

Salisbury Competitive Brand Positioning Business and Stakeholder Event
5th July 2019
Feedback Summary

More than 100 representatives of Salisbury businesses and stakeholder organisations attended the event on 5th June to hear the outcome of the work to develop a new competitive brand positioning for the city.

This is a summary of feedback to date from the event discussion groups, individual feedback forms, and comments.

In summary:

- There was consistently a very positive response to the positioning from all sectors and all sizes of businesses.
- Responses showed significant commitment to implementing the positioning across all sectors and businesses.
- A number of consistent themes arose in terms of implementation: the need and desire for ongoing collaboration and partnership working, a desire for strong leadership to take the positioning forward, engagement with residents and education sector, 'fixing' some basic issues of place management, the need for a clear brand management function.
- A need was identified for tools and support for businesses and organisations to use the positioning in their own work.

Brand Positioning – feedback and views

Feedback on the competitive brand positioning idea and narratives was positive, with many commenting on how in-depth and collaborative the project has been to date.

The following elements were repeatedly mentioned to be the 'best parts' of the positioning:

Juxtaposition of old and new
Making of 'new traditions'
Artisan/ crafted with care
Recognition of independent thinking
Making Salisbury vibrant and energetic
The aspirational and positive tone
Positivity

The closest anyone came to a negative comment about the positioning was one comment questioning whether 'original' was a truthful description of the city but hoped it would drive ambition and aspiration for the city.

"The aspirational level is inspirational. I see Salisbury through new eyes now."

"It feels a good fit with what we are what we hope to be."

"Our group loved the positioning"

"Today is like a catalyst, we love the positioning it feels right for everyone around the table"

“Looking forward – taking what we have and adding the extra layers of modern technology and communication. It should be a great springboard for young entrepreneurs – new ideas collaboration.”

What Needs to Happen to Implement the Positioning?

Several themes emerged in answer to this question:

- **Partnership and Collaboration**

There was an appreciation shown in many comments of the collaborative nature of the work to date and the opportunity to be involved and share ideas along the way. Many commenters were enthusiastic to have a mechanism to be involved in the implementation going forward and to have a mechanism to facilitate ongoing collaboration.

“ the feeling in the room was overwhelmingly positive and I am excited by the prospect of all the local authorities and association (and there are a lot of them!) working collaboratively towards a common goal.”

“ we need to work together and as individuals to implement what is decided – it is up to us now.”

- **Leadership**

Many commented on the need for strong leadership commitment in the city to drive the positioning forward and make it a reality and several welcomed the idea of a Place Board to include community, business, arts representatives.

“ We need a really strong place forward for coordination with other initiatives and ensure implementation”

Pauline Church confirmed that a Place Board would be established.

- **Engagement with Residents and the Education Sector**

The need to make the positioning a reality for all in Salisbury – and to engage with young people was repeatedly mentioned.

Picking up on the need to fulfil our ‘care’ aspirations from the brand model, the need to build pride in our city through a Residents Campaign was highlighted.

“ whatever’s done needs to take the whole of the population with us so it is imperative that this can work and be accessible for everyone. It needs to blow away as many people as possible!”

- **Fixing the Basics/Care for the Environment**

There were many mentions of the need to address elements such as traffic systems, environmental cleanliness, planning, empty shop premises, etc as a visual sign of ‘care’ for the city environment.

“First stage is to establish new norm, clean environment, clear signage.... effective functioning place enabling businesses to operate effectively. Then we need the development of activities and events which define Salisbury.”

- **Brand Management**

Many comments recognised the need for effective brand management in order to ensure that the brand is communicated effectively by all who use it/ not diluted/ applied with care to ensure the positivity is communicated. (One commenter suggested that this was especially important to ensure that the use of words like ‘Traditional’ do not convey negative connotations.)

“Create brand champions ... to help deliver and communicate the positioning – again you don’t want the brand to be misinterpreted/diluted it needs to be clear and protected.”

Suggestions and ideas for a city level implementation included:

Live Events – concerts, street performance
Early evening activity to link shopping and socialising
Trails – food and drink, sculpture
Beacon of light from the Cathedral
Covered artisan market/Salisbury Fayre
Connecting with and drawing on the heritage of the Chequers

What is needed to enable organisations/businesses to use the positioning?

Detailed guidance on application was mentioned by a range of businesses, including mentions of guidelines, free of charge assets, a photo library, templates, etc.

“Need to have a practical guide to how this could be applied to various elements of communications, signage and organisational practice – very abstract at the moment.”

“A point of contact – a way to get involved so that when there are new ideas where they go to show them so everyone knows about them so that we can achieve joint working.”

“ Effective communication about it – maybe through smaller focus groups (e.g. Indies) so that it can be explained to them with ideas of how they could use it effectively.”

Summary of Recommendations

The following recommendations arise from consideration of the feedback from the event discussion groups and feedback.

- Establishment of Place Board as a mechanism of leadership and partnership working and to “own” the development and funding of implementation ideas going forward.
- Identify quick wins for implementation.
- Continue to involve businesses and stakeholders in positioning and implementation, giving further opportunities to input / share / collaborate.
- Review options for establishing Salisbury Champions/Ambassadors Programme as a platform for ongoing collaboration.
- Development of brand guidelines and toolkit – engagement with stakeholders and business community to ensure this meets their needs.
- Develop a visual identity that can work with existing brands.
- Establish Brand Management Team to manage the development and guide application of the brand, particularly in communications.
- Linked to the Brand Management Team, establish a group of marketing professionals to take forward / advise on implementation.
- Establish a means to engage with residents and schools.
- Secure commitments from key stakeholders on how they will adopt the positioning.
- A residents ‘Pride in Our City’ campaign to promote the ‘care’ brand value.
- Explore the potential to establish a trademark to show Salisbury provenance.
- Look to develop a longer term approach (funding and support has been secured until March 2020, in order to create a visual identity, brand guidelines for partners and businesses and a toolkit.)