3.3 Walking & Litter Picking Group

The proposal has been approved by the Directors. The first walk will take place on Sunday 1st February, starting on Devonshire Road at 11am, and will include areas around the Palace Hotel and the Sorting Office, and behind the railway station, the exact route will be finalised immediately beforehand. It was noted that the footpath behind the station has been cleaned up recently. A request was made for Dukes Drive to be included in a walk sometime soon.

3.4 Buxton Spring Fair 2015

Several 'hold the date' emails went out to potential participants in December, the data base is being tidied up and more emails are going out as new contacts are identified. Planning the event is now starting in earnest, anyone who would like to be involved should contact Janet.

4. FOCUS ON MARKETS

4.1 Market Regeneration (HPBC Tender)

We heard early in the new year that we had successfully passed the Pre-Qualification stage, and will be meeting with HPBC on Tuesday morning. A project proposal had been circulated; the full business plan is commercially sensitive, but will be available in due course. The proposal is that if selected as the market operator, we would set up an

independent CIC, and run the market on both Tuesdays and Saturdays. A regular 'core' market would operate on both days, on Saturdays this would be in conjunction with a rotation of specialist traders, on a different theme each week. The CIC would own its own stalls and other equipment, and employ a part time manager plus hourly paid labour to erect and dismantle the stalls. The financial model is still being finalised, but we anticipate needing to raise in the order of £20,000. HPBC have indicated a possible takeover date in May, but we will not know until April if we are going to be asked to submit a formal tender. It was agreed that given the time needed to procure equipment, confirm staff appointments and recruit a critical mass of traders, mid-July would be more achievable. The meeting supported the proposal as presented and recommended it go to the directors for approval. It was noted that the planning and setting up stages will need a lot of volunteer effort, for instance developing stall specifications and job descriptions, researching best practice, recruiting potential traders; any offers of assistance should be made to John. Denise commented that the plans were exactly what Buxton market needed and with the evident level of support and enthusiasm had great potential; she offered to help in any way that she could.

4.2 Artisan Market Trials

Denise reported that the Artisan Market is not doing as well as had been hoped, with footfall and sales on the Market Place disappointing compared to other towns where they operate. Consequently it is becoming difficult to recruit traders, and after each market around half of them drop out; attrition rate in other locations is less than 5%. She noted that Buxton is very different to most towns, with two distinct town centres, and the Pavilion Gardens complex to add to the complication. Logistically the Market Place is a better space than Spring Gardens, which is cluttered, needs to maintain access for articulated lorries, has annual licensees with pre-allocated positions for stalls and rides, and permanent traders with polarized opinions about a market being there. On the other hand the footfall is higher, and the mix of people is different, with more visitors and tourists in lower Buxton. Competing events in the Pavilion Gardens are a problem either way; the December market coincided with the Winter Wonderland and four of her traders had stalls in both places, so a direct comparison - none of them had taken more than 30% on the Market Place compared to in the Octagon.

One of the aims of the Artisan Market is to draw people in from outside the town, and showcase what it has to offer in the way of permanent shops to people who might not otherwise know. The proportion of visitors to residents at her other markets therefore is quite high, and she doesn't think that has happened in Buxton. She is unsure whether it would be any different on Spring Gardens, the two trials in the summer were not enough to know as it takes time to build awareness.

John has been measuring footfall on Spring Gardens and on the Market Place. The numbers of people passing through the Market Place on Artisan Market days is more than double that on normal Saturdays, so the Artisan Market is definitely drawing people to Higher Buxton, with no discernible effect on Spring Gardens. Denise would be wanting double the footfall again to make the market viable.

There was some discussion around other reasons why the market might not be successful; the price of the stalls, trader attitude, the wide range of specialist shops in the Cavendish Arcade, Buxton people going elsewhere for their Christmas shopping (footfall on Spring Gardens was lower in December than the previous two months).

Denise is in discussion with HPBC about the situation, but because of licensing procedures it is unlikely a market could be held in Lower Buxton before April or May. No decision has yet been made about February and March, it was agreed that if there is to be no Artisan Market we will need to co-ordinate now we communicate this.

It was noted that if we are trying to re-launch the regular market on the Market Place, a third market operating on Spring Gardens would be even more confusing than the current situation. It would therefore be difficult for us to support the Artisan Market moving down there. On the other hand it was suggested that a smaller Artisan Market as one of our monthly specialist markets might work, if the costs could be worked out to be financially viable.

Denise assured us that the fact that the Artisan Market wasn't working as hoped did not mean that our plans for regenerating the market on the Market Place could not be successful.

After Denise had left, the meeting discussed options, and whether it was possible to support a move by the Artisan Market which might jeopardise the regeneration of the regular market. The meeting confirmed its view that the Town Team should prioritise the regeneration of the regular market and could not therefore support the Artisan Market moving to Spring Gardens.

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

5.1 Merchandise

Philip reported that the tea-towels and jigsaws were both selling well, now primarily via third parties such as the Tourist Information Centre and Pooles Cavern.

5.2 New Ideas

A suggestion had been made that we consider getting rowing boats on the boating lake, and running guided adventure tours of the culvert under Spring Gardens. No-one volunteered to pick these up, but it was agreed they can be added to the Ideas Schedule.

5. FUTURE I&V MEETINGS

The next meeting will be on:

Thursday 12th February at 7:30pm in the Buckingham Hotel.