



Meeting report – Freshers & Festive Planning session

Sheffield Plate, Orchard Square

10.00am to 11.30am, Friday, 4 August 2023

We were delighted to welcome 15 attendees to this special ‘Freshers & Festive’ planning session, including representatives from Bella Italia, The Botanist, The Furnace, New River, Orchard Square, Savills, The Sheff, Sheffield Cathedral, Sheffield Hallam University, Sheffield Plate, Sheffield Walking Tours and Subway.

Summary of discussion points covered in the meeting 04.08.23

City centre ‘student takeover’ – plans for 2023

- In 2022, activities aimed at the new September cohort focused on a one-day ‘city centre student takeover’ activity held on Tuesday, 3 October.
- This was followed by two (‘Gather’) events – working with Sheffield Hallam University (SHU) – to take a number of city centre businesses on to campus to directly engage with SHU staff and students.
- Scenarios were presented for 2023 around potential timings of activity for (i) similar activity to that undertaken in 2022 or (ii) a move towards a longer period of activity. Either option could be combined with the chance to undertake another ‘Gather’ activity on campus at SHU, with dates and options presented.
- The group agreed that the main aim of any activity of this nature should be to raise awareness of what is ‘on their doorstep’ – particularly when referring to new arrivals to Sheffield from September 2023 – and to present the variety that the city centre has to offer. It is also an opportunity to show off the city centre ‘in a big way’ to a new audience.

Agreed: The group agreed that moving towards a week-long activity – w/c Monday 25 September – would be the preferred option for 2023. Running over a longer period would enable more city centre businesses to be involved, provide offers and incentives over a suitable period (one day, multiple days or the whole week) that would be convenient to them and attractive to a potential new customer. It was also agreed that – of the options presented – Thursday, 12 October would be the preferred date for a ‘Gather’ event.

Actions: Sheffield BID to make initial contact with city centre businesses, both those involved in this session and those not involved in this planning session, to assess interest and potential participation levels for a ‘city centre student takeover’ and ‘Gather’ in 2023.

For follow-up: The Moor and Orchard Square would meet – post-meeting – to consider potential links via an ‘instant prize’ proposal which was highlighted at the meeting. This *could* form part of the student engagement activity in 2023 if timelines permitted.

Christmas 2023

- The main Christmas timings – as they are known – at this stage of the year were presented, including the Christmas Markets and for related activities such as the Christmas Lights Switch On. Some activities, including the Lights Switch On, are subject to confirmation.
- Discussion around whether there was an opportunity to better coordinate – or at least promote – opening times across the city centre in the run up to Christmas highlighted the challenges involved.
- The group agreed the need to improve cross-promotion – both between businesses and linked with city centre events and activities. Sheffield BID confirmed that they would once again be using the sheffieldcitycentre.com platform for showcasing the best of the Christmas season in Sheffield city centre and would put out a call for content in the coming weeks across various sectors.

Dates for the diary

- The next High Street Forum is 10am on **Tuesday, 12 September** at Virgin Money Lounge, Fargate. Formal invitations would be issued shortly and anyone wanting to attend is invited to email enquiries@sheffieldbid.com.