

Chair – Peter Jesper
Chamber Representative – Maggie Hall
Guest Speaker – Philip Lunn, Lateral Property Group.
Attached – Meeting Agenda (Inc. Steering Committee and Communication Notes) & Group Aims & Objectives.

1. Welcome & Thanks:

Peter welcomed 52 attendees to the meeting (an excellent turnout) and on behalf of HTCDG, extended his thanks to Hazel Bone and Rachel Ellis of Betty's for their kind provision (once again) of the Imperial Suite for the meeting. Housekeeping matters were addressed with attendees being asked to sign in and acknowledge that the meeting was a 'private and closed' event with the content of the main presentation being off the record. No press, media or declaration of interests were given.

2. Steering Committee [SC]:

Peter introduced the new SC to the meeting (Details on the back of the attached agenda and noting apologies from Mark Lancaster, Granville Simpson & Sarah Beaini) and he expressed his gratitude for their time, support and commitment thus far. Specific projects lead by some of the SC members would become apparent later in the update. The SC have published a set of aims and objectives for the group (enclosed with the meeting handout and to be published soon on the chamber website) and have clearly stated that the chief activity of the group is to be around lobbying activity on behalf and with the support and input of Town Centre [TC] businesses.

The next Steering Committee meeting will be on 16th November, so if you have a contribution or have any comments regarding the group, its initiatives, tonight's meeting or anything else, then please send it to talk@harrogatetowncentre.org

3. Group Update:

Peter then reported on activity of the group since the inaugural meeting, alluding to the results of the SWOT and initiatives analysis members were asked to participate in during September (see below). Members were also asked for their participation in all matters TC and provide comment, evidence and ideas resulting from issues surrounding their business locations in the TC and to recognise the communication notes on the reverse of the attached agenda ("The quality and weight that the group will bring to future lobbying will be directly proportionate to the quality and weight of the representations members make to the steering committee"). Email is the preferred method of communication with the SC and the Chamber, So members were asked to submit their contributions using the new email address (talk@harrogatetowncentre.org). Peter also requested that members should join the HTCDG Linked-In Group, check out the chamber website (www.harrogatechamber.org) and consider the many benefits of Chamber membership and participation for their businesses.

4. Initiative Activity So Far includes:

- a. Parking Charges: Over 82% of responders flagged Parking charges and issues as a major concern to their business. Many other provincial towns are now receiving support in various ways from their councils; including North Lincolnshire, Bridlington, Selby, Scarborough, Grantham and Stamford. Peter has formally written to chamber with this feedback. The Chamber Officers achieved a deferment of the introduction of higher off-street parking charges from September until the New Year. We then raised the issue very strongly at the recent Chamber Liaison meeting with Harrogate Borough Council's Director of Development Services. In addition Brian Dunsby raised our objections to increased parking charges at the North Yorkshire County Council Harrogate Area Committee Meeting, questioning why Harrogate and Scarborough should be charged even more for on street parking when other towns in the County have free on street parking all year round. Peter has also had dialogue with the Council's economic development unit about presenting proposals that would assist and support TC retailers next year (too late for action this year but they would now like to consider our ideas). Peter re-enforced the need for member contribution/evidence/feedback here.

- b. Town Centre Signage: Over 73% of responders identified poor TC signage as an issue for their businesses. Granville Simpson (Chamber Past President and SC member) has volunteered to re-visit a signage scheme that he presented to the council 3 years ago that was subsequently rejected due to a lack of funding. Peter requested member contribution by way of thoughts, opinions and identification of signage issues.
- c. Tourist Information: 69% of responders ticked Tourist Information [TI] as an area of concern; identifying with Peter's comment "If your business is acting as a frustrated satellite tourist information office . . .". SC member Mike Procter has volunteered to collate and report on TI matters (locations, service etc.). Again member feedback and examples are essential to move this forward.
- d. Buy Local Campaign: SC member Sarah Beaini has taken on this project and is already looking at several different schemes run in other towns. More news to follow shortly.
- e. Seasonal Opening Hours: John Fox's Harrogate@ Christmas scheme has done excellent work for the TC this year and on the back of this, several traders have enquired as to what other traders were opening/closing during the festive period. We agreed to try to co-ordinate and publish store times on the Chamber website and SC member Sue Savill had agreed to work on this. Consequently, the group was emailed on 19th October, but the response from members was poor. A reminder will be sent out again shortly – Please respond if appropriate.
- f. Street & Farmers Markets: Issues regarding location, frequency and disruption caused have been raised and SC member Andrea Thornborrow has agreed to front this project in the New Year. If you have issues regarding markets, please feed back to us ASAP.
- g. What's On In Town: Peter has begun work with Harrogate Chamber to try to co-ordinate a rolling calendar of events for publication by the Chamber so traders can see what is coming to town and plan accordingly. More news to follow.

5. Main Presentation:

Peter introduced Philip Lunn of Lateral Group, who then presented his vision for Harrogate through his development ideas for the Cenotaph, Parliament Street, Montpellier, Crown areas of the TC. Full detail was not minuted and will arrive in the public Domain after Christmas. Peter chaired a lively and mixed Q&A session which ended at 7.45pm.

6. Close:

Peter gave the final thanks and reiterated the need for communication and contribution. Informal networking continued until 8.15pm.

Kind regards

Peter J.

Peter C. Jesper

Chamber Vice President
Project Leader – Town Centre Development Group
Direct Line: 01423 877933, Mobile: 07889 117822
Email: peter.jesper@jespers.co.uk



HARROGATE CHAMBER OF TRADE & COMMERCE
P O Box 8, Dept T2, HARROGATE HG2 8XB, UK
Tel: 01423 879208 Fax: 01423 870025
Website: www.harrogatechamber.org