

## Appendix 2

### Report on Rothwell Summit 2008

#### Executive summary

This document is intended for members' information. It centres on points raised and votes cast at the Rothwell Summit. Also included is an update of ideas raised at the 2007 Summit and comments received by Town Centre Management. From these views a SWOT analysis helps develop a preferred way forward for Rothwell 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 Rothwell Summit was arranged by the Area Management Team and held at Rothwell Parish Centre on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> February 2008. It attracted 40 attendees from the public, private, voluntary and specialist sectors. It was noticeable that the meeting ran more positively than the previous year with a greater range of pertinent questions and less concentration on individual viewpoints.
- 1.2 The event was chaired by South Leeds Area Manager, Dave Richmond, and the panel was:
  - Cllr Stewart Golton - Rothwell Councillor and Town Centre Management Board Chair
  - Frank Britton – Rothwell business owner
  - Brian Nicholson - Redcar Economic Development Officer
  - 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 Rothwell Town Centre.
- 1.4 The SWOT and summary has been initially prepared by the Town Centre Manager and will be subsequently considered through AMT, Town Centre Management Board and the Rothwell Town Centre Partnership.
- 1.5 Copies of this document will be circulated and be available from the library and One Stop Centre.
- 1.6 Brian Nicholson spoke about the advantages and effects major superstore development has had on the town centre. After an interval questions were raised by the audience and discussed. These centred on:

#### 2.0 Questions

- 2.1 **Traders should be encouraged to play a greater role in improving the attractiveness of the town centre.**

For 33  
Against 0

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2.1.1 Summary: The shortage of traders at the Summit was noted and it was said there were opportunities for them to play a more valuable role in the town's regeneration.

2.1.2

**Strengths:** General support for town centre improvements  
Some traders very active in regeneration opportunities  
Historic and picturesque town centre – especially upper floors  
Pedestrian priority shopping on Commercial Street and Jailyard

**Weaknesses:** Small number of shops  
Small number of shoppers resulting in low profit margins  
Traders have not identified opportunities in which they can play a key role

**Opportunities:** Identify ways in which traders can play a key role  
Meet with key businesses to explore launching a Chamber of Trade or developing another body – possibly social enterprise?

**Threats:** Traders unenthusiastic about forming a collective voice  
A knock-back on an early initiative could be very damaging

2.1.3 Recommendation: *TCM to form a trade think-tank to identify initial way forwards for a Chamber or similar organisation.*

## 2.2 More should be done to improve on the attractiveness of local amenities

For 31

Against 2

2.2.1 Summary: The idea of linking Springhead Park and The Pastures with the Town Centre is being explored by TCM and Parks (who attended the Summit.) However it was interesting to see that Summit attendees also identified opportunities for the Park to play a greater role in attracting trade to the town centre.

- Raise profile of the river with a walkway
- Measured mile with a "trim trail"
- Illustration boards
- Lines outlining car parking spaces
- Duck pond
- Soft play area
- Animal farm
- Educational visitors centre
- Reopen skateboard park

2.2.2 **Strengths:** Opportunity to form a mutually beneficial partnership around town centre. Present Rothwell as a "cultural" town centre  
Little funding required – unless larger opportunities are subsequently developed (soft play area, petting zoo etc)

**Weaknesses:** Will the scheme have sufficient impact?

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**Opportunities:** Develop initial ideas for the scheme  
Look to the opening of the new riverway as an initial launch date

**Threats:** Lack of interest  
Lack of take-up

2.2.3 Recommendation: TCM to link with key agencies, (including Parks and Countryside,) to develop a best way forward. Park and history details to be included on the already planned town centre signage. Look for a launch of the scheme in partnership with the opening of the rerouted river and the Rothwell cycleway.

### 2.3 **We should maintain activity to attract visitors and benefit the community following on from Rothwell 600.**

For 30  
Against 3

2.3.1 Summary: The Rothwell 600 project has drawn together a strong partnership to develop activities for the town centre and surrounding areas. From its conception TCM wanted key aspects of it to remain following the year end.

- Support historical groups to maintain momentum around the history of Rothwell including surrounding areas.
- Continue work with schools
- Progress interpretation boards showing centre of medieval Rothwell.
- How to manage visitors around the castle site – concern about health and safety issues.
- Continue partnership working of community groups.
- Have an annual celebration or ongoing campaign around historical aspects of Rothwell.

2.3.2 **Strengths:** As with 2.2.2  
**Weaknesses:** As with 2.2.2  
**Opportunities:** As with 2.2.2  
**Threats:** As with 2.2.2

2.3.3 Recommendation: TCM to link with key agencies, (including Parks and Rothwell 600,) to develop a best way forward. Park and history details to be included on the already planned town centre signage. Look for a launch of the scheme in partnership with the opening of the rerouted river and the Rothwell cycleway.

### 2.4 **We need to look at traffic systems in particular on Butcher Lane and Commercial Street.**

2.4.1 Summary: With the major redevelopment concern is expressed as to the changing needs of traffic flow around the town centre.

#### 2.4.2 **Related comments raised at the Summit**

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- Butcher Lane should be a one way street
- Pedestrian zone on Commercial Street has never been adhered to.

2.4.3 **Strengths:** Re-evaluate traffic routes to find improvements  
Strengthen the town centre shopping area for deliveries and shoppers.

**Weaknesses:** Excluding word of mouth, no incident reports  
Implementation will need to compete with other Highway priorities

**Opportunities:** Will lead to better pedestrian connectivity around town centre  
Will lead to better transport routes  
Could provide better opportunities for town centre to expand  
Could lead to improved safety for vehicles and pedestrians

**Threats:** Findings may not be implemented if not of significant priority

2.4.4 **Recommendation:** Discuss concerns and possibilities with Highways.

**3.0 Update on issues raised at 2007 Summit:** 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 **Developing a wider mix of shops:** The town centre's appeal has improved through the new build of shops on Jail Yard and renovation of shops on Commercial Street. An expanded pet store, delicatessen, craft shop and handicrafts are key new offers. The latest addition is a Thornton's Chocolateire on Marsh Street.

3.2 **Outdoor markets:** A trial outdoor market was held at Christmas which led to a partnership with Rothwell Entertainments Committee to develop a farmer's market which is preparing to run on a regular basis.

3.3 **Improved connections between shopping areas:** Signage placed in Marsh Street and tender being prepared for clear mapping. Painting of uniform street furniture is progressing.

3.4 **Developing an evening economy:** TCM is investigating the potential for developing a strong evening economy utilising after-work shoppers from South Leeds. This idea will progress through consideration at the May TCP when evening farmers' markets will be discussed.

3.5 **Support for an events management structure:** Town Centre Manager promotes a quarterly events programme. Rothwell Events Team is providing great assistance with town centre entertainers and street market plans. Rothwell 600 celebrations conceived and launched to provide an extra dimension to Rothwell entertainments and calendar of events.

## 4.0 Public Consultation

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- 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 the main document above. Below are the comments returned:
- Dance shop, haberdasher, and clothes shops for children, shoe shop.
  - Re-instate the shopper's bus. Not all residents live close to a bus stop or access to a car (especially the elderly and infirm)
  - I would like a DIY store, a movie rental store and a kids zone (shoppers crèche-play place) large bays for parking-especially Morrisons!
  - No more estate agents- banks-building societies, hairdressers. Let us have foot wear, household linens, lingerie, sewing requisites, and a pound shop. I no longer shop in Rothwell except for bits and bobs, I go to Castleford, Pontefract, Morley, Dewsbury and get everything I need.
  - Have a look at Garforth!!! More variety no more banks, building societies, or estate agents, need possible middle range children wear, accessories shop (handbags, hair decorations, scarves, gloves, modern jewellery) tea shop type café for coffee, dainty lunches.
  - Rothwell needs an ice skating rink or something similar to entice youths off the street at night into a safe environment where they can socialise and have fun in a cool place.
  - Better bus time table on 444 Rothwell, Leeds route , just one bus every hour Saturday, Sun, and after 3 O'clock week day.
  - We could do with:
    - Shoe shop
    - Material & sewing aids, zips, buttons etc.
    - Hardware pots, pans, etc...
    - The town does not include any 'alternative Therapy' shops/clinics-which in this day and age is very popular. i.e. acupuncture, Chinese medicine, tai chi. Q'. massage / reiki,gong
  - Rothwell is in need of a good shoe shop and clothes shop
  - Badly needed:-Rothwell ladies, gents and children's outfitters, jewellers, furniture shop, pork butchers, shoe shop, interflora flower shop.
  - More shops- larger variety- e.g. music, shoe, clothing for whole family, book. Some form of family entertainment e.g. Bowling Alley.
  - Monthly farmers or continental market, variety of restaurant and bars
  - To have a wilkinsons/wynsors/factory shop/Julian Graves/& Similar to bring it up to Gaforth, Crossgates, Castleford etc.
  - Another bargain store like B&M as at Morley. A good reasonably priced shoe or instead of B&M Wilkinson. A small but in door market.
  - The single thing that would improve Rothwell town centre is clean public toilets, which are open at weekends and for long hours.

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- The police station should be manned during the day and open to the public as it used to be.
- We need another shop like RAYS that sells everything at a good price, the new DIY shop is too expensive. Everything else is fine.
- We need an affordable place to eat in the evenings. Shopwise we need a green grocery. Dry cleaners. Haberdashery, alteration shop, shoe shop, clothing store. These were all in Rothwell when I moved here 14 years ago.
- Sad we have lost 'Blockbusters' dry cleaners and second bank, sorry to hear will be losing 'Shamas'. Would like to see all these returning/staying. Would also like to see quality delicatessen, another takeaway specialist. ( Pizzeria) and haberdashery. In the 'old days' a town was only a town if it had a ' Woolworths'. Any chance of such a store.?
- Get rid of Morrison's and return Rothwell to the community. Make shop units available with realistic rents that will allow the tenants to make a realistic profit.
- This Leaflet is brilliant! Better communications about Youth events/places to go, Café culture, shops like QLM.
- We need more family café/pizza bars, more evening entertainment to liven the region up over this time.
- Coffee shop/café (good for children- maybe in Morrison's) Public toilets. I hope the cobbler is staying as we need him! Plenty of parking as before work started!
- Better Christmas lights to coincide with the Rothwell 600 anniversary and new buildings (i.e. across the street- something updated- been same for years!) new shopping units-video, DVD rental, upmarket café , meeting place for younger clients.
- At least one Local doctor should be on call each weekend. One chemist should be open for prescription until doctor's surgeries finish. for example 7pm.
- Need a fishmonger, regular and thorough cleaning of the car park toilets. Landscape car park-needs completing, poor access from car park spaces to Morrison store entrance- need footpaths & pedestrian crossings.
- Keep the buses out of pedestrian centre and make the road flat. It worked when the road was done last time. We don't need buses in centre. They spoil the place senior citizens.
- More speciality shops e.g. delicatessen, clothes, jewellery, shoes, green grocers, - open after 5pm. Restaurant, café bars, internet café, better access to the country park.
- Get rid of Morrisons-replace with Waitrose, more speciality shops like Crafty Fox, more butchers and greengrocers.
- Why is the town centre manager not in Rothwell?, at present Rothwell has a poor choice of shops – no shoe shop for example, transport from Oulton/Woodlesford needs improving- Buses are very poor.
- I would like to make some suggestions for the type of shops I would like to see in Rothwell. I feel it would be extremely useful to have similar shop units to the ones available at Colton i.e. Next, JJB. Etc. The new large units that are being built would be ideal for these type of high street stores.

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- I firstly wrote to Highways in June 2005, then in February 2006, followed by October 2006 and finally in March 2007.  
Commercial Street should be pedestrianised - the street is too narrow for traffic, especially buses. At present, the street is an oily, sunken mess with seven buses an hour using it. That apart from all other illegal traffic.  
I understand from a reply to one of my previous letters to Highways that some traders are against a traffic –free street because “rerouting the buses would drive people away from the town centre leading to a loss of trade”  
This is absolute nonsense! Buses could be rerouted down Butcher lane(to Leeds and Castleford). People ‘get on’ the buses in Commercial Street to leave Rothwell centre. Coming into the centre by bus, mostly, people would alight in Church Street, or Gillett Lane, or the Working Men’s Club or Blackburn Hall.  
A bus stop in lower Butcher Lane (one way) to Leeds or Castleford would be no great distance from the new store. In fact it is a similar distance now from the HSBC bank  
Vehicle access to the shops should be at a fixed time early morning.  
I believe the ‘organisers’ have missed an opportunity to make Rothwell an award-winning development.  
A pedestrianised Commercial Street can only enhance the facilities of Rothwell Town  
The proposed new development will be ‘ordinary’ with noisy traffic bearing down a narrow street, belching smoke and dropping oil. Perhaps that may drive people away! And, where will people cross the street to get to new shops in Jail Yard hopefully to be renamed Meynell Walk or Meynell Mall?)

### 5.0 “ROTHWELL’S BIG IDEAS for 2008/09”

- 1) **Encourage traders to play a greater role** in improving the attractiveness of the town centre.
- 2) **Look to realise the cultural opportunities of the town centre:** through its community spirit, assets, environment and history.
- 3) **Provide ongoing monitoring of the various rejuvenation schemes:** to ensure opportunities are realised and the end plan maintained.
- 4) **Develop a wider shopping experience:** through the range of shops, street market and evening opening.
- 5) **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.