

Notes of the Bar Working Group held Friday 9th January 2008 at Filton Sports & Leisure Centre

Present :- Cllrs Adam Monk, Terry Pomroy, Doug Daniels
Heather Beese, Lesley Reuben, Bob Whiting (Scottish & Newcastle Club Specialist)

Apologies :- Stan Sims , Alan Tink

- Cllr Monk opened the meeting by explaining to Bob Whiting from Scottish and Newcastle that problems had been experienced with declining profits. Measures had already been put in place to cut costs. The working group wanted to know if there was anything the Brewery could suggest that might help. It would also be necessary to look into the terms of the contract and the loan and maybe restructuring or re-pricing might be advantageous.
- Bob explained that there was an 8.4% decline nationally within the licensed trade since the 'New Licensing Laws and smoking ban'. The Ratepayers Arms graphs showed a slow decline in Beer sales over the year whereas the Cider had remained popular. Recent press coverage for the bar had been excellent publicity – whether good or adverse it had raised awareness and worked as a very good advertising campaign. Bob explained the way the loan worked and an idea to raise profits could be to pay back the loan. He also stated that all the measures that have been taken to reduce costs are exactly what he would have advised if we had called him in as a trouble shooter to help. Bob finished by saying that he would go away with the Groups concerns and report back to a future. Cllr Monk asked if it would be possible for the presentation to be given at a meeting of the full Council where public also attend. Bob was more than happy to do this however he would have to consult and confirm a date with the regional manager Jason Burton on his return from leave as he covers our patch normally.
- Cllr Monk thanked Bob for attending which had proved very helpful and informative.
- WiFi – quotes were still awaited from the IT experts
- Décor – the mirrors had now been moved and the paintwork was looking shabby and revealed nicotine stains – the Clerk explained that this was already in hand and the site manager was in the process of organising the washing of walls and a fresh coat of paint.
- Staff had raised concerns over changes in the Bar and how to answer queries from customers who were being given conflicting information – it was agreed to invite staff to an informal meeting (date to be confirmed) where questions could be answered first hand.

- Next meetings – Friday 16th 10.30a.m. Friday 23rd 10.30a.m. to meet with the Scottish & Newcastle- to be confirmed when Jason returns from leave.

Notes of the Bar Working Group held Friday 16th January 2008 at Filton Sports & Leisure Centre

Present :- Cllrs Adam Monk, Terry Pomroy, Doug Daniels, Alan Tink
John Beese, Lesley Reuben,

Apologies :- Stan Sims

- Cllr Monk opened the meeting by reviewing all previous meeting notes to recap and ensure that actions had been done;
- Minimum stock levels had been agreed and it was agreed to discuss these with the Steward now that he had returned to work.
- Staffing Levels needed to be strictly adhered to – however the Steward felt this was difficult at times especially with large functions. Agreed to try and get estimated numbers attending prior to the date.
- Signage - agreed to recommend directional signage at the entrance to the car park and improved lighting for the sign on the side of the Pavilion.
- Skittle League – contact to encourage teams
- Daytime meeting with user groups i.e. Parent & Toddler, OAPs, Colleges to see what we can offer.
- Suggestion Box – responses were read out, very positive feedback with some good suggestions to work with.
- Wifi – still awaiting the quote from the IT experts – agreed to chase again.
- TV – £425 worth of Argos vouchers had been received from the suppliers of Wines and Spirits in the previous financial year. A small amount had been spent on gazebo's for the Festival. The remaining vouchers were nearing their expiry date.
The Bar TV was nearing the end of its life and it was agreed to purchase a replacement TV with the vouchers
- Jazz Night – the Steward was organizing a Jazz night for the end of February and it was agreed that if possible this should take place on a Saturday and not Sunday as this could be misleading for customers.
- It was confirmed that the meeting with staff would be held on 22nd January 6.15p.m. in the Skittle Alley

Next meeting Friday 23rd January at 10.30a.m. when it is hoped to have some feedback from the Brewery.

Notes of the Bar Working Group held Friday 23rd January 2008 at Filton Sports & Leisure Centre

Present :- Cllrs Terry Pomroy, Doug Daniels, Alan Tink
John Beese, Lesley Reuben, Jason Burton (Scottish & Newcastle
Regional Manager)

Apologies :- Stan Sims Adam Monk,

1. Cllr Pomroy recapped on the reason for the meeting and hoped Scottish & Newcastle could offer advice on the way forward.
2. Jason reminded the group about the state of the economy and that the Brewery were not in a position to be giving away thousands of pounds. However if we able to repay the loan (which was costing us £16.67 every barrel/6p per pint) there would be more flexibility for help with increasing profits.
3. All the correct measures had already been put into place especially where the cut in the varieties of real ales were concerned. Another option would be purchased bottled real ales to give the customer a wider selection as these had a longer shelf life so maintaining the reduction in wastage.
4. At a glance Jason could see that our pricing structure was wrong and suggested they ran in line with the strength of the beer and profit margin. Individual products should be priced accordingly. Some beers ie. Abbot sales is popular but the price charged of £2.50 per pint is only gives a 35% profit where as other beers could give us as much as 60% profit. He suggested a full review of pricing and it was agreed the Clerk send him a full price list to review.
5. A flier inviting residents to a 'Have Your Say' type meeting could be organised and the Brewery may be able to help with the cost of this.
6. Signage – again the discussion of signage and drawing in passing trade. It was agreed to meet with South Glos Officers to see if a sign was possible on the A.38 directing customers to the Ratepayers.
7. Bar décor – it was agreed to thank the maintenance staff for painting the bar which had made a big improvement. It was agreed to recommend that the corridor partition be removed to allow a more open and inviting feel. Also to arrange for the area behind the bar to be brightened up with a coat of paint.
8. Bingo – it was agreed for the Steward to go ahead and arrange the Bingo as he felt appropriate.
9. Date of next meeting – Friday 30th Jan. 10.30a.m. in the Lounge.