

Uppingham Business Forum

Notes of a Meeting of the Uppingham Business Forum held on Thursday January 12th 2023 in The Falcon Hotel

Present

14 representatives of Uppingham organisations and businesses. Apologies for absence from Philippa Wills, Damon Le Geyt and Edward Baines: Also, from the Rutland Representative of the new Rutland Chamber of Commerce.

1. Welcome and Opening Remarks

Colleagues were welcomed to the first meeting of 2023 with future meetings scheduled quarterly.

2. Declaration of Interests

The various council, business and community organisation interests of those attending were noted.

3. Review of Late Night Shopping 2022

In the presence of the lead organisers of last year's event, a well rounded and lengthy discussion praised the organisers for their outstanding effort in stepping forward to organise the event at short notice and the excellent footfall achieved on the night. The new volunteer team had been able to balance the books and deliver the event to budget with significant help from the town council and a number of local businesses. Uppingham First acted as banker and insurance broker. Acknowledging that most things had gone well despite a number of challenges on the way, it was agreed by all that a number of issues needed further attention in preparing a proposal for 2023. These included:

- The title and character of the event. – Is it a late night shopping event with significant engagement and support of local businesses, a community fun night out for families, or a combination?
- A forward project plan and a local government event plan for the road closure(s) is vital
- How can businesses in High Street West and Orange Street be engaged so as to benefit from the increased footfall
- Sound Health and Safety practices on the night are vital

In summary, members of the Forum were delighted that the volunteer leads were willing to carry on and organise a 2023 event. Members looked forward to hearing further details at the next meeting.

4. Town Centre Events and Road Closures

The following schedule has been forwarded to RCC and UTC:-

April 23rd - Stilton Cheese Run – High Street + Market Place
June 4th - Social Sunday – Part Market Place
June 11th - Social Sunday – Part Market Place
June 18th - Uppingham Feast – High Street + Market Place
June 25th - Social Sunday – Part Market Place
July 2nd - Cycle Race + Social Sunday – High Street + Market Place
July 9th - Social Sunday – Part Market Place
July 16th - Social Sunday – Part Market Place
July 23rd - Social Sunday – Part Market Place
July 30th - Social Sunday – Part Market Place
August 6th - Social Sunday – Part Market Place
August 13th - Social Sunday – Part Market Place
August 20th - Social Sunday – Part Market Place
August 27th - Social Sunday – Part Market Place
Sept. 3rd - Round Rutland Run - High Street + Market Place
November 1st - Rotary Christmas Fair – The Falcon Hotel
December 7th - XMAS LNS - High Street + Market Place

To these must be added the Lent Fair and the Fatstock Show.

5. Station Road Entrance – New Business Signage

Following numerous requests, it is proposed to explore the possibility of securing RCC highways support for new signage at the entrance to the Station Road Industrial Estate. The best location (pictured) is narrow but feasible with the right design



6. CCTV

A proposal to extend the Uppingham Webcam project into High Street East with a further camera is now in the Uppingham First business plan for 2023. A host business for the camera is sought.

The market place webcam and CCTV camera awaits an engineering visit to restore its public transmissions. This is scheduled for late January.

7. Celebrating the Arts in Uppingham 2023

Rotary in Uppingham is to organise a major summer evening event featuring some of the town's galleries and artists with invited guests from around the county. More details soon.

8. ABC Trail and Leaflet Update

This online (with downloadable pdf) and paper leaflet trail (see www.uppinghamfirst.co.uk) is in need of updating and redesigning. An appropriate action is in the UF 2023 business plan. The relaunch may be linked to the arts evening mentioned above. Galleries and artists will be approached for inclusion but are welcome to express interest in advance to secretary@uppinghamfirst.co.uk.

9. Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Consultation

All businesses should by now have received a copy of the plan with attached questionnaire. A number of proposals in the plan will have a direct impact on the high street and our commercial areas. If businesses are happy with the proposals it would be very helpful if a positive notation on the questionnaire could be sent to the town council. If they have a question, they can call 07710 328469 for an answer or pop into the one of more of the following events.

January 19th Thursday Neighbourhood Forum public meeting - The Falcon Hotel – 7.30pm to 9.30pm

January 21st Saturday Drop in Workshop - Town Hall – 4pm to 7pm

January 24th Tuesday Drop in Workshop - Town Hall – 1pm to 4pm

10. Election of Forum Chair for 2023

It was unanimously agreed that local business proprietor and artist Chris Merricks be elected as Chair of the Business Forum for 2023.

11. Any Other Business.

The following were raised in discussion:

- a) The King's Coronation – The palace has requested that there be no civic events to mark the occasion to avoid comparisons with the former Queen's Jubilee events
- b) Gigaclear Fibre Broadband in Station Road – Notice of the contractor's intention to part close the road has just been published. Clarification is being sought on the extent and timing of the closure. Impacted businesses should receive more information direct from the Gigaclear contractor. The Highways Authority has been alerted to the implications for businesses and nearby residents and should monitor developments
- c) Office Space – Information on the availability of hot desking and free office space in and around the town centre is being sought by a local business. Please notify any possibilities to secretary@uppinghamfirst.co.uk
- d) Power Supply – There are concerns over the adequacy of the power supply to some town centre business premises – Further investigation is required
- e) Queen's Statue – The Lord Lieutenant's initiative to fund a bronze statue of the late Queen was discussed. Some Uppingham businesses have already contributed. A gift of £5K will entitle the giver to a formal acknowledgement at the base of the statue. The possibility of a combined Uppingham Community donation is being explored.

Meeting closed at 7.30pm.