



**Minutes of the Executive Board meeting: 27<sup>th</sup> September**

Present:

Name	Representing
Sally Hawken	Residents /Chair
Sue Pike	Town Council
Roger Terry	Chamber of Commerce
Roy Vass	Traders Assn
Sandra Crocker	National Retail
Roger Holmes	Town Forum
Jan Powell	Cornwall Councillors
Gary Randall	Landlords/Treasurer
Andy Harwood	Area surrounding Liskeard
Nicky Harwood	Voluntary Sector/Arts
Natalie Herbert	Young people
Jenny Jones	Events & Fun WG
Tristram Besterman	Identity WG
Bruce Hawken	Empty shops WG
Allison Livingstone	Town communications WG/TT comms officer
Rachel Brooks	Measure & Learn WG/Secretary
Katie Berring	Area Manager Boots
Alan Berry	DCLG
Steve Foster	Accountable body (CC)
Michelle Virgo	Facilitator
James Alcock	Plunkett Foundation (Presenter)

Apologies: David Orr – Work Hub WG, John Lennon – Voluntary Sector/Arts.

Agenda items	Actions
<p><b>Welcome, Introduction and apologies</b> The new members, Sandra Crocker (representing retail chains in the town centre) and Natalie Herbert (representing the student community) were welcomed.</p>	
<p><b>Ground rules for the meeting</b> Michelle Virgo facilitated a discussion to decide the protocols for this and future meetings.</p>	Protocols to be observed in all meetings.
<p><b>The Liskeard Town Shop</b> <u>Presentation on the work of the Plunkett Foundation by James Alcock</u> This charity, started in 1990, advises on and supports the creation and management of community-owned shops. Their model of democratically-run retail outlets could be useful in the organisation of the Liskeard Town Shop. The Foundation supports 286 shops and, on average, oversees the start-up of 20 new shops a year. Over the years only 13 community shops have closed. This 95% success rate compares favourably with the national retail figure of 46%. The shops are generally managed and run by a mixture of staff and volunteers, with an average of 3.3 paid staff, 30 volunteers and about 130 members. Community shops tend to prioritise local food and local suppliers. Their social impact is increasingly important, many becoming the hub of their community, especially where there are meeting rooms. <u>How to set up a Town Shop</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Contact experts like the Plunkett Foundation, Cornwall Rural Community Council, Locality, Community Regeneration Scheme (via Steve Foster) etc. regarding funding and procedures.</li> <li>2. Establish a working group.</li> <li>3. Consult the community</li> </ol>	



<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Visit the four existing Cornwall village shops and, as an example in an urban setting, The Real Food Store in Exeter.</li> <li>5. Prepare a detailed business plan.</li> <li>6. Look at options for legal structure (65% of community shops use Industrial and Provident Society model).</li> <li>7. Sort out finance, possibly using community shares which can cost from £10.00 to £50.00, with a top limit of £20,000 shares owned by one person. On average, a small village shop will need to raise £55,000 as start-up funding. Fundraising and donations not only raise necessary capital but, perhaps more importantly, build community impetus. Consider registering as Enterprise Investment Scheme.</li> <li>8. Identify suitable premises.</li> <li>9. Plan a glossy opening ceremony.</li> </ol> <p>In the following Q &amp; A session the following points were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The average set-up time required for a sustainable venture is 9 to 18 months.</li> <li>• The business plan should be a template, not a constrictor.</li> <li>• A skilled manager is essential. The shop must make a profit.</li> <li>• There is no record of the impact of urban stores (Exeter and Reading) on local traders; community shops in smaller towns have generally been started to fill a perceived gap in the high street (eg. Slaithewaite).</li> <li>• There would need to be constraints on shareholders removing their funds if business viability was threatened.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Discussion on the proposed Liskeard Town Shop</b></p> <p><u>Vision</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• help create interest in some sectors, eg. the arts.</li> <li>• provide services for the changing demographic of the town.</li> <li>• extend town life beyond 5.30</li> <li>• meet the different needs of different age groups at different times of the day</li> <li>• increase the number of people using the town centre</li> <li>• encourage young people to spend more of their leisure time in Liskeard town centre</li> </ul> <p><u>Ideas on what the Town Shop could offer:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local food and drink – cooking lessons – a deli and restaurant, open in the evening – universal delivery service with secure trolley drop-off point for left shopping.</li> <li>• A milk bar (like shake-away, very popular with the young)</li> <li>• Health focus (Boots) – with guest speakers (eg Macmillan nurses), pro-active health advice, dental advice, screening, lifestyle advice: bringing health into the community.</li> <li>• A mixture of established and start-up businesses.</li> <li>• Creative workshops and studios for photographers, artists, designers. Arts pop-ups – exhibitions</li> <li>• One floor could be a work hub and office space for home workers</li> <li>• Tourist information</li> <li>• A sound studio - a space for young people after school.</li> <li>• The top storey could be used as a flat.</li> <li>• There should also be an online presence, eg. Art on line and in shop.</li> </ul> <p><u>Practicalities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do we secure a property?</li> <li>• How would the shop interact with other empty shops?</li> <li>• How would it interact with Liskerrett which also has artist studios?</li> <li>• How do we balance the need to consult widely with the need to get moving?</li> <li>• We would need to identify cornerstone tenants to ensure economic viability</li> <li>• Would there be enough people support it and to volunteer?</li> <li>• The accountable body needs to be sure of the sustainability of the venture</li> <li>• How do we make the most of the TV coverage?</li> </ul>	<p>Visit nearby community shops (St Germans and Duloe)</p> <p>Visit Real Food Shop Exeter. Check out the effect on footfall and trading in the area.</p> <p>GR to negotiate with the landlord of the former Cornish Times offices regarding favourable lease arrangement in return for a refurbishment of his property.</p> <p>Set up a Town Shop WG. Initial members Gary Randall, Allison Livingstone, Roger Terry, Andy Harwood, Bruce Hawken.</p>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We need to be sure of the conditions of the rent-free twelve months, eg. length of subsequent lease agreements and break points.</li> <li>• A legal body needs to be formed to take on a license and raise investment. Establish the expectations of lenders and grant bodies especially with regard to length of lease. There is a need to identify small scale investors.</li> <li>• Do the Plunkett Foundation provide access to funding? The TV company? Public Works Loans board.</li> <li>• We need to be clear about outgoings.</li> </ul> <p><u>Concerns:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The town shop could be competing against existing traders and existing local produce networks.</li> <li>• It has to be socially, economically and environmentally sustainable.</li> <li>• TT capacity to manage additional work-stream on top of everything else.</li> </ul> <p>Bearing in mind that a Town Shop was not part of the original bid, Alan Berry advised that DCLG were relaxed about how exactly the bid money was spent, provided that the outcomes met the aims of the bid.</p> <p>It was agreed that the town shop had to be commercially sustainable.</p>	<p>WG to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) look into forming a suitable body in order to be able to take on License;</li> <li>2) seek legal advice (probably from Andrew Earl);</li> <li>3. Establish costs of year one</li> <li>4) check the sustainability of the project;</li> <li>5) check out funding streams.</li> <li>6) liaise with Boots.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Notes of last meeting</b> These were agreed as representing the meeting</p> <p><b>Matters Arising:</b> <u>DCLG conference</u> Allison Livingstone and Andy Harwood were thanked for their work at the DCLG conference.</p> <p><u>Branding</u> Allison Livingstone gave an update on the issue of branding. Yellow Door, needed to be convinced of our desire for their branding. By the end of October they could provide three ideas which would be open for consultation. A discussion followed about the validity of a brand which had not come from local people. Allison Livingstone made the point that Yellow Door had already been consulting in their many visits to the town. Sally Hawken asked for clarification of the scope of the branding exercise as products and shop signage were a matter for individual shops. Tristram Besterman felt that his identity working party would be happy to look at any branding ideas from Yellow Door, provided they were followed by community consultation.</p>	<p>It was agreed to ask Yellow Door to continue with their branding ideas.</p>
<p><b>The Big Clean Up</b> Andy Harwood reported that Mace had just taken over the project management of the event.</p> <p>Roger Holmes asked about the financial implications for the Town Team, but was assured that Yellow Door was looking into donations of materials and calls for volunteers. Sally Hawken asked for more information about the day and raised the possibility of a number of volunteers turning up without prior registration on the days. Jan Powell and Sue Pike offered to plan for and supervise these volunteers. Roger Terry said that there could be resentment from other traders if Fore Street were prioritised. Sally Hawken raised the Mayor’s suggestion that if paint were to be available at subsidised rates the TT could consider a bulk purchase for other town centre shops to use outside the big clean Up.</p>	<p>A conference call was arranged with Yellow Door and Mace for 5.00pm on October 1<sup>st</sup> with Sue Pike, Andy Harwood, Allison Livingstone and Jan Powell.</p>
<p>It was agreed that the remaining agenda items would be discussed at the next Executive Board Meeting. The meeting closed at 8.30pm.</p>	

The next meeting would be at 6.30pm on 15 October at Lux Park.