

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
COLNE TOWN CENTRE FORUM
HELD AT COLNE TOWN HALL
ON 13th OCTOBER, 2015**

PRESENT –

Graham Wharton (Chairman – in the Chair)

<i>Naz Alam</i>	<i>Colne Talk</i>
<i>Sandra Fernandez</i>	<i>Pendle Belles</i>
<i>Frank Murray</i>	<i>Pendle Belles</i>
<i>Ashley Sutcliffe</i>	<i>Live Like The Boy/Colne Town Council</i>
<i>Ame Barker</i>	<i>Funky Gifts</i>
<i>Becca Barker</i>	<i>Funky Gifts</i>
<i>Suzanne Cockshott</i>	<i>Colne Children's Centre</i>
<i>Councillor S. E. Cockburn-Price</i>	<i>Pendle Borough Council/Colne Town Council</i>
<i>Colin Unwin</i>	<i>About Coffee Ltd.</i>
<i>Linda Roberts</i>	<i>12 Bar</i>
<i>Mark Bateman</i>	<i>The Bookshop</i>
<i>Maria Birkett</i>	<i>EShoes</i>
<i>Zoe Dickinson</i>	<i>Let's Make Something Beautiful</i>
<i>Ruth Crompton</i>	<i>The Dressing Room</i>
<i>Pete Jagger</i>	<i>Stell's Famous Pet Sotre</i>
<i>Tracy Jordan</i>	<i>Text Styles</i>

Also in attendance:

<i>Paul Collins</i>	<i>Regeneration Officer, Pendle Borough Council</i>
<i>Jane Watson</i>	<i>Senior Committee Administrator, Pendle Borough Council</i>

(Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D. E. Lord and A. R. Greaves, Ian Varley (Colne Markets Manager) and Lara Oddie).

1. MINUTES

AGREED

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 1st September, 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2. MATTERS ARISING

Paul Collins reported that if anyone required any additional blue parking discs they should contact Sandra Farnell in Neighbourhood Services on telephone 661053 or alternatively let Paul know and he would distribute some.

3. GREAT BRITISH HIGH STREET COMPETITION

It was reported that Colne had been shortlisted in the final three in the Market Town category of the Great British High Street Competition. Paul Collins said that people could visit the website and vote, this represented 50% of the marks with the other 50% being awarded following the judges' visit. Ten days' notice would be given for the visit and it was anticipated this would be before the end of October. The Forum then discussed ways of 'showcasing' the town during the visit which it was hoped would be on a Wednesday as this was a market day.

Colne In Bloom had said they would help 'spruce' up the town the day before the visit. A video of events which had taken place in the town was to be put together to show to the judges and a walkabout with interviews with a cross section of shopkeepers, including market traders, was also planned. Councillor Cockburn-Price said the Town Council could look at hiring street entertainers on the day of the visit and it was suggested that market traders be asked to erect bunting and possibly spread out across the empty stalls to help improve the atmosphere in the market hall.

Forum members were encouraged to dress their shop windows for the visit and it was suggested that this be themed, possibly in red, white and blue which were the colours of the Competition. Paul Collins said he would send an email round once he had been notified of the judges' visit.

On behalf of the Forum Pete Jagger congratulated the Forum Team who had submitted the bid. He also encouraged everyone to spread the word about voting for Colne on the Competition web site. It was acknowledged that people could vote more than once and that they should be encouraged to do so.

Paul Collins said that Colne had the backing of Visit Lancashire Tourist Board and that the 2BR radio station had recently been to the town to take photographs in connection with the competition.

Concerns were raised that the empty shops, particularly the former Blockbuster unit, would have a negative effect on the judges. Ashley Sutcliffe explained that in the breakdown of the bid it was explained that empty shops were to be expected. He said it would also be acknowledged that every effort was being taken to try to address the problem and bring the property back into use.

4. EVENTS

Paul Collins asked the Forum for feedback on the **Tour of Britain Cycle Race** which had taken place on 7th September, 2015. The general feeling was the event had been a huge success with lots of positive comments from people visiting the shops. The television coverage of the event had been shown worldwide and showcased the Borough to its full potential. People from Kent, Australia, America and France had visited the town since the event.

Councillor Cockburn-Price said that the Town Council was planning a **Halloween** event in the town centre. She said there would be lots of 'free' activities for people to do and shopkeepers were being asked to take part in a shop window competition. There would be various street entertainers as well as food stalls selling autumnal themed foods. It was suggested that shopkeepers dress up in Halloween costumes as well.

Colne Town Council were preparing an **events calendar for 2016** and asked members of the Forum to let them know of any planned events which could be included on the calendar. The calendar would then be distributed to every household in Colne. Events would also be posted on the Town Council's website.

5. CHRISTMAS 2015

Ashley Sutcliffe said that the Christmas Lights Switch on event was planned for Saturday 28th November, 2015. The procession would set off at 5.30 p.m. from the Crown and move up to Hartley Square. The switch on was planned for 7pm followed by a firework display. Last year between 10 and 12 thousand people attend the event so publicity for this year's event was already planned. The Food Festival would also be taking place and food stalls would be lining the streets from Barclays Bank up to the market car park.

6.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Paul Collins gave an update on the position regarding the proposed installation of free **Wi-Fi** in the town centre. He said a quote of just over £19,000 had been received from Wi-Fi Spark for the scheme to be installed and then there would be a monthly cost on top of that. The issue of whether or not to proceed with this scheme was going to be considered by the Executive at its next meeting on 22nd October. Obviously the cost was a major concern. The Forum was advised that the current scheme was no longer fully operational and replacement parts were no longer available.

Councillor Cockburn-Price said that Pendle Council had asked the Town Council to consider taking on the responsibility for this provision. She said that this issue was to be discussed further at the Town Council's next meeting on 14th October and she invited anyone who was interested in this issue to attend.

The Chairman asked if anything further was happening regarding the provision of hanging signs. Paul Collins said that he had approached a number of contractors to provide the signs but had experienced problems with them when it came to the design stage. The Chairman suggested a different design be considered such as two brackets with a 'slot' in sign which could be changed when needed. It was agreed that Paul would investigate this and report back at the next meeting.

Paul Collins said that the Council was running a Business Month and local business people would be invited to attend a series of free workshops, drop-ins and seminars aimed at helping them get the best out of their business. Paul said he would email everyone about what was available.

7.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

AGREED

That the next meeting of the Colne Town Centre Forum be held at 5.30 p.m. on Tuesday 19th January, 2016 at Colne Town Hall.

Chairman _____