

**NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF SCRUTINY PANEL 2 -RETAIL EXPERIENCE**

**Wednesday, 25 April 2012**

**COUNCILLORS** Councillor Matthew Lynch (Chair), Councillors Tony Ansell, Sally  
**PRESENT:** Beardsworth, Elizabeth Gowen and Dennis Meredith  
**Officers** Marion Goodman Head of Customers and Cultural Services  
Tracy Tiff Overview and Scrutiny Officer  
Joanne Birkin Democratic Services Officer

**1. APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Suresh Patel.

At this point the Chair suggested that it would be useful for a Vice Chair to be elected for the life of this Review. It was therefore proposed and seconded that Councillor Suresh Patel be appointed Vice Chair of Scrutiny Panel 2 (Retail Experience). Upon a vote it was

**AGREED:** That Councillor Suresh Patel be appointed Vice Chair of the Panel.

**2. DEPUTATIONS/ PUBLIC ADDRESSES**

There were none.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING)**

Councillor Tony Ansell declared a Personal interest as the proprietor of the All Saints Bistro in the Town Centre.

This interest is for the life of the Review.

**4. SCOPE OF THE REVIEW**

The Panel considered a report on the scoping of the Customer Services Review.

The main points of the discussion were as follows: -

**Purpose /Objectives of the Review.**

- Members felt that there were many proposed changes to the Town Centre coming up and that this review gave them the opportunity to influence decisions and make the most of the new opportunities.

### **Information Required.**

- Members felt that it was vital to examine the improvement that BID makes to the Town Centre Street Scene.
- Part of the baseline data should include a definition of the Town Centre, numbers of shop types and vacancy rates.
- Members considered that other Councillors and Officers should be sent a short questionnaire asking them why they go to shop and what they liked about it.
- Members had some suggestions for site visits, such as Market Harborough, and agreed that they would take other suggestions from the Town Centre Manager as to other locations, particularly town centres that are vibrant and successful. They also considered that it would be useful to visit any developments which Legal and General had developed in the last few years.
- Members also considered that the impact of car parking changes should be considered.

### **Format of Information.**

- Members considered that it would be useful to ask the Chair of the Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Association to attend to give evidence.
- Members also felt that the work of the Community Safety Partnership had been central to the improving the town centre dealing with problems from beggars etc. They therefore thought that the Community Safety Partnership Manger should also be invited to come and give evidence.
- Sheridan New, the former manager of the Grosvenor Centre was suggested as co-optee. He will be approached after Overview and Scrutiny Committee has formally approved the scope.
- The Market Chairman, Raymond Martin be invited to join the Panel as a Co-optee.

**AGREED** That the Scope of the Review as attached at Appendix A will be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2012 for approval.

The meeting concluded at 6:42 pm