

Sawbridgeworth Town Centre Partnership
Minutes of Meeting
22nd March 2007

Those present:

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|----------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Joseph Fitzgerald | Resident - Meeting Chair | Partnership Community |
| Cllr Brian Rochester | Town Council | Partnership Councillor |
| Simon Dennis | Dennis Butchers | Partnership Business |
| Paul Gravelle | Budgens | Partnership Business |
| Cllr Roger Beeching | Town Council | Partnership Councillor |
| Kay Allington | All About You | Partnership Business |
| Nicky Needham | Business | Partnership Business |
| Fiona Wootton | Goose Fat & Garlic | Partnership Business |
| Gillian Melling | Resident | Partnership Community |
| Chris Carter | Resident/Country Markets | Partnership Community |
| Chrissy Young | Resident/All About You | Partnership Community |
| Paul Pullin | Economic Development Mgr | EHDC Partnership Adviser |
| Lyndon Wootton | Goose Fat & Garlic | |
| Christina Fonseca | Saffron Walden B. Society | |
| Vicky Young | Leventhorpe School | |
| Gary Needham | Resident | |
| Monya Billing | Stort Valley Project | |
| Cllr Joyce Vincent | Resident/Town Council | Meeting Host |
| Charles Wall | Leventhorpe School | |
| Carole Wall | Resident | |
| Michelle Gravelle | Thought for Food Retail Ltd | |
| Stephanie Newman | Resident/Grassroutes Soap | |
| Lesley Hines | Resident | |
| Dianne Sutherland | Resident | |
| Lynda Sands | La Provence | |
| Keith Jacques | Jacques & Associates | |
| Dave Hitch | Christines Bakery | |

1. 1. Welcome

This meeting of the Sawbridgeworth Town Partnership was opened by Joseph Fitzgerald who welcomed the large attendance (27 persons!) and the many new faces from Business and the Community.

2. Apologies

Alison Frost, Cllr Angela Alder, Gill Hawkins, Eileen Evans, Dianne Clark, Kate Hazlehurst, Ben Poole, Penny Poole, Sarah Lilly

3. To approve minutes of February 22nd 2007 Meeting

Notes previously circulated to participants of that meeting were agreed as a correct record of the meeting. Minutes of that meeting and Agenda for this meeting are not printed out as they are circulated by e-mail and are available to download from www.sawbridgeworth.com
 Paper copies are available for those not on the net.

4. Matters Arising from last meeting

No matters arising.

5. Partnership (STP) Short Progress report

Joseph Fitzgerald gave a short PowerPoint presentation on the role of the STP and progress date on the theme of 'a consensus of the willing with a can do attitude'
 Facts were presented on the daily traffic flows and those who bypass us without interaction, how competition to retail in SBW is from without and not within.
 An outline of various sector objectives and the overall achievements of the STP were itemised.

New Retail thinking in SBW and what 'Partnership' means with examples from Budgens www.sawbridgeworthbudgens.com and Gowan Gallery were touched on. New ways of working in the STP were highlighted and the high value capital already utilised by individuals, businesses and schools in moving projects forward in the STP at a rapid pace was something that needs recognition. The presentation ended with the unlocked potential in our midst, in other words the 'SBW assets waiting to be promoted'. We have got to join up the dots of our SBW offer with all the transport systems that could serve us better.

6. Report from Working Groups

Business Plan (BP)

Charles Wall reported on progress of business plan – structure agreed, building from basic points further and further into detail with complete links to action templates, past research findings etc. File management is becoming an issue – we are looking into options including possible web solutions.

The Business Plan needs forward thinking statements for the Environment Group to include Objectives for the group over short, medium and long term. Discussion of this led to creation of mini Working Group to create these for the purposes of the Business Plan. Stephanie will lead this group and stated that Alan Trebby was not able to attend meeting but would like to assist with environmental issues. Joseph stated that Environment Group needs to include accessibility and inclusiveness for all.

A proposal has been made to estimate the value of the time that has been put in to the STP to date through all of the volunteered resources. This will help to illustrate the value and strength of the support within STP

Tourism

Gill Hawkins was unable to attend and Joseph gave her report on the work to date in the group.

An audit of all brochures and leaflets relating to tourism in Sawbridgeworth, was underway, Brian Rochester gave an overview of the actual reprint status. 'Rights of Way' brochure is a great leaflet that shows you how to walk around SBW and is in much demand. Joyce Vincent reported on a 'leaflet swap' event and found that many other communities, including Cambridge, were very interested in leaflets about SBW.

To co-ordinate SBW oriented websites and links offering visitor and tourist information a search of relevant websites has been carried out (Stephanie) with the aim of developing a web-based marketing strategy. Signage; we have revisited the areas (Monya and Joseph) already identified as requiring improvement by the previous signage audit 2006, covering road signage, finger posts and town centre signage to shops. This was necessary to ensure that no additional signs have been erected since the surveys were carried out. Once exact details are documented, we will open negotiations with officers to progress signage requirements to satisfactory implementation.

Roger Beeching learned from a recent meeting with BAA that they would like to display leaflets from SBW in Stansted airport; he also mentioned that there were two videos created for the millennium about SBW. Simon Dennis will work on finding someone to convert this film to more modern format.

Paul Pullin encouraged the broader perception that tourism also includes the money that visitors spend in local businesses

It was agreed that it is of paramount importance that we now take the momentum forward into accomplishments and not fall at the same 'stumbling blocks' that previous groups have.

Farmers' Market

Lesley Hines gave a comprehensive and detailed report on the long list of plans rolling out to stage the first Farmers' Market on May 5th 2007. A summary follows.

- • Licence has been secured.
- • Risk assessment has been completed
- • Market is confirmed for Saturday 5th May – 9:30 – 1:30
- • Promotion and advertising is under way – leaflets are being printed for free, press release is completed and firm commitments have been obtained from press for coverage
- • Producers are being recruited starting with most local and then moving out from SBW. Now collecting 'certificates to trade' and selecting produce areas we would like to see,
- • Image of layout that is planned for FM was shown and discussed.
- • Before and during event footfall surveys.
- • A direct approach to get the local retailers to work with FM.

Discussion followed on other ways to promote from simultaneous music event to costumes etc. There is still a need for 'grass roots' help to get signs posted and spread the message. 'Big time word of mouth'. Additionally, we will need volunteers with putting up signs, promoting via the school and leaflet distribution (10,000 copies)

The Farmers' Market and the May Fayre should be publicised together. Concern was expressed about involvement of other local organisations in this event and this was quickly clarified in that several of these organisations had been approached and given priority in attendance, to take up this offer or not was a matter for them.

Retail (RWG)

Chrissy Young provided an up beat and wide ranging report on the actions and achievements of the Retail Working Group. Action templates have been created for all the Objectives in this sector.

Coupon Scheme is to be launched to coincide with the Farmers' Market where SBW Businesses make offers to attract customers, Chrissy will start recruiting retailers. Help is needed to get more local businesses signed up

This well timed initiative will help to maximise publicity for the retailers and retailer outlay costs will only be the value of the discount they offer. It is hoped to run the scheme every other month coinciding with FM.

Empty Shops

The group want to fill empty display space. If participants know Landlords of some of those premises then please get in touch 'Empty shop windows' initiative needs help to source and contact the landlords to gain access to the empty shops so that the windows can be cleaned and possibly decorated

Retail + STP Website Paul Gravelle and others are developing a website for STP with strong retail focus – Joseph demonstrated the concept. This will be an innovative approach to promoting retail in SBW, a tool to advertise all businesses with an interaction with each participating business. There will be potential for participants (group) to update the site according to their needs at any given time.

The concept needs further development and when mock up is ready we show what is possible and this will be taken to businesses to get their support. It is hoped at that stage a link to the way it operates can be set up for interested parties so as to encourage participation.

Next step, need people to help with development of content. Need retailers to put some money into this. If enough businesses get involved it might only cost £20--30 each per annum.

Paul Pullin offered to speak to Paul Gravelle about initial funding for website from East Herts Economic Development fund to get it past first line development.

Community and Culture.

This Working Group now consists of Carole Wall, Nicky & Gary Needham, Charles Wall, and new members Vicky Young, Roger Beeching and Joyce Vincent. It is hoped that they will be able to produce an outline of Objectives for the STP Business Plan to be incorporated for the target date of April 16th.

Gary Needham suggested: Sports clubs should join the Community and Culture group. Manor of Groves, Football, Cricket, Tennis, Golf Club and Sports Association. Gary will approach the clubs.

7. STP next steps:

Paul Pullen says STP approach and progress is very impressive Project management method is the way to get things done. He offered Project Management training through East Herts. Group spokespeople could send Action Plans to Paul Pullen he or a colleague can help make suggestions for improvement;

STP Logo creation, Joseph showed the basis of an idea and the possibility of including Leventhorpe School is to be followed up by Charles Wall. It was suggested that we hold a competition and use the press coverage to gain interest. A brief for the logo will need to be drawn up and if there is a wish to incorporate the SBW Town Crest then permission will need to be sought of the Town Council

8. Election of Treasurer and Press Officer

- Keith Jacques was nominated, seconded and elected by unanimous vote to be Interim Treasurer.
- Fiona and Lyndon Wootton were nominated, seconded and elected by unanimous vote to be Press Officers.

9. Any other Business

Paul Gravelle requested that a questionnaire be circulated to determine the consensus about what area of coverage the website should include (streets, business areas).

A proposal to place a telephone mast on London road was brought to the attention of the STP just prior to the meeting there was insufficient time to formulate a group response, participants were asked to consider the matter individually and respond accordingly. The details will be circulated to all participants in the days following this meeting.

10. Date & Venue of next meeting.

Is set for Thursday 10th of May at 7.30 same Venue unless otherwise advised.