



## **Hull BID Retail Seminar**

**Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2008, 10.15am  
The Albermarle Music Centre, Ferensway, Hull**

### **In attendance:**

Mike Killoran (in the Chair)  
46 delegates in attendance.

### **Welcome**

The Chair welcomed delegates to the Hull BID Retail Seminar and introduced John Holmes, Chief Executive, Hull Forward.

### **John Holmes, Chief Executive, Hull Forward**

John Holmes provided a background into his experience of being involved in regeneration whilst working for One North East and his ambitions for Hull Forward. He highlighted that the role of Hull Forward was to create a thriving sub regional capital with a strong economy.

The transition of Hull Citybuild becoming Hull Forward was discussed and the key outputs of Hull Citybuild, which included 5,600 net new retail/service jobs and 4,500 new residents, were noted.

John Holmes reported on the Hull City Centre Masterplan and the reasons behind its creation. This included; sub-regional capital status not being achieved; more jobs being required in the city centre and; wage rates being too low. The objectives of the Masterplan were highlighted as being a unified and compact city core, a city reunited with its waterfront and a strong retail sector, to comment on a few examples. It was commented that having 'icons', such as the Deep and the KC Stadium, helped gain national recognition and this was vital to encourage more people to come into Hull.

The progress made in the city centre so far was noted, and included Paragon Interchange, St Stephen's, Humber Quays and planning permission being secured for the Quay West development. The key impacts and outputs of each development were noted.

John Holmes provided an update on the Fruit Market and East Bank of the River Hull developments. With reference to the East Bank of the River Hull, it was highlighted the need for the city to be connected. The moving footbridge link was expected to be operational from Spring 2009. It was commented that initial planning proposals had been rejected as the quality was not up to standard.

It was highlighted that there were a number of hotel developments currently underway, which were as follows:

- 120 bed Premier Inn at The Boom
- 200 bed 4\* at Humber Quays
- 50 bed boutique hotel at the Fruit Market, Marina Gateway
- 80 bed boutique hotel at the Fruit Market, Dry Dock
- 50-80 bed Travelodge at Ferensway, Freetown Way

John Holmes reported on a study which was being commissioned on Whitefriargate. It was expected for the initial brief to be signed off within the next week. It was expected that the first stage would entail a full analysis of occupation, future intentions, public realm improvements and reviews of the planning policy and retail capacity. The second stage would include public sector options, analysis and proposals for upper floors and the current/future connectivity. It was emphasised that it was essential the consultation includes input from retailers. All retailers were encouraged to forward their views.

An insight into Hull Forward was given, which covered areas such as bondholders, the change from Hull Citybuild and progress to date. It was highlighted that their ambition was to 'be a catalyst that transforms Hull into a global economic player'.

The first World Trade Centre on mainland UK and was expected to be open shortly. The services provided were recently launched by Peter Mandelson. All the partners for the World Trade Centre were highlighted. The purpose of the World Trade Centre was expected to be the first point of call for potential investors.

John Holmes closed his presentation by highlighting the priority projects and next steps, which included appointing a Chair of Hull Forward and finalising the Business Plan. Priority Projects were highlighted as being the continuing delivery of the City Centre Masterplan and detailed action plans for the 3 key sectors: renewable, port and value added logistics and healthcare.

The Chair invited delegates to forward questions to John Holmes.

A range of topics were discussed and included the A63 Caste Street, flood defences, the new transport interchange and safety and security within the city centre.

With regards to improvements of the A63 Castle Street, John Holmes highlighted that various ideas had been put forward, for example Cut and Cover, however due to funding issues this wouldn't be possible. It was emphasised that improvements to Castle Street were essential and would have a major impact across the city. Discussions were on going with the Highways Agency and the Regional Transport Board.

Concern was expressed over the new Interchange, in particular with reference to pedestrian crossings and was it necessary for buses to go to the interchange. It was confirmed that the interchange had experienced teething problems. John Holmes highlighted that it was necessary for buses and trains to be under one roof and that there was a high proportion of passengers who travelled to the Interchange via bus. With reference to the pedestrian crossing being so close to the interchange and buses travelling too fast, there was agreement that this needed to be addressed. An additional concern was expressed over bus routes through the city centre, including Brook Street and it was added that the roads could not take the weight of the buses.

A Paragon Square trader commented that trade had been affected badly as a result of the development of St Stephen's and asked as to whether anything would be done to benefit Paragon Square traders. John Holmes reported on the Whitefriargate study, which would be taking place shortly, and highlighted that this would have an impact on other areas of the city. It was expected that some key results of the study were expected to include better signage across the city and linking all parts of the centre together. Any input or comments from businesses would be greatly accepted.

It had been noted that it was hoped the developments in Hull would attract out of town shoppers but it was commented that the general impressions of the city, in particular with regards to crime, had driven people away. The issue of feeling safe whilst walking in the city centre was discussed with a majority stating that they felt 'unsafe' on an evening. The work of the PCSOs and the Ambassadors was praised and it was noted that changes had been noticed with a lot of the improvements and future improvements being down to teamwork between each security group.

Currently there were 4 Ambassadors funded by Hull City Centre BID and 9 PCSOs. It was noted that PCSOs had limited powers.

The development of St Stephen's and the potential development of Quay West was discussed. It was commented that it would not be encouraging Hull to be different and thus wouldn't attract out of town shoppers. John Holmes highlighted that department stores were needed in Hull, as well as cafes and restaurants to increase the vibrancy of the evening economy, and the concern that Marks and Spencers may consider vacating as a result of premises not being large enough. The need to attract larger retailers was also needed in order to attract people to the city.

It was suggested that there should be crèches available for mothers who are shopping. Mike Killoran highlighted that Princes Quay had previously hosted 3 crèches, however they all closed due to a lack of business.

The issue of footfall across the city centre was discussed, in particular along Whitefriargate. A retailer highlighted concern and lack of business since the opening of St Stephen's. John Holmes reported back to the Whitefriargate study and emphasised that the brief would be sent out shortly. The idea of a partly covered arcade was discussed. It was suggested that money should be spent on existing businesses rather than new shopping complexes.

Car parking in some areas of the city, particularly around Silver Street was discussed. It was highlighted that not everyone wishes to use multi storey car parks. Kevin Priestley reported that Hull City Council was currently working on a Car Parking Strategy and consultation would begin in the next two to three weeks. It was expected for levels and charges to be reviewed.

The Chair thanked John Holmes for his presentation and input from the delegates present.