

The Business Group and CBA merger

Notes from meeting between Ray Casey and TS on Wednesday 14th April 2004

Ray Casey confirmed that, having spoken to the current members of the CBA committee including the Treasurer, it was agreed that the CBA would no longer be an independent body but would become the Retail Sector of The Business Group.

Due to the priority that had to be given to his business and the fact that Ray was invariably working away from Crowborough each day, Ray had no option but to relinquish the Chairmanship of the CBA. An added factor was Sue Newbury's retirement and departure from Crowborough resulting in her giving up the joint CBA chairmen's role. There was no-one else on the committee to replace him. Merging into The Business Group was the only viable option especially as the overwhelming majority of the CBA members were retailers in any event.

Ray agreed to continue his operational, communication and organisational roles over such events as the Summer Fair, Christmas Celebrations Day, Traders' Map that should be completed ready for distribution with a few weeks, any links and work connected with The Farmer's Market and any such things that required liaison with the Town Council Manager.

Ray also agreed to attend Partnership meetings to support the Business Group as the representative of the Retail Sector. Hopefully, this would be acceptable to The Crowborough Partnership. As before, only the Chairman of the Business Group would have voting rights on the very rare occasion that was necessary. Members of the former CBA Committee would automatically be invited to attend future Business Policy Group meetings.

It was agreed that Ray and TS would work together to deal with the outcome of the Market Sector meetings to support retailers in formulating a programme and actions plans to combat the perceived threats and improve competitiveness and communication amongst retailers throughout the town. The original group of retailers would approve what TS and Ray had in mind to involve and support retailers and TS would set about putting something together in the first instance.

Currently, the CBA has some funding that originated from the defunct Chamber of Commerce. In the short and medium term, this is earmarked for the former CBA related activities. No doubt, some of that could be used to fund the next stages of the action for retailers arising from the Market Sector meeting. However, if there were events/expenditure that benefited retailers as well as 'non retailers' that The Business Group agreed should be taken on, consideration could be given to using any surplus funds but it would require former CBA members consent in line with their terms of reference.

The whole situation and arrangements would be reviewed no later than November 2004, but earlier if required.

The concept of the CBA becoming an integral part of The Business Group had been discussed over a number of months and had been raised at a CBA meeting last November as it seemed to be a logical and natural evolution and would eliminate any confusion over the role to support and enhance the local economy.

