

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 Monday
2nd November 2015**

Attendance:

David Pickett, Russell Downing, Suzanne Young, Fiona Crook-Smith, Caroline Edmunds, Granville Taylor, Martha Vickers, Lionel Zeffertt, Anne Radbourne, Ross Drake, Andy Murrill, Heather Evans, Helen Angelides, Rob Boobyer, Roscoe Young, Alison Bird, Stephen Mckinnon

1. Welcome

All were welcomed and introduced by the chair of the meeting, David Pickett.

2. Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting were submitted on behalf of:
Nigel Morrison, Scott Waters.

3. A.O.B:

Promotion of Al Shaqab Lockinge Day – Rob Boobyer

4. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as a true record of the meeting, proposed by Rob Boobyer, seconded by Alison Bird

5. Christmas

5.i Switch-on

Russell Downing updated the group on the event. Attendance was estimated to be 40-50% down on previous year but still a good turn out considering the atrocious weather. Parade was slightly delayed due to a medical emergency. Plans for next year are to keep the parade simple and on the same route but to move timings of performance on the stage back to 14:00 and bringing the parade forward to 16:30. Granville Taylor asked if the plan was to remain the same for 2016 i.e. Tree, grotto, reindeer etc. This was confirmed. A number of positive comments had been received from the group and wider business community regarding the look and feel of the lights. Russell Downing confirmed that there had been additional lighting added this year as per the project, this would continue into 2016.

5.ii Late night shopping

Russell Downing updated the group on the evening: it was generally felt amongst the group that it had been successful and that the model of one late night should be adopted for 2016 with a view to building on the activity. Reports from around the table and businesses in the Town Centre were very favorable with some reporting that trading had been very strong on the night. All agreed the atmosphere in the Town was very good. The camels, whilst difficult to manage (organiser not the Camels!) could be repeated again.

Stephen McKinnon commented that he felt the BID was not offering Christmas activity for Bart Street and Cheap Street. A discussion took place regarding what the BID was trying to achieve and what its role was. Russell Downing made it very clear that the role of the BID is to promote Newbury as a whole, not any individual parts of it and it is the BIDs role to drive footfall into Newbury and it is the responsibility of the business owners/managers to engage that footfall. The group agreed with this.

5.iii Trading

Russell Downing presented the Spring Board Christmas review, attached as separate report. Feelings around the group and feedback from traders was positive with most reporting Christmas sales up on 2014.

5.iv Footfall

Russell Downing presented the footfall report for Newbury. December was down Y-O-Y by -0.9%, however when you compare this to the South West Region -5.6% and UK -3.9%, Newbury had performed better than the region and UK as a whole. All agreed that Black Friday had not been promoted as heavily on the high street this year, but had a much bigger presence on-line. This did have a knock-on affect for Christmas trading, along with world events, on-line shopping bucked the recent trend of decline and saw a big increase this year.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

6. Other Events

Suzanne Young presented the latest calendar of events for the first quarter, NewburyFest program is being worked on and will be presented to the group in due course.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted

7. A.O.B.

Rob Boobyer is looking for suggestions of how the town can integrate more with the racecourse, the next big meet will be the lockinge day in May. Some of the suggestions include:

- Best Dressed Business Window – Prize Holiday to Qatar
- Spend & save promo for discounted race day tickets (this worked well for ladies' day)
- Picture (selfie) with a cut out of the Cup, moved around different businesses.
- Instore promotions

RESOLVED:

- i. Rob Boobyer and Russell Downing to discuss the above in more detail
- ii. BID to gauge interest and promote.

Meeting closed at 12:10

Next meeting: Tuesday 2nd February 2016