

Social media survey of Bingley Community Gift card idea

Introduction

At the June F&GP, scrutiny was correctly applied to the support of the Community Gift card idea advocated by Joe Wheatley and Lewis Kirdale. In addition to having conversations with business owners in Bingley, the following question was posed on Facebook on the page of Councillor Kirdale and then shared across local community groups; Eldwick and Gilstead Community Group, Bingley Residents and Bingley and Crossflatts Community:

I'm after your thoughts. How would you feel about the introduction of a community gift card?

It would look a little like this: <https://miconexpartners.com/town-and-city-gift-cards/>. It would be shared between Baildon, Bingley and Shipley meaning that Town Councils would share the costs and you as consumers can have lunch in Baildon, a coffee in Shipley and a pint in Bingley all on the same card.

It is a pre-loaded giftcard where the "giver" puts x amount on the card. The recipient can then spend it on whatever businesses sign up - the only rule is that they have to be independent businesses.

The thinking is that we try something new to reinvigorate our town, engage local business and get us spending in central Bingley.

Four options were provided and a fifth was added by a resident:

- As a consumer, this is a great idea
- As a consumer, this idea could be better (elaborate in the comments please)
- As a business owner, this is a great idea
- As a business owner, this idea could be better (elaborate in the comments please)
- As a consumer I wouldn't be interested [added by a resident]

Results as of 12:40 on 11/07/2022

- As a consumer, this is a great idea: **78% / 117 votes**
- As a consumer, this idea could be better (elaborate in the comments please): **1% / 2 votes (suggestions received)**
- As a business owner, this is a great idea: **7% / 11 votes**
- As a business owner, this idea could be better (elaborate in the comments please): **0% / 0 votes**
- As a consumer I wouldn't be interested [added by a resident]: **13% / 20 votes**

In total, **85% / 128** responses were strongly in the affirmative that this is a great idea.

The suggestions for improvement are as follows:

Resident A:

Hello! Think your gift card idea is a great one but I'm not adding my "anything else" to the comments as someone is bound to disagree.... I said "and something else" as my choice. Could it be set up so that local funds or charities could also benefit? For example, if I got the card as a gift, I may want to donate it to the food bank.... How could they use it? (Challenge probably there is that they may want to use it to buy great value food in Aldi but that wouldn't work as it's not an independent business and the independents cost more...) But you get my point!

Resident B:

Whilst it's hard for local businesses already running on tight margins you would need to incentivise people to do this. Ultimately gift cards can be challenging as funds are not protected should business (or the card provider) go bust and many people have been stung by this previously with High Street chains over recent years as well 'Christmas clubs'. The general advice to consumers is therefore to avoid due to the risk involved.

Unedited (by me) feedback can be viewed:

- [Councillor page](#)
- [Bingley and Crossflatts Community](#)
- [Bingley Residents](#)
- [Eldwick and Gilstead Community Group](#)
- [YouTube channel](#)

In total, it is likely that between 3,000 and 3,500 users viewed these posts across each of these posts.

Conclusions

Those polled are in favour of Bingley having a community gift card. There isn't universal interest, but no initiative is ever going to achieve that. It led to interesting conversations about our town which Councillors may benefit from reviewing.

Given 85% of respondents were enthusiastic about the introduction of this, it is fair to surmise that this is likely a popular initiative. It indicates that Bingley Town Council would be looked upon favourably for introducing such a scheme.

Ilkley is advertising the initiation of their community gift card at present. This is an opportunity for Bingley to be seen as an early adopter, as a progressive and dynamic town council reflexive to the wants and needs of residents and local business owners for a small year on year outlay.