



KEY POINTS FROM A MEETING WITH BUSINESSES IN HULL'S 'OLD TOWN' ON THURSDAY 25TH JANUARY 2007

PRESENT

Ken Baldwin	Hull City Centre BID
Sarah Jackson	Hull City Centre BID
Kevin Priestley	Hull City Council
Alan Phelan	Hull City Council
Victoria Jackson	Kingston Recruitment

In attendance

A selection of local businesses

- 1. Area Dead on a night**
 - 2. Beggars in doorways on a night**
 - 3. Broken windows**
 - 4. Graffiti**
 - 5. Driving footfall down Whitefriargate into Trinity House Lane & Square**
 - 6. Car parking hours & traffic wardens**
 - 7. Bus routes into the old town with the onset of St Stephens**
 - 8. Fish Trail**
 - 9. Subsidised brochure for the Old Town**
 - 10. Better signage to the Old Town from the A63**
 - 11. Trinity Church closed half the time**
 - 12. Empty shops in Whitefriargate**
 - 13. No lights working down Trinity House Lane**
1. It was mentioned that the area on a night is dead, which is intimidating for businesses who leave their premises late.
 2. From 4pm on an afternoon beggars start to gather in doorways along Silver Street, a number of the businesses from Silver St & Hepworth Arcade have expressed how intimidating this can be especially if you are leaving work late and are on your own. They appreciate that most of the beggars are harmless, but it is just the fear of crime that most people have.
Hull BID will speak with the police & the ambassadors, the ambassadors are information gatherers only and cannot move them on.
 3. It was mentioned that a lot of the premises down Manor St had had their windows broken.
 4. The businesses mentioned how much graffiti there is in the city centre.
The BID are in the process of finalising details for 2 cleaning teams, one of which will be work in the Prospect & Paragon areas (main pedestrianised areas) and the second is being supplied by Cityworks which is a council funded initiative through to 2008. 2 teams of 5 will be out and about in the old town area of the city centre tackling graffiti, chewing gum and other cleaning issues. A programme of cleaning is being finalised and will be sent out to all of the businesses to advise them of when the team will be in their area.
The team in Prospect & Paragon will begin w.c 12.02.07 & the old town team will begin early April 2007.

5. How to drive footfall down Whitefriargate into Trinity House Lane & Square.
 Kevin Priestley of Hull City council mentioned that he is going to be putting power points into Trinity Square so that we can hold markets in the square.
 The BID are also in the process of looking to buy market stalls that can be easily stored and put up for local people to use them for craft / antique fairs and re-introduce farmers markets into the square.
 It was asked how often these local markets would happen, if it would be just once or twice a year or once or twice a month?
 Definitely once or twice a month (at least), the BID asked if it introduced farmers markets that it wouldn't upset the traders in Trinity market.
 The businesses at the meeting said competition is healthy and why should 20 or so traders dictate what happens in Trinity Square, and these traders would also be able to use the market stalls provided by the BID. Trinity Square needs a farmers market.
 The businesses asked if the continental markets would go into Trinity Square or down Trinity House Lane?
 Ken Baldwin said that the BID were working towards this the markets going into Trinity Square and would keep the businesses updated. With regards to Trinity House Lane the council had explained that it was too narrow for a market, as consideration had to be taken for emergency vehicle access etc. The BID will speak to Trinity House and see if stalls could be put down one side of the Lane.
 Ken Baldwin explained that for Christmas 2007 the BID were looking at the possibility of putting an ice rink into Trinity Square. It was pointed out that we would need to speak to Holy Trinity Church as it owns the whole area. Ken Baldwin has already had discussions with the Reverend Forester and the Bishop who are very keen to support any ideas to bring more people into the area.

6. One of the main areas of concern by the businesses was the car parking issue in the old town. The car parks need to be opened later on a night, and the Apcoa car park in Market Place (opposite King Billy) also needs to be opened on a Sunday, as this is the main car park that feeds the old town area. The car park on Blanket Row which is a pay and display car park is open 7 days a week, if it could be improved (ideally tarmaced over) it would be an ideal car park as it is conveniently located for the Old Town area.
 Kevin Priestley explained that the council 'think tank' were looking into the opening hours of all of their car parks and also the privately owned car parks.
 Could the BID subsidise some of the car parks to be opened later & on a Sunday?
 Cities such as Lincoln help to subsidise the car parks for the people who work in their city centre by subsidising the car parks on the outskirts of the city, leaving the central car parks free for visitors, Ken Baldwin is speaking to Graham Hall regarding this.
 Parking on a night is again a huge concern due to the lack of open car parks and the traffic wardens patrolling the street, this is killing the evening economy. The matter was raised about the size of the car parking spaces in Silver Street, these are too small to accommodate an ordinary size car, and the traffic wardens are keen to give anyone a ticket if they go over the parking space boundary line. This is only in Silver St; if you go round into the Land of Green Ginger the spaces are ok
 It was asked if there was anything that we could do about the traffic wardens?
 Kevin Priestley mentioned that for a number of years the previous traffic wardens turned a blind eye to many parking offences, now the present traffic wardens have got strict.

7. The question was raised about the bus routes into the old town once St Stephen's is open in October 2007.
 The BID will check with the council regarding this and report back to the businesses.

8. Fish Trail – would it be possible to link any festivals into the fish trail or Andrew Marvell / Wilberforce etc?
 2007 is the bicentenary of the abolition of slavery by William Wilberforce, so this is being celebrated throughout the city centre.
 The Destination Management Organisation (DMO) specialise in advertising weekend breaks to the city which incorporate guided walks and meal packages. Hull BID will speak with them and see if they can incorporate the fish trail into their packages if they don't already use it.

9. Subsidised brochure for the old town.
Ken Baldwin explained that city centre maps are being produced; these will be available in the tourist information centre and in hotels around the city. The BID are also in the process of commissioning a website that will show all of the businesses in the city quarters, the business can also have their website address as a link on this website.
10. It was asked if there could be better signage to the Old Town from the A63. the businesses would like a sign to read something like:
HISTORIC OLD TOWN
MARKET
SHOPPING
PARKING
The A63 is not owned by the council, this is the remit of the Highways Authority and they are notorious for being difficult to work with.
It was asked if they would take notice if the businesses got a petition together requesting the signs, Kevin Priestley did not seem to think that this would make any difference, as the Highways Agency see additional signs as a safety issue.
It was agreed that the BID would lobby the MP for the area – need to check who this is
11. If visitors did want to come and have a look at Holy Trinity Church they would find that it is closed for the majority of time.
The BID agrees that this needs to be changed if the church is to be marketed to its full potential, the reason the church is closed most of the time is due to it being so cold. The church is looking at putting a glass frontage on the main doors into the church to alleviate this problem. The BID will keep the businesses informed of updates on this.
12. Why are there so many empty shops in Whitefriargate?
There are a lot of people walking down Whitefriargate but not many people shopping – if we can get Trinity Square sorted out, it will hopefully help to build it up.
The BID are working on covering the windows of the empty properties with a montage of what is happening within Hull City Centre, in the centre of these will be a clip frame in which we can advertise the forthcoming events in the city centre. Once the property has been sold the montage will be taken out and used in another empty property.
It was asked if the BID could find out what is happening to the empty HSBC building down Whitefriargate?
BID to try to find out
Will Marks & Spencer be moving out of Whitefriargate, this is a major concern as at present this is the main pull to the area?
At present the BID don't know if or when M & S will pull out of Whitefriargate, we know that they require larger premises and may go into Quay West. Henderson Global are actively trying to get John Lewis Partnership to be the anchor store in Quay West, the BID will keep the businesses updated on this issue.
Footfall counters are going to be fitted in four locations throughout the city centre, one will be on the M & S building, so the BID will be able to see if footfall is up or down each month.
The businesses said that in order to improve footfall we need to work towards creating a better ambience in the Whitefriargate / Trinity House Lane / Trinity Square area, this will then hopefully help the area to regenerate.
13. The businesses complained that the lights down Trinity House Lane are not working and have not been for some time, the council repair team came out and did something to them (during the day) and they still don't work.
Hull BID will chase this up with the Council
19.02.07; Response from the Council:
Kevin Priestley has spoken to Andy Driver about the lighting in Trinity House Lane and he is aware of the problems, in general the lighting is around 15 years old and the operational team are having problems keeping the water out of the light fittings which are all wall mounted.
Andy is going to do some investigatory work to see if anything can be done and as soon as I have a clear idea on a way forward will be in touch.

Summary

It was agreed that the BID would hold regular meetings (one per quarter) with the Old town 'Trinity' area.

To differentiate this area from the rest of the city centre it is the independent retailers, not the national multiples who are going to make this area popular, but to do this the right rents & right people need to be negotiated.

The area has lots of potential, The Boom which is being built by Pure Urban on the East Side of the River Hull is linking to the old town with a bridge across the river, the main run to get to the bridge is going to be down Whitefriargate, connecting the old town to the new town. The Boom will have 600 residential units in it therefore bringing more people into 'city living' what an opportunity we have.