

STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

PROFORMA

Cabinet Meeting3rd December 2015

1. Title of Item/Report

The Use and Control of Activities in our Town Centres

2. Record of the Decision

To seek Cabinet approval to establish policy guidelines to coordinate and manage activities taking place within Stockton's town centres, including promotional activities, the marketing of goods and services and research/canvassing purposes.

Ensuring that the high streets and town centres can thrive requires the provision of not only a range of essential shops and services, but attractions and activities that help ensure that they are a social place and encourage a vibrant economy.

In addition to celebrating the role that markets / specialist markets play in re-energising the high street, the report looked at the role street traders, pedlers, buskers and other activities had in enhancing the vibrancy and attractiveness of high streets and Town Centres.

It had long been recognised that thriving markets, entertainers and street traders add to the variety and joie de vivre of our High Streets, the diversity of shopping opportunities, and the character of the neighbourhoods in which they were located.

In addition, these types of activities can provide valuable employment / volunteering opportunities for local people as well as in some cases be a seedbed of entrepreneurship.

Activities on the High Street and in the Town Centres should contribute positively to the public realm, this was vital if the Council was to be successful in creating environments that people want to visit, socialise, live and work in. Equally activities should satisfy demand, by providing goods, services, entertainment or information that was required.

To that end Stockton-On-Tees Borough Council wanted to establish a policy framework within which a range of activities were considered,

encouraged and permitted where appropriate. However these permissions should not detract from for example the quiet enjoyment of residential areas, or the unhindered enjoyment, specific fixed or temporary installations of art or the performing arts.

Demand for use of the highway in our town centres by external organisations had increased significantly, especially following completion of the recent regeneration schemes. The benefits to an organisation in using the highway for promotional activities were clear in terms of providing access to a large footfall. Organisations do not incur overheads and business rates by operating in such areas. Examples of organisations operating in this manner in town centres include charities, the armed forces, and commercial organisations, for example Sky TV, mobile phone operators, religious and political organisations.

However, with an increased number of organisations wanting to operate in town centre areas, it would be prudent to set policy guidelines to avoid uncontrolled and inappropriate activity that would detrimentally impact upon visitors enjoyment and experience. Many local authorities across the UK and a number of Welsh authorities had developed policy frameworks which allowed them to licence and manage town centre activities.

Attached to the report were the proposed policy guidelines for consideration.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The draft policy guidelines attached at Appendices 1- 4 be approved for consultation with key stakeholders.
2. Final approval of the guidelines be delegated to Director of Public Health and Head of Economic Growth and Development Services in consultation with relevant Cabinet Members.

3. Reasons for the Decision

To ensure that Members are aware of the current issues that a current lack of controls is having within town centre areas, whilst ensuring that appropriate recommendations are suggested which will enable the Council to effectively control and monitor activities in these areas.

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None.

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

None.

6. Details of any Dispensations

N/A

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

Midnight on 11th December 2015

Proper Officer
07 August 2015