

# ORMSKIRK

## Town Centre Management Group Meeting Notes

30th April 2019



**Attendees:** Ian Gill (WLBC), Dominic Carr (WLBC), Lisa Ratican (WLBC), Steven Wilson (WLBC), Dave Mutch (OCP), Sue Evans (OCP), Jan Barnes (EHSU), George Aird (EHSU), Roy Bayfield (EH), Jordan Griffiths (M&S), Laura Rimmer (OBA / The Cricketers), Ben Kehoe (WLBC)

**Apologies:** Colin Brady (WLBC), Kate Pierce (WLBC), Kate Arnold (EH) Dave Coyle (OBA)

**Chair:** Ian Gill

### Agenda

1. Welcome & introductions
2. Recent & upcoming events
3. Ormskirk promotion
4. Partner updates (all)
5. AOB
6. Date of next meeting

### 1. Welcome & Introductions

Ian Gill gave round the table introductions and welcomed Ben Kehoe (Economic Regeneration Apprentice) to the meeting who is a new starter in the Economic Regeneration team.

### 2. Recent & upcoming events

DC gave an update on recent events, including the Ormskirk Stakeholder event, held on 3rd April at the Chapel Gallery. The event was attended by a number of local businesses, the Town Centre Management Group gave an update on: new developments in Ormskirk, footfall data and how to use experiential retail to increase custom. General feedback from attendee's was good. DC welcomed feedback from partners. SE passed on information that some businesses she spoke to would like to see the event focus more on future plans for Ormskirk. IG said this would be considered for the next event to be held next February.

DC updated the group on upcoming events, with the Medieval Festival being the first big event of the year, being held on 11th & 12th May. DC reminded partners to upload events on the Discover Ormskirk website using their logins.

LR explained that the Council has offered to subsidise a Visual Merchandising Course for retailers. Although the Council has promoted the course there has been no take up from businesses which is disappointing.

### 3. Ormskirk Promotion

LR - Discover Ormskirk website is performing well and attracting good traffic and new visitors from further afield. Most popular pages continue to be the events calendar and walks pages. Social media channels are also performing well and continue to attract new followers daily.

The Economic Regeneration team are assisting OCP with the promotion of the upcoming Gingerbread Festival, by creating an event on Facebook, to date this has reached 15k people, which is very positive. New posts have been scheduled weekly to continue to keep up interest in the event.

Main events continue to be promoted on Visit Liverpool & Visit Lancashire websites.

WLBC have been asked to attend a Travel Show, along-with other Local District Officers in October to cross promote Lancashire and each individual areas.

A double page editorial has been designed and scheduled to feature Ormskirk and West Lancashire in a hardback publication '*Welcome to Lancashire*' guide, due out in June. The publication will be placed in high-quality hotels and establishments across Lancashire.

The next Lancashire Tourism Officers meeting is being hosted by WLBC at the Chapel Gallery; Sue Mullen from the Confederation of Passenger Transport is scheduled to attend. Sue is keen to work with districts to highlight what Lancashire has to offer with regards to the coach & bus offer, using the various channels to disseminate information to their 1000 members both regionally and nationally.

DM provided an overview as to the current trading conditions nationally with an update of how Ormskirk's footfall is performing. Footfall has risen significantly from March to February which can partly be explained given the improved weather. Ormskirk's footfall for the year to date is up 4.4%, which is significantly higher than the North and Yorkshire (1.3%) and the UK (0.8%). Based on Springboards footfall figures.

### 4. Current business trading conditions

JG - updated the group on M&S's position, during the first quarter of the year sales had dropped but then picked up in the second quarter. Thursday, Friday and Saturday continue to be their busiest days with 12 - 2pm being the busiest time of day. JG noted that theft had been on the increase which they continue to monitor, Jordan said M&S value the assistance from the CCTV service which has helped. Also problems with the taxis parking in the hashed area continue to be a problem.

Laura Rimmer (The Cricketers) reported that their bank holiday weekend over Easter was not as busy despite the great weather, however, it has picked up more recently. Market days still remain popular days.

LR visited two 'new' independent businesses in Ormskirk Town Centre, to welcome them to the town centre and provide information on how to promote themselves on DiscoverOrmskirk.com, and how to get involved with Ormskirk Business Action group. Both businesses are very happy with how their business is doing and both are attracting new customers from further afield such as St Helens and Wigan.

### 5. Partner Updates

#### Edge Hill (EH)

RB - Although the University has seen fewer 18 yr olds apply to study there, there's been an increase in applications from international students. The new medical school will train up to 30 trainees per year. EH have recently undertaken



an Economic Impact report, results can be shared with partners once the report is finalised. EH are also supporting this year's Gingerbread Festival; Short Scruffs are a drama group that have produced 3 plays for the event. An outdoor Shakespeare event is taking place at EH on the same day as the Gingerbread Festival from 3pm onwards, the group agreed that this could have a positive impact on both the Gingerbread Festival and the Shakespeare event and we should let visitors know they can spend the whole day & evening in the town. RB said the Artz Centre is doing well and figures are increasing, they're also looking to extend their offer towards the local community audience. The music offer at the Artz Centre is continuing to be very popular and has positive affect on local bands who perform there in allowing them to showcase themselves to a larger audience.

### Edge Hill Student Union (EHSU)

JB - EHSU are currently organising their Freshers Fair for 2019, stalls are available to businesses on the day, for a charge, JB asked if businesses would like to take up a stall to contact her to discuss costs. JB also offered OCP a stall at the event which may help them attract some volunteers.

### Ormskirk Community Partnership (OCP)

OCP are currently working on the upcoming Gingerbread Festival. They have 3 offers for organisations to sponsor the event in 3 bands, Gold, Silver or Bronze. They are hoping these new sponsorship packages will appeal to businesses and help fund the event moving forward. DM explained that OCP are investigating improving the conditions of some town centre alleyways and will provide an update in due course.

### Ormskirk Business Action (OBA)

Laura confirmed that OBA are moving forward with Ormskirk's Night Market plans, the first event will take place on Friday 31st May. Promotion of the first event is going well.

### M&S

Update included in item 4.

### WLBC

SW reported that the Council's Car Park machines will have contact-less payments system installed in June. Although Ormskirk Market struggled at the beginning of the year, with the good weather upon us, trade has picked up. Thursday's continue to have the better offer with more stall holders trading. The Markets team are also looking at ways to attract new traders for Saturdays.

### 6. AOB

SE announced that OCP has a new volunteer, a student from EHSU which is great news for the group.

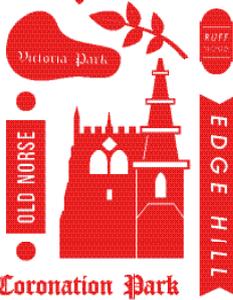
### 7. Date of next meeting

Tuesday 30th July 9.30am - 11.30am





Thursday and Saturdays



Coronation Park



TRADITIONAL

GINGERBREAD

Bars

& Restaurants



24,196  
POPULATION