

Markets Forum

A meeting of Markets Forum was held on Wednesday, 19th September, 2007.

Present: Cllr Robert Cook (Chair), Cllr Mrs Jennie Beaumont, Cllr Ian Dalgarno, Cllr John Fletcher (Vice Cllr Mrs Suzanne Fletcher), Cllr Bill Noble

Officers: S. Burgess, C. Watson (DNS), M. Jones (LD)

Also in attendance: L. Palmer, Market Traders

Apologies: Cllr Mrs Suzanne Fletcher

MF 9/07 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no interests declared at the meeting.

MF 10/07 **Minutes of Meeting Held 18th July 2007**

The Town Centre Manager updated that there was a delay in the production of No Smoking signs. It was queried whether the panini van would be affected by the No Smoking regulations, and the Town Centre Manager confirmed that there were restrictions on smoking in the panini van area.

CONCLUDED that the minutes of the meeting held 18th July 2007 be agreed as a true record.

MF 11/07 **Markets Fair Final Plans**

The Town Centre Manager reported on the Markets Fair that took place on 12th September 2007 and 15th September 2007. Although footfall figures were not recorded, it was agreed that the fair was a success with a noticeable increase of trade. Officers noted the number of traders that wore fancy dress and decorated their stalls for the fair, and the publicity gained from the fair.

Market Trader representatives suggested holding further market events on a two monthly basis and the Town Centre Manager noted that there was an opportunity to hold a Christmas Fair on 8th December 2007. It was noted that several events would take place in Stockton Town Centre on each Saturday during December 2007, and these would support such a fair. It was agreed that the Town Centre Manager would poll market traders, and if there was enough support, a Christmas Fair would be held on 8th December 2007.

Officers requested that for week commencing 24th December 2007 the Wednesday market, which would take place on Boxing Day, be moved to Christmas Eve, Monday 24th December. The Traders approved that the market would change day on that occasion.

CONCLUDED that:

1. A poll would be taken of Market Traders regarding a Christmas Fair.
2. The market would change dates from Wednesday 26th December 2007, to Monday 24th December 2007.

MF Stall Covers Terms and Conditions of Use

12/07

The Town Centre Manager noted that a small number of stall covers had leaked in heavy rain, and the possible reasons for this were discussed. However, as the covers had been pressure hose tested and it was a very small number of covers that had leaked, the Officers were happy it was not a major design problem. The company that provided the covers were to perform further tests, and 40% of payment was being withheld until Officers were satisfied with the covers, as per the contract with the company.

It was agreed that a discussion on Stall Covers Terms and Condition of Use would be deferred until the issue was corrected.

CONCLUDED that the information be noted.

MF Go-Stockton Website Introduction

13/07

L. Palmer gave a verbal presentation on Go-Stockton.com. The website, which was a private enterprise and not a Local Authority website, would be launched on 1st November 2007, and aimed to increase footfall into the town centre. The information on the website would be updated regularly and would be promoted through several sources, which included One NorthEast, Stockton Sparkles magazine, Stockton Tourism, press releases and posters. Wellington Square, Castlegate Centre and Stockton Markets would all have space on the website. The Stockton Markets page was to include a basic list of all traders, the products that they sold, and a link to their website if applicable.

There was an opportunity for market traders to have their own page on the website at a cost of £195 per annum. The Market Trader Representatives suggested that L. Palmer approach traders individually regarding the opportunity. It was also suggested that a notice on the website be placed in the rent office.

It was suggested that the website included information on other town centres in the Stockton Borough. It was further suggested that the website included a search engine that allowed the public to search the website by product. L. Palmer noted that these were possibilities for development of the website.

CONCLUDED that:

1. The information be noted.
2. L. Palmer to approach market traders individually regarding purchasing page on the website.
3. A poster be displayed in the rent office regarding the website.

MF Promotional Booklets Progress Update

14/07

It was noted that the promotional booklets, produced by The Circuit and which every trader had been interviewed for, had gone to press and would be published by 29th September 2007. The Market Trader Representatives

informed that the booklets would be allocated to traders and distributed to libraries, tourist information centres, bus terminals etc throughout Tees Valley, North Yorkshire, Durham and Northumbria.

CONCLUDED that the information be noted.

**MF
15/07** **Promotional Budget Update**

The Promotion Budget Expenditure was distributed and discussed.

It was noted that the rental of radios from Apex, which had been agreed at a previous Markets Forum meeting, had been discontinued due to complaints from traders. Market Trader Representatives believed that there was support for the radios, which kept them in touch with security services, and suggested that a secret ballot be held to ascertain whether traders wished to rent the radios. The Town Centre Manager explained that Officers could not dictate what the Promotion Budget was spent on, or influence the decision to hold a secret ballot, but were able to provide information on the cost of the radios if a ballot was to be held.

The Town Centre Manager wished it to be noted that the Teesside Princess annual social event was not paid for from the traders' promotional budget, but by Stockton Borough Council as a thank you for the ongoing support from traders. Those that wore fancy dress at the Markets Fair on both days were being issued with tickets for the event.

The Market Trader Representatives noted that the football teams that they had sponsored had been highlighted in the Evening Gazette's Grass Roots section.

CONCLUDED that the information be noted.

**MF
16/07** **Dates of Future Meetings**

Dates of future meetings were noted as follows.

*Wednesday 14th November 2007

*Wednesday 16th January 2008

*Wednesday 19th March 2008

Meetings would take place at 5.15pm in First Floor Committee Room, Town Hall, High Street, Stockton-on-Tees. Dates of further meetings would be discussed at the January 2008 meeting.

CONCLUDED that the information be noted.