



north london

Notes
of the first
NORTH FINCHLEY BUSINESS FORUM
held at
Arts Depot, 5 Nether Street, North Finchley
London N12 0GA

10th October 2011, 6.15pm

Present: Gary Ince, North London Business (Chair)
N Patel, Office Interiors
Keren Nero, Semko Ltd
Maytal Dabush, UK IT Service
Dinesh, Natural Health
Jay Thankey, Natural Health
Cindy Robert, Wild Garden
Raj Mathur, Coffee Republic
Terry Downes, Ceramic Stile
Rachel Chattalis, O2
Paul Shea, Tally Ho Discount
Esmine Puzone, Finishing Touches Haberdashery
James Hogg, Sainsbury's
Tina Alu, Da Lillo
Richard Peters, Richard Peters Opticians
Richard Pell, HRSP
Giselle Malawer, Back in Balance
C Khatri, Just Write
D Tranmer, Ace Tones
Helen Michael, Café Buzz
Mr Roy C, Roy C Café
Leon Perkin, Ballards Newman
Faith Unoarumhi, Ardexcel Support Services
Rez Songsar, Rez Computers
Kypros Liverers, Acvica

Cllr Alan Schneiderman, LB Barnet
Cllr Jim Therney, LB Barnet
Steve Murrant, LB Barnet
Kishore Joshi, LB Barnet
Mark Connolly, LB Barnet
Jodie Yandall, LB Barnet
Lucy Shomali, LB Barnet
Hemant Amin, LB Barnet
Ellen Scrimgeour, North London Business

Apologies: Cllr Richard Cornelius, Leader, LB Barnet
Cllr Alison Cornelius
Cllr Lynne Hutton
Cllr Ross Houston

Item		Action
01/11	<p>Welcome & Introductions</p> <p>Gary Ince (GI) welcomed all to the meeting and attendees introduced themselves.</p>	
02/11	<p>North Finchley Business Survey Findings, North London Business</p> <p>Printed copies of survey were circulated and Ellen Scrimgeour presented the findings of the face to face survey of retailers carried out in May? . It was noted that business' intention to continue trading does not equate to success because often there is no choice despite difficult conditions.</p> <p>An extensive discussion was held about issues affecting North Finchley.</p> <p>Parking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As per the survey, those present clearly felt parking to be the main issue for businesses in North Finchley. Costs had increased both on street & in car parks. • One business said that policy should encourage local people to shop locally, to give town centres a chance against competition from superstores with free car parks. Once a client has got a ticket, they never return to that shop. • Another business recalled that 15 years ago, controlled parking had been introduced to generate a turnover of cars however now it had become a revenue-making exercise. Prices have gone up by 400% in some cases. Cost of residential and business parking permits has also gone up eg. from £300 to £500. • It was suggested that some free parking be made available, whether half an hour / 2 hours. This would entice more shoppers to the town centre. • The new cashless system had driven (particularly older) people away. • A suggestion was made that car parks allow payment at the end of the visit to take away anxiety about getting ticketed when people are shopping. • Barnet CPZ Campaign are fighting increases down a legal route. • In East Finchley, residential parking is for 1 hour a day to prevent commuter parking but in North Finchley restrictions are in operation 9 – 5pm. • It was thought that about 15 new spaces could be created at Tally Ho one way system, where there are double yellow lines and a series of planters, which could be converted into bays as they attract litter anyhow. • Traffic wardens are over-zealous • Kishore Joshi (Senior Engineer) said he could not respond directly on issues but would take notes and have them responded to the next meeting. • NLB will ensure the Head of Parking attends our next meeting & 	ES

	<p>responds directly to comments and suggestions in the minutes.</p> <p>Consultations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One business said they had been consulted 18 months ago and had never heard back from the council. Lucy Shomali said that town centre strategy resources had been diverted, but the consultation responses would feed into the Outer London Fund application. <p>Community Safety / Cleanliness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steve Murrant introduced himself as head of Community Safety / Enforcement, who leads a team of 6 dealing with anti-social behaviour, graffiti, dog fouling etc. SM said they were tackling street drinking by a voluntary agreement with off licences where they initially secure agreement not to sell strong alcohol. After this pressure is ramped up. This was introduced in Cricklewood in April and drinkers move from the area as they cannot obtain alcohol. The initiatives are carried out in close partnership with Safer Neighbourhood Teams. One business stated that The Arcade is used as a toilet, mainly by street drinkers. Rubbish, rats & flytipping at the back of the shops was reported, as well as unsightly bread left for pigeons on Tally Ho corner and signs on lamp posts. This would be dealt with tomorrow by SM's team. SM asked anyone with an issue to contact his team member Mark Connolly, e-mail mark.connolly@barnet.gov.uk There was a brief discussion on A-boards. Currently Council policy does not allow them. SM's team just enforces policy set by cabinet so businesses need to lobby their ward Councillors on this. <p>Crime & Policing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Businesses felt that police presence in the town centre seems to be sporadic. Police officers rather than PCSOs should be more present and visible. One business stated that there is a police forum every 3 months, held at Waitrose, where typically only 3 businesses attend along with 4 or 5 police. The businesses community should make the most of this by attending to agree on priorities for local policing SM and Cllr Alan Schneiderman mentioned the Ward Panel meetings, was a closed meeting for local representatives of business, residents, schools etc. North Finchley crosses West Finchley and Woodhouse Wards. If a business wishes to join, they need to sign up for 1 year (comprising 4 meetings). For more information, please contact the council's Business Liaison Officer, Hemant Amin on 020 8359 7131 or mail hemant.amin@barnet.gov.uk. It was suggested that police required at 1 / 2am as well as 9 – 5pm. Hemant Amin (HA) said in Edgware amended shift times had been agreed at the Ward Panel meeting. The police will be invited to the next meeting. 	<p>LS</p> <p>All</p> <p>All</p> <p>All</p> <p>ES</p>
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	<p>Arts Depot</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Businesses felt that the Arts Depot was to be a community resource but currently it is underused and there is no dialogue with the community and lack of strategy. 	
03/11	<p>Opportunities for the Town Centre – London Mayor’s Outer London Fund</p> <p>Jodie Yandall (JY) advised that the London Mayor - Boris Johnson, had released part of a £50 million grant available for town centres in the Outer London Boroughs. Chipping Barnet had been successful in securing £400K mainly thanks to active & well co-ordinated business community. They will use funding for public realm improvements, business training, visual merchandising, a town centre magazine etc. The council is hoping to put in a bid for mid November deadline for the next round of this funding. The bid will probably enhance the proposal to relocate the library in the Arts Depot. Consultants are currently drawing up proposals that feature lighting, better signage, signage to car parks, decluttering the street scene, farmers market, promotion / advertising, creative use of vacant premises to improve the economy of the town centre.</p> <p>A business suggested signs to the open air market and making the market more attractive. An after school club could be run at the Arts Depot. Businesses suggested a local printed / online business directory. The council noted & is seeking further ideas and support for the bid from the business community. Any ideas should be sent to Hem Amin (hemant.amin@barnet.gov.uk).</p> <p>JY suggested a representative from Chipping Barnet be present at the next North Finchley Business Forum meeting.</p>	<p>All JY</p>
04/11	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>Progress on the planning application for Balfour House was raised and the council confirmed there was no news.</p> <p>An attendee said the council was too bureaucratic and the community need a human face, with someone prepared to explain & negotiate on policy. Hemant Amin as a Business Liaison Officer has providing this function since February 2010.</p> <p>The next meeting will be convened in late November 2011, depending on the availability of the Arts Depot.</p>	<p>ES</p>