

Markets Forum

A meeting of the Markets Forum was held on Wednesday, 15th March 2006.

Present: Councillor Cook (Chairman); Councillors Mrs Beaumont and Noble.

Officers: P Hutchinson, G McDonald and C Watson (DNS); R Kench (CESC); Mrs T Harrison (LD)

Also in attendance: Mrs L Hutchison, P Johnson and Mrs P Mason (Market Trader Representatives) and R Agar (Bravura)

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Mrs Fletcher, Narroway and Mrs S Burgess (DNS).

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 22nd February 2006 were agreed as a true record with the following amendments. In the conclusion of Stockton International Riverside Festival point 3 should be changed from Mr Kench to be contacted to Mr Noble to be contacted.

Stockton International Riverside Festival 2006

Mr Kench provided Members with the data which had been collected regarding the Stockton International Riverside Festival for 2005 and confirmed that the Festival had been a success and they believed that the town received at least 50,000 visitors however it was believed that the actual figure doubled that amount.

Mr Kench acknowledged the need to reduce any negative affect on the market and advised that although they had improved disabled access there was still room for improvement.

He also acknowledged the need to look at how the town was policed in the evenings to make it a better environment for families during the Riverside Festival.

It was acknowledged that Market Traders should be informed as early as possible, however early consultation had not been possible due to the lack of meetings of the Markets Forum as a result of the upcoming elections.

Mr Kench advised that they were making every effort to inform Market Traders that a much earlier stage in preparation for the Stockton Riverside Festival 2006.

Mr Kench advised that he could not present a full plan and itinerary of the Stockton International Riverside Festival as many of the acts were yet to be booked were in the early stages and many were new acts and were unsure of the size and space their acts would require at this stage.

Mr Kench was able to provide a map of the Town Centre showing the position of some of the events that had already been booked and organised. The main stage would be in place but would be narrower and shorter and would have less seating than the previous year.

For 2006 there would be a maze which would cover the same footprint and vicinity as the marquee of the previous year.

One of the acts would be a high wire act that would be 30 metres above the High Street which required poles at either end of the High Street and a truck measuring 2m x 8m which would be parked and provide a central supporting pole of high wire along the north side of the Town Hall.

There would also be a pole in situ towards Dovecot Street for a second act. There would also be a small fenced off area resembling a garden which would be 7 metres square in the vicinity of the Littlewoods Retail Shop.

Members were advised that all equipment would be erected at the latest possible time.

The Markets Manager advised that once they knew what was being put in place they would look at the repositioning of the stalls and find out which market traders would be disrupted. The Markets Manager would then write to all stall holders asking if they wished to trade during Stockton International Riverside Festival with the possibility of those who would be disrupted yet wished to trade, taking the temporary space of those not wishing to trade.

All issues relating to compensation would be dealt with by the Town Centre Manager.

The Market Trader Representative queried what would happen if Market Traders advised that they would not move and was advised that the Council were not legally required to ensure that the same plot and size was provided. It was merely that a plot and size was offered.

Members queried the possibility of the Stockton International Riverside Festival and Market being advertised together as great emphasis was made on the Stockton International Riverside Festival as it appeared that the market which was a traditional market and had been going for many, many years was sidelined when it should in fact be hand in hand with the Festival.

The Chair advised that such decisions were not purely up to Mr Kench but also involved the Town Centre Manager. It was confirmed that the Town Centre Manager had been invited to join in the meeting with Mr Kench and such matters would be discussed.

Members discussed the possibility of changing the time of the Markets Forum meeting to 6.00pm.

CONCLUDED that:-

1. Upon receiving further details of the proposals and areas to be occupied by act and equipment for the Stockton International Riverside Festival the Markets Manager would find out who of the market traders would be disrupted and would then write to all stallholders asking if they wished to trade during the Stockton International Riverside Festival. Upon their replies the Markets Manager would look at the possibility of relocating those market traders who would be disrupted to vacated sites.

2. The Stockton International Riverside Festival would be on the agenda for the next meeting.
3. The times of the Markets Forum meeting would change to 6.00pm.