

THESE MINUTES ARE DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED BY THE BOARD AT ITS NEXT MEETING

**A Meeting of the Newbury BID Christmas & Events Group was held on
Wednesday 7th January 2015**

Attendance:

Russell Downing (RD), Suzanne Young (SY), David Pickett (DP), Rob Boobyer (RB), Ross Drake (RD*), Simon Carr (SC), John Stratford (JS), Carolyn Taylor (CT), Andy Sheppard (AS), Fiona Crooksmith (FC), Lionel Zeffertt (LZ), Stephen McKinnon (SM)

1. Welcome

All were welcomed and introduced. RD introduced DP as the new Chair of these meetings.

2. Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting were submitted on behalf of:
Neil Munday (NM), Greg Brighthouse (GB), Paul Redman (PR), Caroline Edmunds (CE), Jan Ferrer (JF), Annette Bellamy (AB), Nigel Morrison (NM), Angela Thompson (AT).

3. A.O.B:

English Tourism Week (CT)
Santa Fun Run (RB)
Fashion Week (RB)

4. Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

5. Christmas Review

5.1 Lights

General consensus, (except for LZ, who thought they were “poor”), that lights were very fitting for Newbury, and whilst they do not bring money into the tills they were an additional attractive feature for the town. RD: BID hired them last year but we now own for next 3 years. RD: no fixings near Camp Hopson; in 2015 there may be lights between HSBC and David Clulow. LZ: lights at station approach in 2015? But recognised this is difficult as no structures on one side of the road. AS: some issues on day of Lantern Parade; RD and AS agreed that in future it is agreed who switches off lights for the lantern procession, as Corn Exchange road closure people turned off Northbrook St lights. RD: lights now off and target removal date of 16/01/15. CT: Issues with rubbish around the trunk; next year someone must take responsibility to keep it clear, and

perhaps have extra barriers around the trunk to prevent it happening. RD: tree to be removed Friday 16/01/15.

General agreement that the date worked well; RB: no clash with Hennessy, alleviated the traffic issues; positive feedback from the public; RD: more entertainment was needed on the stage; more space needed (Town Centre Inspector thought it was the largest number of spectators he had seen at the event); AS: potential Health & Safety issues with staging; agreed that 2015 plans must consider Corn Exchange performance timings more. RD: parade included a larger BID area and many local children but harder to manage; 2015 parade will have fewer participants; more paid for security rather than volunteer marshals needed; SM: proposed a gradual “switch on” of lights throughout the procession to reduce the crowding and management issues. CT: sound issues reduced the impact of the actual “switch on” and caused some confusion.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted

5.2 Late night Shopping

General agreement that figures were down on 2013; DP: 4/12/14 too soon after Black Friday? More visible signage needed around the town centre? RD*: state the event name on the road closure signs? Agreement that we need to gauge commitment from all businesses ASAP to plan 2015.

RESOLVED:

- i That the update be noted**
- ii BID to produce feedback form and present results at next meeting.**

5.3 Christmas Market

BID takes responsibility for it; Your Event Organisers had previously delivered successful Food Festivals, and Reading BID were also using them for Christmas Market; unfortunately, Reading failed, 15 of their traders dropped out prior to Newbury’s beginning; internal issues within Your Event Organisers, and event badly managed. RD: will only run a Christmas Market in 2015 if we can use the Market Place. Discussion took place about whether to have another (Christmas market) or do something-else (ice-rink? local market?). Many towns have had struggling Christmas Markets.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted

5.4 Best Dressed Shop Window

43 participants (up from 36 in 2013); 51 public votes (up from 20 in 2013); all agreed it is a cost neutral way of moving people around town; LZ /Pageant was the over-all winner.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted

6. Food Festivals

All agreed that until a new event organiser has been found the dates are unconfirmed but we still aim to do 2 per year; general consensus that we need to use local traders (up to 20m radius).

RESOLVED: That the update be noted

7. Easter

Plans to deliver another Egg Hunt; Oldburys and Caffe Nero keen; those who did not get an egg previously will be prioritised. RB: suggested that the retailers think up their own clue!

RESOLVED: That the update be noted

8. Footfall

The camera data shows that the last Saturday in November was the busiest; peaked 15th-21st Dec; 17.5 thousand people on Boxing Day! 3rd-4th Jan as busy as before Christmas. DP: Parkway – footfall down on 2013 (but attributed some of 2013 to location of Christmas Market). RD: in answer to RB: retail parks will not give us their figures for comparison.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted

9 Road Closures

RD: we need to submit requests to WBC by mid/end Feb.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted

10 Other events

Wedding Fair at Racecourse 22nd Feb; RB hoping to promote racecourse as a wedding venue; using an event company; he will ask them to contact BID companies. LZ (Pageant) and SC (Oldbury's) keen to talk to them.

Bank Holiday Sat 23rd May-Mon 25th May: children's rides in Market Place and Victoria Park;

French Market – organiser just contacted SY; we need to source a road closure company and quote her before confirming.

JS: carnival? (The carnival organisers confirmed today (12th) that it is happening and keen for retailers to participate in procession; let SY know if you are interested).

AS: will confirm the Corn Exchange April outdoor event ASAP.

JS: Devizes to London canoe race – Easter weekend: need to tap into the extra footfall/visitors.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted

A.O.B

Santa Fun Run? RB: start at racecourse – 5k run, involve families; Sun 13/12 proposed?
This clashes with Lantern Parade so date TBC.

Fashion Week – in the week leading up to Ladies Day at the races (16th Aug).

English Tourism Week 15-21 March: on behalf of CT, SY has sent out info to all BID
businesses, to contact CT direct if interested.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted

Next meeting: Monday 2nd February 2015