

## MASCOT Members Meeting Minutes

**Venue** Bacchus Hotel, Sutton on Sea  
**Date** Thursday, 11th May 2011  
**Time** 7:00-8:00 p.m.

### Those Present

Peter Ross (PR)  
Karen Ross (KR)  
John Handley (JH)  
Chris Drew (CD)  
John Clarke (JC)  
David Brailsford (DB)  
John Carter (JCa)  
Richard Houltyby (RH)  
Graham Cullen (GC)  
June Jones (JJ)  
Helen Matthews (HM)  
Jim Needham (JN)  
David Carruthers (DC)  
Russell Bolesworth (RB)  
Victoria Bolesworth (VB)  
Ben Pilgrim (BP)

### Apologies

Tony Howard  
Chris Flanagan  
Elizabeth Elvidge  
John Finley  
Debbie Sutcliffe  
Shuan Smith  
Robert Watson  
Rob Manning  
Keith Butters  
David Andrews  
Karen Froggat  
Graham Parkhurst  
Karen Brant

DB opened the meeting at 7:00. Apologies were given as above. The review of the previous minutes was delayed until the next meeting as copies were not available.

CD proposed the AGM be held on the 8<sup>th</sup> of June at 7pm in the Bacchus Hotel and the room agreed. The meeting will also include an update on MASCOT's activities and consultation with members.

JH elaborated that the committee requires feedback on two issues in particular:

The Environment Agency is currently reviewing the future of the sea defences and beach re-nourishment scheme. MASCOT is part of the consultation and we will be pushing for any solution that results in a relaxation of planning restrictions.

Secondly the Town Council is required to finalise a Town Plan to which MASCOT has been asked to contribute. JH had a completed plan from Leadenham as an example.

David Andrews was not available to give a treasurers report but had informed JH that renewals continue to flow in and the balance is around £2,000.

#### **Chairman**

John Handley 01507 443374 chairman@mascot.org.uk

#### **Acting Secretary**

Chris Drew 07837 781261 chris.drew@tinyislandssoftware.com

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Keith Butters was not available to give a membership secretary report but the committee are aware that renewals are reasonable.

DB now introduced Ben Pilgrim, a PR consultant working on behalf of Tesco.

BP thanked MASCOT for agreeing to meet and explained that Tesco would play an active role in the local business community. The planning application for a store on the Station Road site was submitted a week earlier but had not yet been registered by the council. The application is for a 28,000 square foot store (approx 1/3<sup>rd</sup> larger than the Co-op) with 150 car parking spaces. The application for the new 'greatly enhanced' sports centre to be located down Stanley Avenue is still being worked on. There is a legal agreement that the existing sports centre cannot be closed until the new one is open. The war memorial will stay in place and Tesco have liaised with both the Town Council and British Legion on this issue. The new store will keep people shopping locally and hopefully increase footfall in the town centre shops. It will create approx 150 jobs (full & part time) with good relative pay and flexibility. BP hopes the plans will be approved in 3 to 4 months. The Leisure Centre will take around 9 months to build and the store a further 9 months after that.

BP then took questions from the room:

JCa Highlighted the traffic problems already present on many of the high street junctions and asked what changes were planned. BP replied that the pedestrian crossing would be moved away from the Station Road junction towards the sea. Traffic studies have been done and BP will send the estimated traffic figures through. Several MASCOT members commented that this would be an opportunity to introduce the long overdue pedestrainised section.

JH asked if BP thought highways believed the project could work – yes.

HM stressed that traffic counts must take the high season into account. BP assured her that the highways department insisted it did.

PR asked what would happen to the Co-op? BP says retail studies suggest there will be enough business for both stores.

PR asked about the Golf Road site. BP explained that talks with Lindum broke down some time ago and Tesco are now putting their money and effort into the Station Road project.

JCa asked about the loss of car parking spaces and venue for the market. BP said that Tesco's car park would allow parking for 2 to 3 hours and it is usual that people parking there would use other shops as well as Tesco. The market is a question for the council who are committed to keeping it but haven't decided on a location as yet.

#### Chairman

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JH explained MASCOT's preference for a market on the high street which again could tie into pedestrianisation. The room agreed that pedestrianisation would be a benefit and now could be the time.

DB asked about the loss of the public toilets. BP explained there would be in-store toilets available to the public (including those not shopping) during open hours.

CD asked about opening hours. BP said 10pm to 11pm close is likely.

HM liked the artist's impression of the area around the war memorial and wondered if a band stand could be incorporated. BP stressed that now the application is in this is the time for consultation and feedback.

GC asked if 200 people would be able to gather around the memorial on remembrance Sunday. BP said hopefully so and repeated that the British Legion have been consulted.

CD made a statement on behalf of Councillor Tony Howard who was unable to attend: The new store requires the demolition of the sports centre. A new sports centre is to be built down Stanley Avenue but the public has not been asked what they want. For example a swimming pool or indoor bowls area (to compliment the very successful outdoor bowls already on Stanley Avenue) would present a real benefit to the town. JJ added that it shouldn't be seen as ELDC's sports centre but as the people's sports centre. BP replied that Tesco will buy the land and pay for the construction of the sports centre but it is ELDC that will decide what is built and therefore they are the ones to lobby.

CD asked what would be sold. BP explained that as markets change and the store is 2 years away that is hard to answer but as a guide 80% to 90% will be food sales the rest is likely to be made up from clothes, shoes, small electrical goods (white goods unlikely), papers and magazines, CD's and DVDs. Banking facilities are unlikely due to the store size.

JCa & JH commented on the lack of expansion options suggesting the Golf Road site would be a better bet. BP replied that if the Station Road project goes ahead he can't see another supermarket being built on Golf Road. If planning was approved for Golf Road then Tesco would take a commercial decision on whether to proceed at Station Road but BP felt that there were too many planning issues at Golf Road.

JH said the Golf Road proposal brings a bigger supermarket, petrol station, pub, care centre and more houses to the area – why is the Station Sports proposal better for the town? BP replied that it will increase footfall in the town centre.

JH was also concerned that the supermarket would be out of character with the high street. BP replied that it was designed to be sympathetic.

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GC asked how much Tesco would be spending in the town. BP explained that the 106 discussions haven't started yet (the new sports centre is NOT part of a 106 agreement).

RH asked what projects are typical? BP replied that road improvements, signage and Town Centre Manager funding are all common.

CD explained the problem of empty cash machines across bank holidays particularly now the HSBC has closed and asked if Tesco would (like the co-op) have an externally accessible cash machine – at least 2 are required. BP replied that it would – at least 2.

JJ asked if the store would incorporate a cafe. BP replied that no decision has been made yet. Various members pointed out that there are already a lot of cafes and this would be a problem.

JH asked why the retail survey that concluded the area couldn't support another supermarket has now been disregarded by ELDC – particularly when both the co-op and Lidl's have since expanded. BP felt extra business would come from locals who currently travel out of the area to shop and those in nearby villages who don't currently travel into Mablethorpe. Planning approval will include an assessment of the impact to existing shops.

JH pointed out that local population growth is now frozen due to the Environment Agency and ELDC's policies and that Tesco should join MASCOT in campaigning for a relaxation of the planning restrictions.

JN asked if Tesco's used data from its club cards and online orders to identify likely shoppers in the area. BP replied that this is the case and the area will have been flagged up as an opportunity partly because of this data.

KR asked when the planning application would be approved /declined. BP explained once it is registered the process of negotiation has an initial 13 week target.

RB asked why the sports centre and supermarket will take so long to build. BP answered that the 9 months are early and conservative estimates. It is in Tesco's interest to build both facilities as quickly as possible.

DB thanked BP who has promised to email the secretary with requested items and updates and also offered to return for another meeting to provide an update if required.

DB closed the meeting at approx 8pm.

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