

## Appendix 1

### Report on Morley Summit 2008

#### Executive summary

This document is intended for members' information. It centres on points raised and votes cast at the Morley Summit. Also included is an update of ideas raised at the 2007 Summit and comments received by Town Centre Management. From these views a Strengths Weakness Opportunities Threats (SWOT) analysis helps obtain a preferred way forward for Morley town centre. "The Big Idea" section at the end of this document provides a summary of the proposed way forward.

#### 1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Morley Summit was arranged by the Area Management Team and held at Morley Rugby Club on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2008. It attracted 82 attendees from the public, private, voluntary and specialist sectors.
- 1.2 The event was chaired by South Leeds Area Manager, Dave Richmond, and the panel was:
  - Cllr Robert Finnigan – Chair of the South Leeds Area Committee
  - Keith Robinson – Morley Chamber of Trade President
  - Stephen Battye – Redbrick Mill, Batley
  - Michael Laing – Morley Leisure & Hotels
  - Peter Mudge – Town Centre Manager – Morley and Rothwell
- 1.3 The Summit raised thoughts for a "preferred way forwards" for economic development of the town centre. At the end of each discussion point a vote was recorded. The document is intended to provide an agreed way forward for Morley Town Centre. The SWOT and summary has been initially prepared by the Town Centre Manager and will be subsequently approved through AMT, Town Centre Management Board and the Morley Town Centre Partnership.
- 1.4 Copies of this document will be circulated and be available from libraries and the Town Hall.

#### 2.0 Questions

##### 2.1 Should Morley develop a new environment for the pub and hospitality sector?

- 2.1.1 Summary: This linked with the Summit's main presentations which drew attention to the town's need to do more to support and develop an exciting offer throughout the day and into the evening.

<b>Support:</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>Oppose:</b>	<b>4</b>

##### 2.1.2 Related comments raised at the Summit

- Morley needs attractive high quality bars
- Smoking ban and cheap alcohol from supermarkets has affected license trade.
- People congregating in doorways to smoke can be intimidating.

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- Illegal to smoke in doorways.
- Government policy is having significant affect on Morley trade
- Illegal to serve drunken people, its not drinking in pubs that is leading to increase in drunk people, people are drinking at home due to cheap supermarket alcohol.
- TCM to support pub trade.

### 2.1.3 Strengths:

- With a fifth of Morley's homes being newbuild there will be significant numbers of people looking to use the town centre as a social base.
- Key town centre restaurants have a viable and expanding evening economy.
- Utilising the major social offer is being developed on the edge of the town at the Village Hotel.
- A "fresh broom" approach can be adopted in the town centre
- The pedestrian priority area may be increased to make the town centre an increasingly attractive place for eating, drinking and socialising.
- Newly opening businesses will have their own marketing budgets / gimmicks to make them attractive to customers.
- Problem has been incorporated by the Summit and major stakeholders are all eager to assist.

### Weaknesses:

- The resident population have voted with their feet and do not frequent the town centre in the evening.
- Morley town centre's evening economy looks on the brink of collapse – since the smoking ban over half the town centre pub have been put up for sale – and are still available.
- Possibly the town centre can never develop a viable evening economy
- Failing to find a partnership mechanism with the Village Hotel will lead to opposing pulls around the town centre.

### Opportunities:

- Notify estate agents of the opportunities to develop a vibrant social economy.
- Work with stakeholders to quickly progress opportunities.
- Prepare a wish list of companies we would like to have and then meet with them to progress ideas.
- Develop a new and exciting hospitality / social / retail offer in vacant and underutilised properties around the junction of Queen Street / Fountain Street.

### Threats:

- Evening economy does not recover
- Recession negates the opportunities.
- Pubs and other social premises get amended planning permissions.
- Pubs and other social premises do not progress the opportunities.

2.1.4 **Recommendation:** As a matter of great urgency action should be taken to provide non-financial support to the pub and hospitality sector in Morley town centre. This support should encourage an holistic approach to create stronger working partnerships with the daytime economy.

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### 2.2 Should more be done to promote public transport to and within Morley?

2.2.1 Summary: The Summit devoted considerable time discussing ways to increase the number of people using public transport to reach the town centre. The discussion centred on general improvements and provision of a bus station.

**Support:** 71  
**Oppose:** 10

2.2.2 **Bus Station:** Discussions have been held with Metro to investigate options for sites where buses can park up and customers wait in comfort. Initial discussions have dismissed a bus station to the east of the town centre (near the market) or in the Queensway Car Park. Options under consideration before the 2008 Summit included a bus only zone beside the Town Hall or as part of a regeneration scheme for the south end of the town centre.

#### 2.2.3 Related comments raised at the Summit

- Morley needs a bus station.
- Should be near the Maid Marion restaurant. (East of Town Centre)
- Has feasibility study been completed? Possibly somewhere near Morrison's car park (West)
- Lot of land near Bridge St so could this be a possibility? (South)
- Have to be able to persuade operators to use bus station.
- It would encourage shoppers to come to Morley.
- Talked to Metro about possibility of bus station, aforementioned suggestions were discussed. Problems with getting buses down Albion St, Commercial St, Queensway out of town. (East)
- Consultation should be carried out with traders and residents.
- Town needs to be accessible, area near top end of town near pavilion could be convenient and attract more businesses.
- Plans that have been discussed look promising
- Must attract new residents into town centre, bus station could help achieve this along with better facilities.
- Bus station needs to be in right place at right time
- We need to improve town centre to attract people prior to going to Metro for a bus station to ensure people, when they do come are happy with what they see and return time and time again. This is short term plan whereas bus station is longer term plan.

2.2.4 This SWOT is based on the current bus stop provision on Queen St / Wellington St.

**Strengths:** Established..  
Minimal cost to maintain.  
In centre of town.

**Weaknesses:** Bus stops and queues cause pedestrian congestion in an increasingly busy footfall area.  
Buses pulling in causes vehicular congestion

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Potential danger as people walk out in front of buses  
Potential danger as impatient drivers go around buses.  
Increased pollution levels in town centre – of running engines from buses and queuing vehicles.

**Opportunities:** Find a preferred location for loading / unloading of buses

**Threats:** Bus company's objection to changes  
Cost of relocation  
Some initial inconvenience to passengers  
Inability to develop a preferred location.

**2.3 Improve bus services to the town centre from neighbouring areas:** This concerns increasing the number of routes and ensuring bus timetabling means they are at key points at key times.

### 2.3.1 Related comments raised at the Summit

- Free bus service to the Post Office side of town.
- Are plans to have an improved bus service short or long term?
- If we have free bus it could encourage people into town centre to increase footfall.
- Link buses with the train station.

**2.3.2 Strengths:** More people would be attracted to the town if the number of routes increased.  
Shops and services would benefit through increased buses.  
If train station has a bus link it could lead to new opportunities for town and town centre.  
Proposals may lead to increased profits for bus operators.

**Weaknesses:** If losses are foreseen, proposals are unlikely to be supported by bus operators.  
There will be initial set-up costs.

**Opportunities:** Metro to consider opportunities  
Increase number of routes.

**Threats:** Bus operator's object to any changes  
Cost of increases  
Reappraisal leads to a decrease in services.

**2.3.3 Recommendation:** On the basis that a bus station will attract more passengers to the town centre, existing ideas will be progressed and any new ones considered.

Metro - has confirmed - it will investigate what opportunities there are to increase areas served by bus routes.

## 2.4 Should Morley town centre actively address climate change issues?

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2.4.1 Summary: Across the UK town centre initiatives are looking to reduce carbon emissions and become more environmentally-aware.

**Support:** 25  
**Oppose:** 1

### 2.4.2 Related comments raised at the Summit

- Make new builds more eco-friendly
- Create community that is carbon neutral
- Climate change strategy consultation.
- Create sustainable homes so that people can work locally thus reducing the need to travel.
- Regenerate areas to enhance environment and improve buildings, ensure these are sustainable.
- Have a USP to attract people into town.
- Need to include elderly and young in consultation
- Use “Facebook” to engage young people
- Do more to promote ‘buy local’ scheme, events etc.
- More environmentally friendly
- Working towards carbon neutrality

### 2.4.3 Strengths:

- A positive image for the town centre
- Possibility of attracting grants for being environmentally friendly
- Opportunities for press coverage
- Doing our bit to save the World

#### Weaknesses:

- No key stores currently promoting a green message
- No shops currently advocating town should become carbon neutral
- No financial incentives being offered to business
- No green champions identified to lead the cause

#### Opportunities:

- Locate a green champion willing to lead the cause

#### Threats:

- No-one found to lead the cause
- Insufficient support from business
- Unsustainable

2.4.4 **Recommendations:** Opportunities to reduce carbon emissions and develop buy local and local foods will be progressed when appropriate. TCM will invite interested parties and individuals to form an action group.

## 2.5 Should Morley promote a local food stuff?

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2.5.1 Summary: Local towns had a strong association with rhubarb production. Would it be advantageous for Morley to promote this or another association with food?

**Support:** 5

**Oppose:** 1

### 2.5.2 Related comments raised at the Summit

- Educate and encourage more sustainable food production
- Rhubarb triangle to rediscover and promote
- Promote the town centre externally
- Morley has great community spirit
- Have a rhubarb festival similar to Wakefield?
- Promote town's historic links with fish farms.

### 2.5.3 Strengths:

- Opportunity for extra press coverage
- An added attraction for the town centre
- Opportunities to link to town's heritage

#### Weaknesses:

- No stores promote any local foodstuff
- Wakefield is already promoting itself as the rhubarb town
- Wakefield has an established rhubarb festival
- In Morley no-one has stepped forward to lead this promotion

#### Opportunities:

- Locate a champion willing to lead the cause

#### Threats:

- No-one found to lead the cause
- Insufficient support from business
- Unsustainable
- No press coverage

2.5.4 **Recommendations:** Opportunities to develop local foods and recipes will be progressed if someone is wishing to progress them.

## 3.0 Update on issues raised at 2007 Summit

3.1 The items listed below are topics upon which votes were taken at last year's Summit. As the Summit generates ideas from individuals they can only be introduced as and when appropriate. The summaries below give an update on how matters should progress during the coming year.

### 3.1.1 **Would specialisation of business draw more visitors to Morley?**

Vote Result: **Yes** 63 **No** 8

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**Way forward:** The push for specialisation should come in the form of developing the café culture, leisure industry and encouraging specialist craft and family-friendly interest shops in the town centre..

### 3.1.2 ***Is there potential to develop the evening and weekend economy?***

**Vote Result:** Yes 63 No 4

**Way forward:** This question related to more businesses opening in the evening and weekends. (2:1 above relates to supporting and developing the current evening openers.)

The drive for 2008/09 is to sustain and develop the evening offer of the town centre. The private sector is key to long term development of this sector. The entertainments organizers continue to develop an exciting mix of weekend events and activities.

### 3.1.3 ***Should outdoor markets be encouraged on a regular basis?***

**Vote Result:** Yes 59 No 19

**Way forward:** Markets for Morley traders are now operational. Additional colour is available by including specialist markets within the traders' event.

On a weekly basis, stalls from the indoor market can now use outside which is intended to encourage more customers to come to the town centre.

### 3.1.4 ***Should people pay to use public car parks in the town centre?***

**Vote Result:** Yes 6 No 59

**Way forward:** A 3 hour limit is being introduced for half of the main (Queensway) Car Park with the other half remaining unlimited. The idea is that new and existing shoppers will be encouraged to use the town centre if they can easily find somewhere to park. The unlimited half will remain available for people working in the town centre.

Once the new system is installed ongoing monitoring will be undertaken of the impact on Queensway and other town centre car parks.

### 3.1.5 ***Do existing loading / unloading arrangements meet the needs of Morley town centre?***

**Vote Result:** Yes 8 No 46

**Way forward:** This remains a divisive issue between the public and private sector. Assisted by Highways, improvements have been made – particularly clarification of parking arrangements in South Queen Street and beside the Market. Work is still required in New Brighton opposite the park.

### 3.1.6 ***Are there sufficient available premises in the town centre?***

**Vote Result:** Yes 46 No 12

**Way forward:** A key store should be encouraged to move into Morley Bottoms and another in Fountain Street. Their presence should encourage others to take up vacant premises.

Investigation should be made on the possibility of additional parking at either end of the town centre.

Better road crossing points should be investigated at both locations to improve accessibility from / to Queen Street and around the areas.

Charity Shops: Further consideration should be given to identify any best way forward so the town centre is recognised for having a healthy mix of shops.

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### 3.1.7 **Can we exploit the historical & environmental aspect of the town centre?**

*Vote Result:* Yes 63 No 1

**Way forward:** A Heritage Trail has been prepared and is now on its second print run. Space has been made freely available in the town hall for storing heritage items which can then be displayed at the library. Heritage trails are staged bi-annually. Gateways have been improved at New Brighton and progressing for Fountain Street. Other gateway opportunities are being investigated. In the main car parks investigation is underway of noticeboards and additional promotion of the town centre and what it has to offer.

### 3.1.8 **Should we do more to develop new events and link up existing ones?**

*Vote Result:* Yes 63 No 0

**Way forward:** The calendar of events is prepared and promoted. Opportunities are being utilized to develop the potential of existing and new events. An example is getting the St George's Day to also cover the Saturday as well as Sunday which is widely recognized to have been Morley's busiest trading day in living memory. TCM is encouraging events to be led by Morley Entertainments Committee and Morley Chamber of Trade with TCM supporting as required.

### 3.1.9 **Should we do more to encourage young professionals who live in Morley and work at Leeds?**

*Vote Result:* Yes 55 No 3

**Way forward:** A range of concentrated promotions has been undertaken and these are now in the process of being further developed at appropriate opportunities. Estate Agents are presented with information for distribution to newcomers.

### 3.1.10 **Can we do more to encourage the non-pedestrian areas of the town?**

*Vote Result:* Yes 58 No 0

**Way forward:** Discussions are being held with key stakeholders to investigate proposals for consideration.

## 4.0 **Public Consultation**

### 4.1 **The Christmas promotional doordrop invited comments on what was needed in the town centre. All of the issues raised have been taken into account in devising the document above. Below are the comments returned:**

- *"We would like a farmers market in Morley least once a month*
- *A 'Farmer's Market' for Morley, say once a month for starters, I am sure it would work as they are very popular. Surely local farmers would be interested.*
- *We need Poundland, the discount shop, we also need a good clothes outlet in the centre as the only clothes shop is Geoff in the market.*
- *Men's clothing shop is needed*
- *Morley needs a bookshop. It always surprises me that there isn't one considering that Morley holds a literary festival.*



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- *It needs much more variety than cheap shops, charity shops and travel agents. It does not encourage younger people who have money to spend and write the shopping centre off as old and fuddy. Too many boarded-up shops and no parking facilities*
- *Having lived in the Morley area from being 2yrs old and having attended the educational establishments of Morley I hate having to be negative but please bring back some of the decent high street shops we used to have and stop charity shops and takeaways from ruling the area.*
- *Less charity shops..*
- *Reduce the number of charity shops - seven at last count, reduce number of estate agents - too many to count and lets have some good shops that will bring business to Morley.*
- *The banks in Morley should be open until at least 5pm.(this may have already happened but I stopped checking ages ago) Morley needs more nightlife to accommodate the young professionals the town is trying to attract. ie late night bars!*
- *To make the Central Post Office accessible to transport. It is no joke to trudge in foul weather from the nearest bus stop, especially for the infirm. The only time cars or taxis are allowed is when the Post Office is closed. Unbelievable! It would also help to re-vitalise what is virtually the dead end of Queen Street.*
- *A bus station in Morley – the only town in the area without one! Batley has one, Dewsbury has one, Wakefield. etc”*

### 5.0

#### “THE BIG IDEAS for 2008 / 09”

### 5.1

**Hospitality / Leisure Sector:** Immediate support should be given to the current offer and a programme developed to secure the future with an aim of increasing town centre useage by established and new residents and visitors.

The hospitality offer of the town centre should be developed. Entertainments should be encouraged promoting the community aspect of the town centre. These will be existing activities and new ideas.

**Specialist Shops:** A review should be undertaken of the variety of shops in Morley and steps should be taken to fill identified shortfalls.

**Transport links:** Ways forward will be drawn up to encourage more people to reach the town centre by bus, train and – where appropriate – taxi, bike, foot and car share. Ongoing monitoring of car parks will be undertaken and coach drop off facilities introduced.

**The Morley Offer:** Reflecting and developing the individuality of the town.

This can include events, gateways, heritage, local foods, carbon footprint etc.

**Developing TCM Action Plan:** Featuring consultation with key stakeholders in the town centre, the TCM action plan will be rewritten to feature 2008 / 09 Big Ideas and other priorities for the year.

### 6.0

#### Recommendations

Members of the outer south Area Committee are requested to:

- (a). Note the contents of this report and consider all recommendations.