





**Brighton & Hove
City Council**

Overview & Scrutiny

Title:	Scrutiny Panel on Support for the Retail Sector
Date:	27 February 2012
Time:	6.00pm
Venue	Jubilee Library – Conference Room 2
Members:	Councillors: Mitchell (Chair) MacCafferty C Theobald
Contact:	Sharmini Williams Scrutiny Officer 29-0451 sharmini.williams@brighton-hove.gov.uk

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AGENDA

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|-----------|-----------------------|---------------|
| 1. | Procedural Business | 1 - 2 |
| 2. | Chairs Communications | |
| 3. | Witnesses | 3 - 16 |

6pm – Gavin Stewart – Brighton Business Improvement District (BID) Manager

6.20pm – The Red Bed Company, Portland Road, Hove

6.40pm – Peter Allinson – Vice Chair North Laine Traders Association, Temptation Café

7pm - Martin Searle – Development Manager, East Sussex, Federation of Small Businesses

7.20pm – Alan Moon - Cocoon & Nigel Haigh - Willow, George Street, Hove

- 4.** Any other business

Further meeting dates:

Thursday, 1 March, 6pm Jubilee Library, Conference Room 2

Tuesday, 6 March, 4.30pm, at Hove Town Hall, Committee Room 3

The City Council actively welcomes members of the public and the press to attend its meetings and holds as many of its meetings as possible in public. Provision is also made on the agendas for public questions to committees and details of how questions can be raised can be found on the website and/or on agendas for the meetings.

Agendas and minutes are published on the council's website www.brighton-hove.gov.uk. Agendas are available to view five working days prior to the meeting date.

Meeting papers can be provided, on request, in large print, in Braille, on audio tape or on disc, or translated into any other language as requested.

For further details and general enquiries about this meeting contact Sharmini Williams, (01273 29-0451 – email sharmini.williams@brighton-hove.gov.uk) or email scrutiny@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Date of Publication – Thursday, 23 February 2012

Agenda Item 1

PROCEDURAL BUSINESS.

A. Declaration of Substitutes

Where a Member of the Committee is unable to attend a meeting for whatever reason, a substitute Member (who is not a Cabinet Member) may attend and speak and vote in their place for that meeting. **Substitutes are not allowed on Scrutiny Select Committees or Scrutiny Panels.**

The substitute Member shall be a Member of the Council drawn from the same political group as the Member who is unable to attend the meeting, and must not already be a Member of the Commission. The substitute Member must declare themselves as a substitute, and be minuted as such, at the beginning of the meeting or as soon as they arrive.

B. Declarations of Interest

- (1) To seek declarations of any personal or personal & prejudicial interests under Part 2 of the Code of Conduct for Members in relation to matters on the Agenda. Members who do declare such interests are required to clearly describe the nature of the interest.
- (2) A Member of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission, an Overview and Scrutiny Committee or a Select Committee has a prejudicial interest in any business at meeting of that Committee where –
 - (a) that business relates to a decision made (whether implemented or not) or action taken by the Executive or another of the Council's committees, sub-committees, joint committees or joint sub-committees; and
 - (b) at the time the decision was made or action was taken the Member was
 - (i) a Member of the Executive or that committee, sub-committee, joint committee or joint sub-committee and
 - (ii) was present when the decision was made or action taken.
- (3) If the interest is a prejudicial interest, the Code requires the Member concerned:-
 - (a) to leave the room or chamber where the meeting takes place while the item in respect of which the declaration is made is under consideration. [There are three exceptions to this rule which are set out at paragraph (4) below].
 - (b) not to exercise executive functions in relation to that business and
 - (c) not to seek improperly to influence a decision about that business.
- (4) The circumstances in which a Member who has declared a prejudicial interest is permitted to remain while the item in respect of which the interest has been declared is under consideration are:-

(a) for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the item, provided that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, whether under a statutory right or otherwise, BUT the Member must leave immediately after he/she has made the representations, answered the questions, or given the evidence,

(b) if the Member has obtained a dispensation from the Standards Committee, or

(c) if the Member is the Leader or a Cabinet Member and has been required to attend before an Overview and Scrutiny Committee or Sub-Committee to answer questions.

C. Declaration of party whip

To seek declarations of the existence and nature of any party whip in relation to any matter on the Agenda as set out at paragraph 8 of the Overview and Scrutiny Ways of Working.

D. Exclusion of press and public

To consider whether, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, or the nature of the proceedings, the press and public should be excluded from the meeting when any of the following items are under consideration.

NOTE: Any item appearing in Part 2 of the Agenda states in its heading the category under which the information disclosed in the report is confidential and therefore not available to the public.

A list and description of the exempt categories is available for public inspection at Brighton and Hove Town Halls.

NORTH LAINE BRIGHTON

Welcome to North Laine - The Soul Of The City! - www.northlaine.co.uk



David Sewell
Chair



Peter Allinson
Vice-Chair

February 2012

Latest news...

Firstly, a belated "Happy New Year" to all our fellow traders in the North Laine.

We hope that you had a busy Christmas and are looking forward to 2012. We thought that this would be a good time to update everyone on our latest activities and help you to get involved. It is also time to renew memberships and invite more people to join us.

For those of you who are new to the North Laine, or perhaps haven't worked with us for a while – a quick summary! North Laine Traders' Association (NLTA) has been operating for 22 years now, helping traders work together to make us all successful. We are a membership organisation, with over 100 traders from this fantastic part of Brighton. We have four "open" meetings a year so we can catch up socially, meet our neighbours and plan future activities. We have street reps in each main road. These are currently:

New Road: David, Pavilion Garden Café (Chair)
Bond Street: Pat, Animal House & Peter, Jabayard
Church Street: David, Marks & Co. (Treasurer)
Gardner Street: Peter, Temptation (Vice Chair), Amanda, Capers & Colin, Komedia
North Road: Gill, Painting Pottery Café & Steve, Leo Frames
Kensington Gardens: currently vacant
Gloucester Road: Alys, Nanodobbie
Sydney Street: currently vacant
Trafalgar Street: Melissa, City College, Miranda, Chilli Pepper Pete, Stefan, Amsterdammers

If you would like to become a street rep, let us know.

Last year, we set out ambitions for our organisation and made excellent progress against our goals. Here is a brief summary of what we are doing.

Current activities:

Promoting the North Laine

Our website (www.northlaine.co.uk) has been a key focus. We are transforming this into a vehicle to attract new visitors to the area and bring them to our businesses. This involves re-vamping the branding, reorganising the site's information and creating much needed new content.

Huge thanks go out to many traders who generously donated extra funds for us to undertake a branding exercise with a local web agency. The results of this will be implemented early this year, aiming to launch the new website later in 2012.

Members will be able to present and update their business profiles and link to and from the site to drive custom to us all. As soon as the site is ready, your street reps will be talking to you about how you can get your information included. Very exciting!

We have liaised with the council to identify new ways of signposting the North Laine and this will be a key focus this year. We are now better connected with tourism organisation, Visit Brighton, and have once again secured discounted rates to our members.

We have an excellent story to tell in Brighton and Hove and will continue to do so!

Negotiating great deals for members

With so many of us, there is huge potential to act collectively and use our numbers to benefit individuals. We have made excellent progress this year!

NLTA members can now get much lower preferential rates with First Data for card handling services – potentially a significant annual saving that can impact directly on your bottom line.

We have also negotiated discounted parking rates with NCP which provides traders with substantial savings compared to normal daily tariffs. More ideas are in the pipeline!

Working together, sharing information

This is one of the key reasons for being a member. This year we have shared all manner of things – from the price of milk, latest developments in council planning and sharing of information to inform and challenge rent reviews.

We have actively engaged with the council's meetings and working parties, gathering information on behalf of other members. We have also set up the NLTA Forum at www.northlainetraders.co.uk to help all members to communicate, engage and continue to discuss the future. All members will be receiving a unique login shortly.

Renewing your membership:

Ensuring adequate funding for our activities, including development of the website and promotion of the North Laine is essential. After consultation with our members, we have made the decision to raise the membership fee to the equivalent of £5 per month (£60 per annum).

Renewing your membership or joining us couldn't be easier. On the back of this newsletter is a membership form – just fill this in, return it to us and we'll do the rest.

Many members have requested to set up an annual standing order. If you wish to do this, just fill in a bank mandate form, and return it to us for processing.

Next meeting:

Our next general meeting is at **Komedia on Tuesday 7th February at 6.00 for 6.30** and we would love to see you there.

Once again, best wishes for 2012 and we hope to see you soon. **David and Peter**

Themes emerging from live chat social media - Support for the Retail Sector Scrutiny Panel

Themes	
	Multiple chain stores
1.	Supermarkets take money out of the local economy.
2.	Stop allowing Supermarkets and large chains to open, it ruins character and takes trade from local retailers. It must not be allowed to come to Brighton.
3.	Big business isn't always a bad thing. Brands are welcomed to areas which require regeneration such as London Road, yet are attacked when they look to open in other areas of the city. Supermarkets and convenience stores are here to stay: people like them, we all use them, they do what they do so very well. Perhaps it would be better to engage with them. Encourage them – through legislation if possible – to support community groups, to stock more local produce (perhaps as a condition of their liquor license?). Our city centre only has Christmas lights because the businesses within the BID choose to pay for them, and I dare say that the multiples along Western Road are heavily subsidising the lighting infrastructure of North Laine through their financial contribution. Brighton is renowned for its 'different' thinking so lets think differently rather than throw all of our toys out of the pram every time Tesco or Starbucks are mentioned.
4.	As a north laine trader, I strongly agree with your comments, but wonder if Brighton had more of a unique selling point (USP) 10 years ago than it does today .it has been very sad to see the demise in trading conditions ,in Brighton, and the rise of the mainstream, which is resulting in this city losing its unique edge.
5.	Independent – unique – retail is a very broad church, taking in professional retailers through to those with 'a good idea' and some cash. It's very (too?) easy for us all to gang together and blame Big Business for the demise of unique Brighton. Brands shouldn't be made the whipping boy; a lot of the blame for the problems in the city's independent retail sector lies on our own doorstep.
6.	Protect independent and local businesses. Put a stop to supermarket sprouting like weeds at every corner and tax them heavier than small businesses. They can afford it!
7.	Find a way to stop supermarkets a) opening stores everywhere and b) ignoring planning rules when they do open. See Tesco's disgraceful work at Palmeira Square or the way they block Queens Road to do deliveries as an example. It costs a fortune to live, drive, socialise etc. in Brighton, and we all put up with the cost because the city has so much character, but I now pass 4 Sainsbury's and 3 Tesco stores on my walk to work, its getting depressingly like much cheaper high streets out there.
8.	Please stop allowing supermarkets to open in empty retail spaces and do we really need anymore mini market/newsagents/off licences?
9.	Want to know how to protect our retail charm. don't give permission for starbucks/tesco et al for starters
Rates & Rents	
1.	Business Rate Relief needs to continue and maybe extend to above the existing valuation limit. There needs to be more control on rents....why are so many properties sitting empty even in prime retail locations? There should not be business rate exemption on empty properties. This will make landlords charge more affordable rents and adjust to the tough retail environment that businesses are facing.

2.	Reduce Business Rates for small, independent traders, promoting the unique qualities of the North and South Laines. Brighton's infamous, unique retail sector will lose its character if more of the small, independent retailers are forced to close. If we become one massive Churchill Square, why would visitors come?
3.	Small businesses are desperately handicapped by add-on taxes and boundless expenses. To run a shop in Brighton today you must consider; Rent, Rates, Business Insurance, Public Liability Insurance, A Board fees, PPL/PPS – Music Licensing for background music, Table/Chair/Street License fees, Commercial Waste at £2 per bag, Recycling fees at £2 per bag, Christmas Lights and Decoration fee, Excessive, Parking costs for staff - £10 per day approx. Wages and Holiday pay, PAYE, Book-keeping fees, Account fees (to finish books) Income Tax, Corporation Tax (for Limited Companies) VAT – 20%, Excessive Electricity Bills, Water/Sewage Rates, Telephone/Internet, Bills, Security. And finally ... Stock, if there's any money left! I would advise people against joining the retail sector just to be trapped and to feed the local councils coffers etc. Retail Entrapment.
4.	Ideally lower rates!
5.	Rent control for small shops and businesses in Brighton. The ratcheting up of rents in the North Laine has driven several friends of mine out - they're doing well online but it doesn't help keep Brighton alive.
6.	Keep costs down so that our present retail sector can remain open. By cutting business rates and not increasing car parking charges, that would free up much needed cash flows for local businesses.
	Council
1.	The Council should have more face to contact with retailers. We need a dedicated Retail Carer.
2.	The council needs to decide if they want to see more pound shops and supermarkets or whether to support independent businesses that create a destination favorable to tourists and surrounding towns
3.	The council needs to interact with the businesses and start to experience what's on their doorstep. Acknowledge and support existing and developing business networks, there are lots of them and most are being led by hard working volunteers.
4.	It is marvelous that the council is opening a debate with small retailers. When did that ever happen before?.....Oh yes round about this time last year! And the year before and..before.....And what was the outcome?....not a lot really. Some money was spent employing consultants to give advice on window dressing. That's a bit like painting the sails because there's a hole in the bottom of the boat. Joking aside it is good that this debate has been kicked off but it will be a fruitless (no worse than that - destructive) exercise if the council fails to listen and take appropriate action. I live in hope... have done for the last 10 years. And if there is a hint of cynicism in my words it is because I'm still waiting for some appropriate action. I have a long list of proposals but will save them for the meeting.
5.	My own experience over the past five years with the city council has been incredibly frustrating. Whether officers or councillors, the organisation has no apparent will to engage with the private sector unless it is entirely on its own terms. The council appears quite happy to take the credit and spin out the PR value, but does little to nurture and support entrepreneurship (throwing a pittance at the

	<p>Chamber for business guides and lifebelt activity really doesn't count). Either a rapid shift needs to be made (forced?) in the culture of the council, or non-statutory services need to be seriously evaluated as to whether they are contributing to the economy and culture of the city, or are they strangling it. It seems to me self-evident that the independent retail sector is best served by people who live in and understand the world of commerce.</p> <p>This forum is all well and good, however I suspect many of the people I work with in Brighton – all of whom have a long history in this sector – are so jaded by their dealings with the city council that they won't bother wasting their time responding to this. Despite the recession, Brighton & Hove appears to be in a good place at the moment, but I fear that the lack of understanding of, and engagement with, the private sector that drives the economy of the city – employing residents, creating reasons whether retail or hospitality-based for visitors to spend – will ultimately be to all our detriments.</p>
	<p>City Centre Manager</p> <p>1. It is shocking that a city the size of Brighton & Hove no longer has a City Centre Management team. The BID ('Brilliant Brighton') has a manager who is responsible for those streets/businesses within the Brighton town centre business improvement district, however since funding was cut from the Business Forum, we no longer have an organisation looking after the retail sector in the city. Having very recently met with the combined Town Centre Initiative and BID in Worthing, who run an impressive public/private partnership, there is an awful lot Brighton can learn from our smaller neighbours on how to run an effective, integrated city centre. Brighton needs an independent TCI immediately to represent city centre businesses – an identifiable person or persons who understand how businesses think and their needs (security, waste management, promotions, street cleansing...). This must have the support of the city council, even when it is critical of council actions or political policy.</p>
	<p>St. James' Street</p> <p>1. St. James's and the area is often overlooked when it comes to decisions about retail in the city. The local plan seems to be ignored when it comes to retail which specified there should be a majority of A1 outlets. At the moment A1 is far from the majority. A few years ago the Gay Business Forum carried out a survey of the area and submitted a visualisation scheme for pedestrian priority. The majority were in favour of such a scheme. The street is very narrow and not suitable for the volume of buses. These could simply be rerouted via the two parallel roads, Eastern Road or Marine Parade and pick up the existing route at Lower Rock Gardens. This would enable the businesses and residents in using the area for community activity, such as street farmers markets.</p>
	<p>Pedestrianise</p> <p>1. On a more selfish note push the full pedestrianisation of East Street through to really encourage easy free flowing north (station) to south (seafront) pedestrians /shoppers/diners.</p> <p>2. Good to pedestrianise St James's Street and only allow buses and taxis along Church Road.</p> <p>3. Pedestrianise St James' Street, traffic here detracts from the retail attraction of shopping here and opens up a wealth of possibilities for</p>

	<p>independent traders to have markets and stalls at weekends plus community events. It is dangerously narrow and overcrowded as it stands. The bus stop outside Morrisons is not needed, buses can travel along the seafront and turn up at lower rock gardens. People travelling in to the area use stops not on St James' Street and so the return journey would prove equally viable. Creating a pedestrianised area here will attract trade, give identity and promote the area. My business is at the bottom of St James' St and would support this.</p>
	<p>Markets</p>
1.	<p>Any suggestion of street markets in Sydney St, will be met with massive resistance!</p>
2.	<p>Themed event markets (ie; Food Market/Chilli Festival/Chocolate Festival etc.) are good, but too expensive for locals to trade at, with little or no profit achievable due to expenses and variables such as the weather.</p>
3.	<p>Markets should be contained to the New Road area away from the shops to avoid taking business from the permanent retailers.</p>
4.	<p>We should promote the markets we have, not open more.</p>
	<p>Food festival</p>
1.	<p>I must point out though that perhaps the perception of the food festival is vastly different from the reality. A pitch at our anchor event – the Big Sussex Market – is £40 for growers, £85 for producers and £200 for hot foods (compare this to another food festival that appeared in Brighton last year that attempted to charge local restaurants £3,500!).</p> <p>Bearing in mind we attract 40-45,000 people over two days at that event alone, it's a safe bet that we deliver a good ROI for any local food business. We are completely unsubsidised by the council (I dare say we could reduce the cost of pitches if we weren't paying the city council a small fortune to use public land), and we only generate income from a couple of events and (very, very hard won) commercial sponsorship activities which then goes to subsidise the infrastructure, promotion and the much wider reach of events and activities that make a 'festival' rather than a 'market'.</p> <p>This city's food festival is now one of the biggest and most influential in the UK, and that has been created by a decade of pretty much voluntary commitment from local business people working together to support the food and hospitality economy. We have a phenomenal marketing and PR machine behind the festival and it's all given for free – our reach is phenomenal: I took a phone interview with the New York Post at the end of January!</p> <p>I'm just one of 15 members of the festival committee and I would say I work at least 30 weeks of the year to deliver our April and September events (and a lot behind the scenes in terms of supply chain and sustainability that people would never see).</p> <p>Always happy to talk with any local food business as to how they can become successfully involved with the festival and make a worthwhile return. We wouldn't have survived for a decade without the ongoing interaction with every level of the local food economy.</p>

	<p>We're very proud that our economic impact study for 2011 showed £4.1m for Brighton and surrounding Sussex.</p> <p>If there was ever a case study of the Big Society in action then I truly believe our city's food festival is it.</p> <p>From the food festivals perspective, it never fails to amaze me how little support (ie. none: in we actually pay the council to use public land to host these free events; there is no will to support a full weekly farmers market... I could go on and on...) we receive from our city council in terms of supporting and promoting small growers, producers and restaurants. Food festivals across the UK are at the heart of local authority economic development policies whereas here we appear to be little more than an inconvenience to the council. Brighton's food festival is now one of the biggest in the UK, attracting 160,000 people in 2011 with an economic impact of £4.1m. Run by a team of volunteers from the business community, we are an entirely sustainable event that, by its very nature, works hand</p>
3.	<p>Brighton is fast becoming a regional foodie hub, with Brighton and Hove food and drink festival showing the way, but they do not get sufficient support from BHCC, they could be much bigger and more regular as the consumer appetite (excuse the pun) for high quality produce is expanding. The commercial trickle down to the surrounding retail community is obvious.</p>
	<p>Parking (Access)</p>
1.	<p>Make parking more accessible/cheaper for visitors and locals and advertise cheap parking where it is provided.</p>
2.	<p>The council shouldn't underestimate the impact of increasing parking fees on the day visitor trade (day tourists from London, shoppers from outer districts and surrounding region). Without serious investment in traffic management and parking infrastructure (and yes that includes the political hot potato that is Park and Ride), we put our independent retail and hospitality sectors at risk by ramping up the cost of parking. We should never be so arrogant to think that Brighton will always be the consumers choice: we do have competition and, as with any market, those competitors will take advantage of any gaps that open up. I haven't heard a single endorsement from local businesses for an increase in parking charges. Unfortunately businesses don't vote Councillors in.</p>
3.	<p>Not increasing car parking charges, that would free up much needed cash flows for local businesses.</p>
	<p>Marketing</p>
1.	<p>Electronic notice boards/maps in Jubilee Square; Centre of information. Close to the Pier/Town Centre, promotes events to visitors.</p>
2.	<p>Offer free pamphlets to visitors, detailing shopping in the North and South Laines and Kemp Town. Include maps.</p>
3.	<p>Create a leaflet drop and information board (solar powered?) at Brighton station detailing local events, shopping and places of interest.</p>
4.	<p>Support tourism initiatives coming from the businesses, don't compete, don't duplicate.</p>
	<p>Recycling</p>
1.	<p>Why not encourage and reduce the costs of recycling for small businesses – Lets walk the Green Talk!</p>

	Organisations
1.	There are very active organisations within the city who support the independent sectors. I am involved in both the Tourism Alliance and the Brighton & Hove Food and Drink Festival, both of which are doing much to promote the independent retail environment.
2.	Keep up the good work Brilliant Brighton, Northlaine.co.uk and Brighton Business partnership.
	Churn
1.	The apparent buoyancy of central Brighton's independent retail sector has been propped up by the inward investment of lifestyle business owners, who are buying into the Brighton 'dream'. If we actually looked hard at the average lifespan of a small retail business in central Brighton, rather than the PR driven numbers game of occupancy/vacancy which the council naturally favours, then I'd say we'd see very significant churn compared, say, to the longevity of businesses in neighbouring areas. Churn is, of course, a bad thing for the stability and resilience of our economy (and failed business owners lives).
	Pop up shops
1.	Pop up shops have been a great way to create buzz over recent years and I'd like to see empty spaces used in this way more.
	Miscellaneous
1.	Retail is changing (internet etc) and small business needs time to adapt.
2.	With convenience stores, Supermarkets and multi-nationals with numerous sites all over the City, appalling rip-off parking, over-zealous parking warden's keen for bonuses – what is our unique retail offer and how different is it from 13 or so years ago? Mainstream Brighton is here.
3.	Are the Green Party alive and well in Brighton? Most people are not aware that this is the first Green Council in the U.K; the message hasn't yet reached street level. There has been no action taken on Green issues and no promotion of Green ethics. An excellent opportunity has been lost.
4.	Our USP a decade ago was that we genuinely had something different. Compare a walk through North Laine now to 10 years ago. The rise of the lifestyle business owner has resulted in functioning retail mutating into seasonal, experience retail (independent but ubiquitous coffee shops and cafés; trinkets and greeting cards). All glorious on a sunny summer weekend when the city is awash with visitors and leisure spending locals, but slightly less wondrous on a wet Wednesday in February.
5	All this talk of keeping Brighton Unique and not main stream but no suggestions, other than keep the big stores out, and how to do this! We feel as a retailer in the North Laine that to bring back that unique feeling Brighton had you need to create the right atmosphere for shoppers, if you look at how the big stores out there spend thousands a year on shopper experience there is obviously some method to their madness.

One of Brighton's untapped resources, buskers, people that go out to entertain the public in return for a few coppers from their audience. This basically amounts to free entertainment, yet anytime a busker sets up on our street (Gardner Street) they are moved on in a matter of minutes, even after drawing a large crowd of people that stop, listen and watch all around our shops, cafés and other services. Why not utilise this 'free' service and allow busker pitches in set parts of certain streets (TfL have done this perfectly in the underground.) Create small areas, marked with paint or some form of stickers, it may even be possible to get a commercial sponsor for the scheme (again similar to TfL) these would be able to be used by buskers for a set period of time each to allow an every changing difference of music, performance etc, maybe 1-2 hours each. This scheme would add to the atmosphere for shoppers in the area helping to keep them longer in retail districts.

Yes I know a lot of shop keepers are going to complain that not every busker is good and they don't like certain types of music but by keeping a allocated time slot it means that if they are bad at worse they are going to be there for an hour or two.

This scheme could be set up relatively cheaply and provide another reason for shoppers to keep visiting and staying in our areas and out of churchill square.

Lets stop moaning about big chains moving in and start making our own solutions! And really the only ones that can stop the big chains moving in are the landlords. Just because the council didn't give Sainsbury's a alcohol licence didn't stop them opening the stores they have!

Comments e-mailed - Support for the Retail Sector Scrutiny Panel

Comments	Date e-mailed
<p>1</p> <p><i>How can Brighton & Hove's unique retail offer be supported, and the impact of high inflation and the economic downturn be mitigated?</i> Anecdotal feedback from out of town customers is that parking charges will put them off returning, or returning as frequently to the town.</p> <p><i>How can the independent retail sector and multiple/larger chains work in partnership to ensure work towards sustaining the viability of the retail sector?</i> The BID tax is an unwelcome burden on small businesses (which mostly vote against it). It is not perceived to off value for money, but pays large salaries to its staff.</p> <p><i>What effective marketing and promotion would benefit the city's retail sector?</i> What Brighton has to offer is well understood – as a town it does not need marketing. . The town should spend time and money in improving access and continuing with its excellent tradition of hosting events like Gay Pride, Beach Concerts, Classic Car events , sporting events etc etc. The events should be publicised according to their need – not the town itself.</p> <p><i>How can retailers, landlords, prospective developers and agents develop the city's retail sector?</i> The council could ask its Conservation officer to delist half of the listed buildings in the Centre. The conservation area rules protect the external appearance – Listing adds lots of expense and undermines viability of businesses who are forced to trade out of these buildings.</p> <p><i>How can regulations and advice regarding the retail sector be utilised and accessed more by retailers?</i> Reduce the number of regulations.</p> <p><i>How could street markets have a more positive impact on retailers?</i> Allow them less frequently</p>	30/1/2012
<p>2</p> <p>Telephoned – wanted more information and wasn't sure about coming to speak.</p> <p>Unfortunately I am unable to attend any of the 3 dates proposed in your email below. I would be happy to come and meet the members of the panel though. I have also attached the Southampton University research I mentioned in my call to you last week.</p>	1/2/2012 8/2/2012
<p>4</p> <p><i>Attached the large food stores report 2012</i> I am a Brighton resident.</p>	2/2/2012

Comments e-mailed - Support for the Retail Sector Scrutiny Panel

	<p>Here are a few thoughts.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pedestrianise the north lanes. It's so much better on a Saturday when there is no vehicular access. Having travelled around Europe, cars are restricted in many town centres and they create an environment for "hanging about" much more. 2. Keep independent shops business rates down 3. Encourage more pop up shops/cafes, street markets, seasonal markets. Especially when the town is busy like the Brighton Festival or The Great Escape. 4. Keep chains out of the lanes. 	
5	<p>23/02/2012 have heard via Gavin Stewart at the Brighton BID that there is to be a panel looking into the retail sector in Brighton & Hove.</p> <p>We trade in both Hove and Brighton, and before Christmas we had an ongoing battle with a Saturday market in George St, Hove. It would be too complicated to go into here but Andrew Wealls or Jim Whitelegg in Licensing would be able to fill you in.</p> <p>I am therefore very disappointed that traders in George St have not been contacted with details of the Scrutiny panel.</p> <p>What steps are the Council taking to make retailers aware of this process? Please don't tell me that you've only told the traders associations, what would be the point of you having another chat with Tony Mernagh and co?</p> <p>Were you aware of the problems a market created in George St?</p> <p>If it would help you, I can tell you now what 90% of retailers will say.....lower rates....no rise in rates in April..... cheaper car parking plus free park and ride for Brighton.....2hrs free voucher parking in Hove (you get the timed voucher from a retail outlet, set the time on it put it on your dashboard, do your shopping and drive home)...no markets.</p> <p>This is not rocket science, this should all have been done already, while you are talking around in circles people will be going out of business.</p>	13/2/2012
6	<p>I'm really pleased to see this initiative as I have championed this cause since setting up the "Unique to Brighton" web directory in 2005.</p> <p>I have responded to 5 of the queries in the attached document. These are a combination of things I have been told by retailers themselves, by locals and visitors who appreciate Brighton's unique retail offer.</p> <p>1. How can Brighton & Hove's unique retail offer be supported, and the impact of high inflation and the economic downturn be mitigated?</p>	15/2/2012

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>As the city's largest employer, Brighton & Hove Council could do more to draw the attention of its own employees to shop locally on its internal network.</i> • <i>Have a workshop to hear & collate ideas of those who responded to this Scrutiny</i> • <i>Learn from successful US initiatives like this one http://www.shoplocally.com/profile/</i> • <i>Allow varied loading/ parking arrangements possible on a micro level? (For example, could loading at Fiveways start at 7am rather than 8am)</i> <p>2. How can the independent retail sector and multiple/larger chains work in partnership to ensure work towards sustaining the viability of the retail sector?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Through Destination Management Initiatives or BIDs</i> <p>3. What effective marketing and promotion would benefit the city's retail sector?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Providing an up to date, online map that shows Brighton and Hove's various parking arrangements.</i> • <i>Random free parking offers</i> • <i>Providing Links to sites like www.uniqueto.co.uk on Visit Brighton</i> <p>4. How can retailers, landlords, prospective developers and agents develop the city's retail sector?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Address the appearance of boarded - up shops right across the city as soon as they are vacant? For example, the art hoardings that were been put up in some places in the city centre in 2007 & 8 were very effective. There are also cheaper ways.</i> • <i>Bring in experts (on, Dan Thompson, e is based in Worthing) from this organisation http://www.artistsandmakers.com/staticpages/index.php/emptyshops</i> <p>5. How can regulations and advice regarding the retail sector be utilised and accessed more by retailers?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Only by speaking to individual retailers face to face and with information flyers.</i>
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