

Markets Forum

A meeting of Markets Forum was held on Wednesday, 23rd July, 2008.

Present: Cllr Robert Cook (Chairman), Cllr Mrs Jennie Beaumont, Cllr Ian Dalgarno, Cllr Bill Noble, Cllr Mrs Maureen Rigg (vice-Cllr Mrs Suzanne Fletcher), Ms E Hutchinson, Mr P Johnson, Mrs P Mason.

Officers: S. Burgess, R. Kench, N. Laws, R. Pundford, C. Watson (DNS), M. Jones (LD).

Also in attendance: Ms L Mason (Market Trader)

Apologies: Cllr Mrs Suzanne Fletcher

M 9/08 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

M 10/08 **Minutes of Meeting Held 21st May 2008**

Members were presented with an update on the sites where traders would be displaced during the 2008 Stockton International Riverside Festival (SIRF). It was noted that there were fewer stalls that would be displaced than expected in the previous draft proposals, and those that were displaced would be allocated suitable alternative spaces. The site plans would be available for viewing in the Market Office.

The Head of Arts and Culture noted that he was aware of, and understood, the frustration caused by the delay in circulating the final plans for SIRF. He explained that this was due to the changes in the private company used to project manage the event, with the company that manage the artist directory taking over this role, and subsequent staffing issue incurred by the company. Members were assured that confirmation would be announced earlier next year.

CONCLUDED that:

1. the information be noted.
2. the minutes of the meeting held 21st May 2008 be agreed as a true record.

M 11/08 **Stockton Christmas Festival Update**

Members received an update on the plans to hold a Christmas Festival in 2008. This would be the first of three years of Christmas Festivals, with the final year being the 700th Anniversary of Stockton's Market Charter.

Following the proposals being presented to traders a working group had been formed with both traders and officers members, which met on a weekly basis, to discuss the detail of the event. The current proposals for the market element of the festival were as follows:-

- The Wednesday market would remain unaffected and the vast majority of pitches would be available as normal on Wednesday 26th November, however this was dependent on construction of the central stage next to the outdoor café being able to commence at 6pm. If not, a small number of stalls may be

displaced on the Wednesday. Traders would be advised at the earliest opportunity if this was the case

- Traders' own stalls could be used throughout the event subject to their conforming to agreed standards with the Markets Manager
- For traders north of the Town Hall up to Dodson's Fountain, existing pitches could be used
- For traders south of the Town Hall, regrettably displacement was inevitable to accommodate the Victorian Fair. These traders would be relocated for Thursday to Saturday either to any untaken pitches north of the Town Hall or in front of the Castlegate Centre. The Council would provide notices / flyers for all customers indicating temporary relocations for the duration of the festival.
- Commitment to the market was required for the full 3 days of Thursday 27th, Friday 28th and Saturday 29th November
- It had been agreed that the proposal for traders to stand on Sunday 30th November would be abandoned.
- Markets at Billingham on Friday 28th and Thornaby on Thursday 27th would operate if traders wished to stand at those locations instead, or "double up".

Members were informed that 24 traders had signed up for the festival, and that traders would be charged half rent for Thursday and Friday, and full rent for the Saturday on the basis that they commit for the three days overall. The Council would shortly be requesting deposits from traders who wished to stand, to protect their pitch allocations.

As well as the market, the following arrangements were also in place:-

- Crafts market booked for Thursday 27th – Sunday 30th November at Parish Gardens
- Farmers market booked for Thursday 27th November at Wellington Square / Dovecot Street
- No commercial continental markets would now take place during the festival this year
- A Victorian Fair was booked for Thursday 27th – Sunday 30th November between the Town Hall and taxi rank (Jason Moody)
- A charity fair was booked at The Parish Church for Saturday 29th November
- A programme of musical events at Green Dragon Yard / Cultural Quarter was shortly to be finalised
- Discussions with local community and businesses to hold a world fair were now at an advanced stage regarding attendance on Sunday 30th November
- A programme of regular street entertainment and stage shows for the High Street was to be finalised
- Discussions regarding a further major visitor attraction in the Town Centre (but not within the High Street) were underway but nothing had been agreed or formalised in this regard.

The Town Centre Manager noted her appreciation to traders for their input into the organisation of the fair, and it was suggested that the working group should continue to meet over the next two years to discuss the proposals for the future events.

CONCLUDED that the information be noted.

M
12/08 **Markets Fair, September**

The Town Centre Manager raised the suggestion of holding a market fair in September as had happened in previous years. The event would involve traders wearing victorian dress for free rent. A date had not been set for the event. It was suggested that letters were sent to all traders and feedback be brought to the next meeting.

CONCLUDED that the Town Centre Manager would write to all market traders.

M
13/08 **Branding Through Bags and Flags**

The Town Centre Manager provided information about a town centre-wide project which was investigating the introduction of environmentally friendly shopping bags, and an example was tabled. The bag would have a logo printed on to advertise the town centre. Bags would be given away to members of the public during a launch event, and SBC would purchase further bags in bulk so that both shop and market traders could sell these on for £2 each, gaining a small profit. After some discussion, members believed that a cotton bag would be a more a popular choice with members of the public, for both practical and aesthetic reasons.

The Town Centre Manager advised that the possibility of using pennant style stall extensions to market stalls was also being investigated, to enhance appearance and vibrancy of the market and an example was also tabled. These would be windproof and waterproof, and would have a design printed on them. It was suggested that approximately 20 - 30 flags would be purchased. Following site visits from various manufacturers it had emerged that there were two options for fitting:

1. Pennants on extension poles could be clipped on the stalls using stall clips
2. Placing sockets into the ground, which pennants could be fixed into.

It was agreed that planning issues needed to be explored before the proposal could be taken further.

CONCLUDED that planning issues be investigated following which more detailed options to be discussed with working group with a view to bringing information back to a later meeting.