

Retail Scrutiny Panel

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Chairman

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Introduction

The Elephants in the room:

- Car Parking
- Penal Rates assessments
- Street Cleanliness

5 Main Topics

- Partnership Working
- Retail issues, marketing and promotion
- The Internet
- Building Projects
- 5 Year Plan / Vision

Partnership Working

- Having Councillors as BID Directors is working well
- Concern over rigid adherence to planning policy. Flexibility required.
- Enterprise consistency

Retail issues, Marketing & Promotion

- Focus on Abington St & Market Sq
- Consider Shop-front Improvement Grants
- Install main route signage advertising in town events. Use traffic message signs. Improve signage vs. street clutter. Distance to x, y, z
- Create “quarters” with arches over the road to announce / delineate them

Retail (continued)

- Encourage 5-7pm shopping – “Free after 3” parking?
- Create “street stages” for entertainment
- Change 1 hour on-street parking to 2 hour
- Parking permits for town centre businesses at attractive/competitive rates

Retail (continued)

- Flexibility towards shop front vinyl advertising
- Support for pop-up shops
- Street lighting improvements
- Endorse Police / PCSO's

The Internet

- It's not a threat: it's an opportunity
- BUT you'll die if you don't embrace it
- Encourage high-speed internet
- Embrace push-messaging
- Support LoveNorthampton website: it's the future
- Free wi-fi in the Market Sq is a good start!

Building Projects

- BID embraces these unreservedly
- BUT could be last nail in the coffin of marginal businesses
- Liaison with businesses is key
- Early notice for planning is key
- Leaflet car park users as they are the ones affected
- Positive signage “Back open by ...”

5 Year Plan / Vision

- Installation/feature in Abington Street outside Co-Op arcade
- Cruciform layout in Market Square with flexible stands & central stage
- Greater powers and support for Town Centre Managers office
- Extend the retail day to 7pm
- Varied events program to increase footfall

Additional thoughts

- Northampton is already a 24 hour economy but retail is only 9 – 5
- Project Angel, St.Johns/Uni, Bus Interchange etc will all increase footfall. This will increase shop take-up but the quality retailers will only come to new units in the managed (Grosvenor) scheme.
- Last 4 months: 4.1m visitors – so we're doing something right!

And finally

- All BID details/documents are available at:
www.NorthamptonBID.co.uk
- Why not sign up for our Newsletter?
- Follow @NorthamptonBID and @ntonBIDchair on Twitter now.
- See www.LoveNorthampton.co.uk for all your Christmas Events...
- (Other BIDs are available/always read the label/may contain nuts etc)



Thank you