

Markets Forum

A meeting of Markets Forum was held on Wednesday, 27th May, 2009.

Present: Cllr Mrs Jennie Beaumont, Cllr Robert Cook, Cllr Mrs Suzanne Fletcher and Cllr Bill Noble.

Officers: C. Watson, R. Bradley, M. Henderson, J. Glancey and Nigel Laws.

Also in attendance: Market Traders.

Apologies: Cllr I. Dalgarno, Mr P. Johnson, Mrs P. Mason, Ms E Hutchinson and Mr J. Mason.

M 1/09 Appointment of Chair for the Municipal Year 2009/10

Councillor Noble proposed and Councillor Mrs Fletcher seconded Cllr Cook

AGREED that Councillor Cook be appointed Chairman for the Municipal Year 2009/10

M 2/09 Appointment of Vice Chair for the Municipal Year 2009/10

Members agreed that this matter be deferred to the Forum's next meeting.

AGREED that the appointment of the vice chair for the Municipal Year 2009/2010 be deferred.

M 3/09 Declarations of Interest

There were no interests declared.

M 4/09 Minutes of the meeting held on 18th March 2008

The minutes of the meeting held on 18th March were agreed as a correct record.

M 5/09 Reporting of Minutes

Members were informed of a proposed process relating to the reporting of Council consultative panels and fora. This would include minutes of the Markets' Forum.

It was proposed that, following each Forum meeting, draft minutes would be circulated to relevant officers and all members of the Forum for comment. Any agreed amendments would be incorporated into the minutes and they would then be published on e genda and submitted to the next available meeting of Council. Subsequently, when the minutes were presented to the next meeting of the Forum, any amendments identified would be highlighted in the minutes of that meeting.

It was anticipated that this process would cut the time currently taken for such minutes to be presented at Council.

AGREED that the process described above be adopted by the Forum.

**M
6/09**

Thornaby Update

The Forum noted that, as a result of a recent meeting with Thornfield a number of issues had been resolved. These included:-

- * arrangements surrounding the dropping of bollards allowing trader access to St Peter's Square ahead of the Thursday market.
- * Improvements to the layout of stalls to help pedestrian circulation and visibility. A plan of the new layout was circulated at the meeting.
- * Acceptance that damaged paving slabs could not solely be attributed to stall erection. Thornfield was monitoring and raising issues with its paving supplier.
- * issues relating to allowing catering traders on site. Noted that, initially, Thornfield appeared to be concerned that market caterers would be in competition with caterers in the Town Centre. It was clarified that the Council policed market regs. Caterers would be allocated specific marked site(s). It was considered that market caterers often attracted people to the Town Centre as a whole.

The Forum noted that a new management regime was to be introduced in respect of the long stay parking. Parking would remain free and limited to 3 hours with no return within 2 hours and this could be followed by a 30p per hour charge for up to 3 hours. It was anticipated that this would discourage long stay commuter parking and leave more spaces for shoppers. Traders would not be charged. Other parking options were being investigated, so as to relieve pressures on residential streets close to the Town Centre.

Noted that Thornfield was looking to purchase some stall covers and the Council would be working closely with them on this.

AGREED that the update information provided be noted.

**M
7/09**

Farmers Market

Noted that the number of Farmer Traders had fallen away significantly since the turn of the year. The Farmer's Market was to be rescheduled to the final Friday of each month to coincide with the weekly Friday market. It was hoped that this would benefit both markets in terms of increased footfall. Specific advertising was underway.

It was queried whether other Markets were being held at the same time.

AGREED that the update be noted.

**M
8/09**

Christmas Market Festival Update

It was explained that proposals for the second Christmas Festival were being formulated in line with broad ideas set out in a report to Cabinet on 5th March. Copies of the Cabinet report were made available.

The Forum was asked to consider how proposals relating to the Parish Church

Gardens could be integrated with the Markets on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. Discussion and comment included locating log cabins within the established market and/or within a continental market.

It was suggested that some options be worked up with a view to bringing back to a future meeting.

AGREED that the update be noted and options surrounding the integration of the Christmas Festival events be considered at a future meeting.

M
9/09

SIRF Update

The Forum was reminded that the footprint for the 2009 festival would be the same as that for 2008. The Forum was asked to consider ways of increasing footfall. Suggestions included

freebies for children

discounts on stalls

Special offers at particular times of the day.

Fliers ahead of events

look at ways of keeping people in the town after events

Noted that ideas would continue to be discussed at SIRF Steering Group and other meetings.

AGREED that the update and the comments made be noted

M
10/09

Stockton Town centre and Riverside Sites Cabinet Report

The Forum noted that a report had been taken to Cabinet on 14th May regarding regeneration initiatives relating to the Stockton Town Centre and Riverside sites. (Copies of the report available on the Council's web site via e genda).

Officers provided the Forum with a comprehensive account of the short, medium and long term investments and interventions that will take forward the successful regeneration of the urban core of Stockton. They included, amongst many other initiatives:-

* Temporary conversion of empty retail units to be used to create vibrancy and more activity and remove the negativity associated with empty units. Production of a Vacant Properties Strategy.

* Maximise the Cultural Heritage of Stockton particularly railway heritage, historic buildings and old industrial areas.

*Housing - Planning permission had been granted for circa 2000 new homes within one mile of the town centre. There were also other housing based initiatives being discussed/planned.

*Health - Working with PCT to identify potential sites for the provision of state of the art healthcare facility in the heart of the Town Centre.

- * Leisure and Events - £2.6 million extension to Splash; building on events such as SIRF, Christmas Festival and introducing a spring and summer festival.
- * Building links between the town centre and the river.
- * Improved transport links.
- * Improved car parking provision.
- * Production of emerging planning policies that would support activity in the town.
- * Attracting 'anchor' stores.
- * Reconfiguration of the High Street and potential re routing bus services to an interchange in a central location of the centre. This could then have a knock-on impact on the location of both market and taxi rank.

Traders identified Parking as being an important factor in terms of attracting people to the town and suggested that location and enforcement could be an influence. It was important that parking was close to the town centre.

Further discussion on the Town Centre took place and it was recognised that the High Street was quite exposed to windy weather. There was a brief discussion on the merits of indoor markets and covered High Streets.

AGREED that the update and the comments made be noted

M
11/09 **The European Services Directive 2006**

The Forum was provided with an update relating to the European Services Directive 2006 and issues surrounding the removal of the six and two thirds mile rule. Officers would keep an eye on developments.

AGREED that the information be noted.

M
12/09 **Market Traders Promotional Budget**

It was explained that the Market Traders Promotional Fund stood at £23,854.65p.

Traders explained that they had been working up a sponsorship of Butterwick Hospice in return for free advertising, however, the trader leading on this was not present to report on progress.

AGREED that the balance be noted.