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NEWMARKET VISION E-NEWS LETTER FEBRUARY 2015

A Year of Vision with 20:20 clarity

As Winter passes it is hoped that the Newmarket Vision will Spring into action to accomplish further goals as set out on the list of agreed priorities which can be found here.....

http://westsuffolk.gov.uk/Council/Policies_Strategies_and_Plans/upload/NewmarketVisionAgreedPriorities140917A1.pdf

The six groups which make up Newmarket Vision may well have met over the last month but it's difficult to give a summary and update on a monthly basis if confirmed minutes are not sent to christine.rush@westsuffolk.gov.uk for publication on the web site, so it is vital that this is done (please!) and thank you to those groups that have.

To remind you, the structure of the groups and further information can be found here:

http://westsuffolk.gov.uk/council/policies_strategies_and_plans/newmarketvision.cfm?aud=council

February Updates:

[1] Community Planning Delivery Group

The work of this group has been buoyed by the terms of reference for the **Neighbourhood Plan (NP)** being approved by Newmarket Town Council which means the NP can now be worked on in agreed manner and will report back to the full Town Council on a monthly basis. The first step will be to approve the area for which the NP will cover, should it be just the Parish of Newmarket, include any outlying villages or even the parts of Newmarket that are actually in Cambridgeshire? The designated area has to be approved by the Local Planning Authority following public consultation and a decision should be reached within a maximum of six weeks depending whether the area is to be cross border i.e. Suffolk and Cambridgeshire. All those involved in the NP steering group have yet to meet due to diary difficulties, but it is hoped to have the inaugural meeting imminently. The services of Maroon Planning have been engaged to advise and support in the early stages.

The **ecological corridor** of the Yellow Brick Road and 'Number One Drain' continues to be worked on, with ideas coming from the group, John Smithson and his team together with Jeff Horner (Suffolk County Council Flood and Water Manager). These ideas/aims are to be collated to produce, amongst other things connected to this area, a workable management plan. There are still areas whose ownership has to be identified but again it proves that collaboration between authorities can and does work with the right approach. John Smithson and Jeff

Horner were recently guest speakers to the Steering Group giving a detailed presentation.

Work is ongoing behind the scenes by Officers looking at the **use of buildings to accommodate a number of public and voluntary organisations** in Newmarket, but there is no further update, although, Suffolk Constabulary reported to the Town Council Meeting at the end of February that they are reviewing the property potential of their current Newmarket Station in Vicarage Road.

Whilst the **Open Space/Sports Report** is ongoing too, no further update is available but a Playing Pitch Strategy is being undertaken by consultants for the whole of West Suffolk and an update on this brief will be provided in the near future.

Social housing update has been provided via email from Kim Langley giving details of the provision that Flagship Housing have, whilst there are other agencies that provide housing those figures were not available. Further information to be provided.

[2] Town Centre, Retail, Local Economy and Tourism Delivery Group (TRET)

A meeting held at the end of January was attended by only a few members due to a clash of meetings. It had been hoped to review and update each sub-group's aims and actions to deal with the overlaps but this was postponed until the February meeting at which each group gave a brief update which promoted discussion.....

[A] The Town Centre Group

Guy Smith has made contact with regard to the **signage design for the car parks** and explained that due to lack of resource it was not completed. It was hoped to be in draft form by early February. Mr Smith wished to discuss the draft with Darren Dixon (Car Parks Manager) before discussing with the Town Centre Group. Nothing further was heard but it was reported that Darren Dixon had been a guest at the Newmarket Retailers Association Meeting. The TC group are keen to input to the NED (Newmarket Equine Design (Art for the High Street)) project as still concerned that repair, restoration, tidiness and building foundations to improve and enhance the High Street is vital.

Litter is a specific issue to be addressed and a meeting with the Waste Management department (Mark Walsh) and other interested parties is to be organised in March.

The **Townscape Heritage** programme to help communities improve their built historic environment is a project the TC group are very keen to pursue and Boyd Nicholas will register the initial interest form. If accepted by the Heritage Fund, a full bid would need to be prepared identifying buildings and suggestions for improvement.

West Suffolk Shop Front and Advertisement Design Guidance – Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is progressing through West Suffolk Councils and will be used as an SPD very soon which is very welcomed news. Whilst this will not have influence over existing permissions it will for any application made after completed adoption of the document.

Joanne Rogers aided the group's thoughts on the problem of **empty shops** which does not reflect well on Newmarket and certainly does not enhance the High

Street. It is a national problem and in fact Newmarket has a lower number of empty shops than the national average and one big local factor is that Newmarket business rates are under Cambridgeshire with a CB post code compared to Bury St Edmunds with an IP post code. Overall it was felt that the expertise required to address this issue should come from the Retail and Local Economy groups but have ideas of some shops that perhaps could be encouraged.

Councillor Peter Hulbert will be taking the **Taxi issue** to Town Council for discussion.

[B] Retail Group

Newmarket Retailers Association have continued with their work on the '**Newmarket Equine Design**' (**NED**) but are still awaiting the commissioning of a further Topographical survey of the High Street, which is vital to demonstrate the situation of the underground services and will be very beneficial for the future provided that it is kept up to date. The second survey could cost approximately £7,000. This funding is currently being sourced. Public consultation further to that featured in the Newmarket Journal is planned.

[C] Local Economy

Work has been ongoing to provide an **Inward Investment pack**, a very useful pack that will show the advantages of investing in West Suffolk. The group have scrutinised and advised on the Newmarket section in particular and whilst the pack will have a physical status it is not envisaged to print ad lib due to costs and not each segment would necessarily be relevant to all. However it will be distributed to appropriate venues and people, and in addition it will be available to download.

Deloitte have been commissioned to produce a **report on the National and International impacts to the economy** of the Horse Racing Industry (HRI).

A **base line of businesses in Newmarket** is being produced which has not been as easy as one might think. Data protection has caused problems in obtaining the relevant and correct information required to give accurate detail but gradually a picture is emerging giving a much more informed piece of work for future reference.

Joanne Rogers gave the group a detailed and very informative presentation on the **BID** and the processes involved. Consultation is due to take place imminently.

Newmarket has achieved **World Host Status**, the first town in the Country to do so.

Draft market licence regulations for Newmarket had been through consultation with the market traders and with a few agreed amendments the new regulations have subsequently been approved by Council. If successful in Newmarket they will be implemented in the other Market Towns within Forest Heath District Council.

[D] Tourism Group

As the Railway Sub group had still to meet, Chris Garibaldi (CG) in particular supported by the other group members, continue to draw the attention required to anyone and everyone who will listen to the importance of improving the infrastructure and services of the **Railway** to Newmarket.

Newmarket is positioned at a key point of two major lines - Kings Lynn to Kings Cross and Norwich to London Liverpool Street. CG went to a Rail conference in Ipswich recently and it was evident that an East/West service to Oxford is an option to be considered. The Consultation on Infrastructure for the Railway has closed but the **Franchise consultation is still open until 16 March 2015 and people are strongly encouraged to respond:**

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/384309/east-anglia-franchise.pdf

Newmarket Music Festival continues to be an idea which will hopefully come to fruition this year, with the aim of keeping it simple, to test the waters for the inaugural year and not on a large scale, importantly testing the organisational skills required. A Safari Concert Day in Cambridge was a great success, a day of informal music. The Churches in Newmarket - St Agnes, Our Lady Immaculate, Christ Church, St Marys and All Saints would be ideal venues for a similar venture. Music would need to be selected suitable to each venue. Three Churches may well be sufficient in number as venues, perhaps a performance after lunch and early evening of three quarters of an hour duration each. Dates venues, performers, facilities, publicity, expenditure and possible income are factors that now need to be detailed and discussed further.

Newmarket Sausage project is advancing well. This education package has many facets and the next stage is for Rachel Wood (RW) and Mave van der Werff (MW) to arrange a meeting with Nick Froy from Newmarket Academy to discuss taking this into the curriculum. It is not known if it would just be a local project or to develop it across border.

MW has discovered a recipe for the Newmarket Cake and having made it for the group to sample it is highly recommended.

RW has prepared a **map of routes for visitors to gain entry to Newmarket Car Parks** which is in draft form following consultation with the Town Centre Group and would like the Retailers to view it for opinion. The map was used for the Town Councils Winter Wonderland but only on the Town Councils website and not in the brochure as was anticipated. Sharon Fairweather pointed out that charges may change for Car Parking from April 2015 and for any further production of the Map this would be relevant. RW has spoken to David Rippington who is confident the present map could be converted for an interactive map for use on various web sites, which were the initial thoughts of its use. The map is part of the work that needs to be discussed with Guy Smith in conjunction with the Town Centre and Retail groups.

[3] Education Delivery Group

Lisa Chambers reported that at the end of last year all the head teachers in Newmarket had agreed to report back about the support they need from the Education Delivery Group - this is still awaited.

[4] Traffic and Highways Delivery Group

The group have responded to the recent **Railway Consultation** which can be viewed here:

http://westsuffolk.gov.uk/Council/Policies_Strategies_and_Plans/upload/NVTGResponseAngliaRouteConsultation150205.pdf

Improvements at the junction of Fordham Road and Snailwell Road have been completed albeit slightly behind schedule. Positive and negative comments have been received and will need to be reviewed together with those in conjunction with traffic flow around the Waitrose junction following significant resurfacing work which clearly has involved an alteration of the signalling.

The delivery group had conducted a **parking/delivery vehicle access survey of businesses in Newmarket High Street** asking what their needs and views were on parking provision and about the proposed NED art installations on the High Street. 70 questionnaires were handed out, 58 replies received which is a response rate of 82%. Primarily the parking bays were of general interest and comments received; 68% of businesses were sure that customers used the parking bays for visiting their shops. When asked if businesses were aware of the NED project putting art on the High Street 31 said no and 19 said yes. Also a high percentage did not think the art would increase the footfall. Views on the location and number of taxi ranks were roughly split.

[5] Equine Hub

The Equine Hub group had two guests at its February meeting (Grant Harris from the Racing School and Judith Mobbs, Assistant Director for Skills at SCC). Fruitful discussions were held around the potential for a project to deliver suitable accommodation for staff working in the HRI, and the possibility of a focused apprenticeship scheme offering placements in the HRI for young people wanting to pursue a career in this field.

[6] Railway Group

No further update apart from via the Tourism Group as the inaugural meeting has yet to take place.

Contributing to this e-newsletter....

If your group would particularly like an issue raised or promoted amongst the other delivery groups, please send details to Christine.rush@westsuffolk.gov.uk

The newsletter will be monthly as a trial period from February – July 2015. If you like it let us know – if not, tell us how we can improve it to make it more useful for you!

Don't forget that the minutes of each group are available on the Forest Heath website (just type 'Newmarket vision' into the search box on the home page: www.westsuffolk.gov.uk).