

Business & Retail Networking Forum Minutes  
Tuesday 3 November 2009  
Rooms of Coventry, Corporation Street

Chairman: Andy Talbot (Centre Manager, West Orchards and Chair of the BID Sub-Committee)

**1. Introduction - Andy Talbot**

Andy Talbot welcomed everyone to the meeting. Andy had been advised that some people had not received invitations to the meeting and this could have been due to the postal situation.

**2. Christmas Marketing – Nicki Leake (Head of Destination Marketing, CV One)**

Nicki Leake gave an update on Christmas Marketing and highlighted the following points of the traditional family Christmas theme:

- For the first time all the centres will be staging their lights switch-on on the same day ie 29 November
- Gingerbread House – the House will open for the first time on 29 November at 3.00pm on Precinct Cross. The ornate structure will come to life as a family of different characters will come out each day (Nicki circulated a photo). Website: [www.coventrysfairytale.co.uk](http://www.coventrysfairytale.co.uk) for performance times
- A competition with the prize of visit to Lapland will be ongoing for the first 12 days of December – competition slips will be in the Feel Alive magazine and entries can be posted in the Police Box. Sponsorship has been secured with Tiny Teddies Day Nursery.
- Feel Alive – 150,000 copies to be distributed next week
- Christmas Marketing will include a postcard Campaign, adverts in the Times, and competitions in the Telegraph, series of adverts on Mercia, billboard campaign and website campaign.

Nicki asked that members keep the Marketing Team informed of any activities which could be added to the website.

Christmas Lights Switch-On on 29 November will feature:

- Beverly Knight at 3.45pm
- Walkabout characters and local sports personalities
- Lord Mayor and Wallace and Gromit at 5.00pm
- X factor and Britain's Got Talent contestants
- [It has also subsequently been announced that Martin Freeman, star of "Nativity" will be there at the Switch On]

Andy Talbot said that free parking will be available at city centre shoppers car parks (website: [www.coventrysfairytale.co.uk](http://www.coventrysfairytale.co.uk)) for late night shopping on Wednesdays (between 3.00pm and 9.00pm). Late night shopping starts on Wednesday 18 November. Andy added that West Orchards had invested more money in Christmas promotion this year which includes 18 full page adverts in the press to publicise late night shopping and the launch of a new Santa's Grotto.

Nicki and Mark Nicholls responded to questions from the floor:

- Reverend David Mayhew (Holy Trinity Church) said Holy Trinity Church would be open as usual and asked whether there would be any reference to Jesus and whether there would be any lights. Mark confirmed that the crib would be in Smithford Way. and added that lights can be offered and suggested David contacted the Coventry Transport Museum as he believes they are putting their own lights up and they may be able to share installation costs
- Keith Draper (Spon Street Traders) asked Mark if there were any lights planned for Spon Street. Mark said that this year lights will be focussed in the main shopping area to add a different dimension.
- Perry Pericleous (Club Release) asked if it would be OK for the Burges to fund their own lights and it was agreed that this would not present a problem

### **3. Jerde the Next Stage - Paul Beesley (City Development)**

Paul gave an update on the Jerde Masterplan. A report went to Cabinet in September and the Cabinet agreed to focus on the South side of the city centre in the first instance. The collaboration agreement will be brought back in March with any proposed changes.

Ironmonger Square is due to be completed by January next year and a report is to be presented to Cabinet concerning additional options round the Burges. There is also a proposal to link the square Weatherspoons.

Paul responded to questions from the floor:

- Friargate application – Paul said Friargate had submitted an application relating to the area around the station. Funding was being looked at but Paul believed this would be a couple of years away yet.
- The Burges – traders in the Burges believe they are being ‘pushed out’ and had been trying to contact the Project Team. Paul said that he would talk to the Project Team to investigate.
- The traders believe that taking the buses away from the Burges has had a big impact on trade – Paul commented that buses had been prevented from laying over as there were issues relating to pollution. As part of the scheme it is proposed that buses will go back through the Burges. Paul added that High Street, Broadgate and Hales Street are all being looked at to remove unwanted traffic.
- Spon Street Traders were concerned at the decrease in footfall. Paul responded by saying there has been a public document issued for comment but there will be opportunities to talk through any problems.
- Taxis – Paul talked through the proposal for taxis to be relocated to Trinity Street
- Poor access to the Burges – Paul to re-iterate to Team that fencing needs to be removed asap.

### **4. Business Consultation 2010-2011 – Brendan Connor (West Midlands Police Authority)**

Brendan Connor briefed the meeting on the consultation process to assist the West Midlands Police Authority in determining the policing priorities for 2010/2011. The Police Authority have been visiting local authority areas over the West Midlands and the main focus has been engaging with business communities and hearing first hand local issues and concerns.

Brendan invited members to a business conference to be held in Birmingham (Maple House) on 4 January 2010 and added that member's views into the strategic policing plan would be valued. Details including an application form were circulated.

Brendan also commented on the degree of under reporting of crime in the business community.

## **5. Building Resilience to Violent Extremism – Sergeant Dipak Patel (West Midlands CTV)**

Sergeant Patel presented a DVD explaining the Government's strategy to deal with countering the threat of terrorism the main priorities being to Pursue, Prevent, Protect and Prepare.

Andy Talbot commented that Coventry Council have invested in putting the right people in place with major incident plans.

Sergeant Patel encouraged members to feel free to speak to the police if they had any concerns.

## **6. City Centre Police Issues – Brian Hornsby (Neighbourhood Inspector, West Midlands Police)**

Brian Hornsby gave an update on City Centre Police Issues. The following points were highlighted:

- There had been a high demand for calls for service
- All crime was down by 12%
- Public satisfaction target with crime – target hit
- Anti Social Behaviour - target not hit
- Anti Social Behaviour 'hotspots' are Lady Herbert's Gardens, Herbert Art Gallery, Priory Place, and Pool Meadow
- Citizen focus has increased greatly

There had been positive feedback from a resident's meeting at Starley Road.

Brian spoke of future projects and highlighted the following:

- Christmas Lights – overseeing and policing on the day
- Safer Travel – Pool Meadow (November)
- Safeguarding Students (November)
- Night time economy – reducing night time crime

Project Paragon – Brian briefed the meeting on the recent restructuring within WM Police and its impact on the city centre

Spon Street – discussion took place re the bad behaviour in Spon Street. Brian commented that Mr Glover (Commander of Coventry Police) was not in favour of 'zero tolerance' and therefore it was not on the agenda. He added that Spon Street and the Skydome area was one of the most policed streets in Coventry. Two comments from the floor were:

- Intolerance should be directed to the behaviour not the person.
- Visibility of the police on the street is needed

Update on taxis – Brian said, it was his view, taxis are not a policing matter but he believes there are too many taxis with a shortage of ranking for them. There were concerns from members that there are too many taxis out during the day time and not enough at night - there was a suggestion that a restriction on the operating times of licences would help the situation.

## **7. Update from Liz Millett (Chief Executive, CV One)**

Liz Millett said that as a result of budget cuts within CV One there had been an internal reorganisation of resources. Shirley Kent had decided to leave the Company to pursue other opportunities and Dave Mooney had moved to another post. Liz thanked them both for their contribution to this forum and added that a new City Centre Manager would be appointed in the near future.

The interim contacts along with Liz are:

- Operational issues – Mark Nicholls (Head of Operations)
- Promotions, Marketing and Events – Nicki Leake (Head of Destination Management)

Liz also thanked Lucie Watson (Sales & Marketing Executive, CV One) for her help in arranging the meeting

## **8. Any Other Business**

Switch it off Campaign – envelopes were circulated with details of the campaign including a poster and stickers. The Campaign aimed to encourage people to take part in the Big Switch Off event taking place in Coventry from 9-13 November. During the key date of 13 November (4.30pm to 6.30pm) lights and appliances all over the city will be switched off, especially those in prominent places, in support of the campaign.