

Markets Forum

A meeting of Markets Forum was held on Wednesday, 26th May, 2010.

Present: Cllr Robert Cook (Chairman), Cllr Mrs Jennie Beaumont, Cllr Ian Dalgarno, Cllr Mrs Suzanne Fletcher, Mr P Johnson, Cllr Bill Noble

Officers: A Brayshaw, S Daniels, N Laws, C Watson (DNS); N Hart (LD).

Also in attendance: No other persons were present.

Apologies: None

M Declarations of Interest

10/10

There were no declarations of interest recorded.

M Minutes of the meeting held on 14th April 2010

11/10

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 14th April 2010.

AGREED that the minutes of the meeting held on 14th April 2010 be agreed as a correct record.

M Thornaby Town Centre

12/10

Members were advised that following the last meeting, potential options for revising the layout at the market had been circulated and to date, no comments had been received.

It was hoped that some consensus of our preferred layout could be agreed prior to entering into discussions regarding the market with any new owners of the Town Centre; and it was confirmed that a preferred buyer had now come forward.

It was suggested that in order to ensure market traders views could be incorporated, the plans for the market be again circulated to the market trader representatives and a letter and copy of the plans sent to each of the market traders for consideration, with a large version of the proposed layouts displayed in the window of The Shambles office.

A meeting had been held earlier today with Hammersons, the current asset managers for the centre, and they had indicated that the new buyer had accepted the retention of the market within the Town Centre as essential, and they were committed to discussing ways of improving the market and its layout. It was hoped that progress would be made to confirm the sale of the Town Centre within the next 21 days.

It was suggested that the obligation for a new road link be retained, this was confirmed.

AGREED that:

1. The report be noted.

2. Copies of the proposed site layouts be once again forwarded to Market Trader Representatives and by writing to each of the Market Traders with a large version of the proposed layouts displayed in the window of The Shambles office, and views be invited to be submitted the Markets Manager.

M
13/10 **Stockton International Riverside Festival**

It was noted that discussions were underway to accommodate a Keen Green and Ethical Market, to be operated by Market Square Group, as part of this year's SIRF/Fringe festival.

The stalls would be located along the Riverside, the details of which were circulated, and a further meeting with the Market Square Group, Police, Health & Safety etc, was planned for June. It was expected that the entire frontage would be filled, as this location was preferred to the town centre.

Concern was expressed by members regarding the letting policy to be used to attract traders selling ethical and green products. It was believed that the Market Square Group were offering discounted rates for such traders to hire stalls from them. This was refuted by officers as MSG brought their own traders.

AGREED that the report be noted.

M
14/10 **700 Years Market Celebration**

Councillor Cook congratulated all involved in the events held on the 12th and 15th May celebrating the 700th anniversary of the Markets Charter.

Street entertainment, fancy dress, town crier, soap box events/activities and vibrant markets had all contributed to making the occasion memorable and much positive feedback had been received.

Expenditure for the event was estimated to be in the region of £14.8k with final invoices still awaited, and traders had contributed £7,500 from their promotion fund. Details were provided of the footfall figures for the market on the days in question, with the Wellington Square area attracting more visitors on the Saturday; and the Castlegate Centre fairing better on the Wednesday. A detailed breakdown of the expenditure would be provided for the Market Trader representatives.

As a measure to improve any future events, it was suggested that traders be requested to remain in fancy dress until at least 3.00pm as many traders had changed from their outfits earlier in the day, lessening the impact to some degree. Traders also expressed their disappointment at the local press coverage with no photographs appearing of any traders in costume.

The Forum was provided with plans for the possible location of the recently unveiled plaque to be sited on the Shambles building, and their views invited on the preferred position. It was proposed that site D facing the Town Hall at eye level, be the most appropriate location for the plaque, subject to consultation with the Council's Historic Buildings Officer, as Listed Building consent was required.

AGREED that:-

1. The report be noted.
2. Market Trader representatives be provided with a detailed breakdown of the expenditure on the 700 Years Market Celebrations.
3. Site D on the submitted plans, facing the Town Hall, be the preferred location for the siting of the plaque commemorating the Markets Charter.

M
15/10

Farmers Market

It was noted that the second of four privately operated farmers markets would be taking place in Wellington Square on Saturday 29th May 2010.

Food First, the operator, would be selling everything from fresh game to quilted cushions, freshly cooked paella to hot pastry pies, and it was hoped that the event would be as successful as the event held in March 2010.

AGREED that the report be noted.

M
16/10

European Services Directive

Work was ongoing to review the market rights afforded to the Council in view of the conflicting legal opinions and the impact of the EU Services Directive.

Best practice guidance was awaited from the Government's Department for Communities and Local Government and once the full extent of the markets rights were understood, a plan for markets across Stockton Borough would be prepared, setting out the role of markets in the Borough, the powers to operate them, as well as publicising information about the markets and partnership links to Stockton's markets.

AGREED that the report be noted.

M
17/10

Market Traders Promotion Fund

Members were advised that the market trader's promotional fund stood at £17,800.

AGREED that the report be noted.

M
18/10

Any Other Business

The Forum was invited to comment on a proposal submitted by the Council's Sports Development Section to have, during the period of the forthcoming World Cup, a small scale football tournament on the High Street provided by a company called Futsal Ltd.

The event would be aimed at young children and would seek at the same time to promote healthy eating, complimenting the natural products sold by market

traders. A location for the event would be chosen which did not disrupt market traders.

Further discussions on the event, including the use of promotional vouchers in the local press, would take place at the next Market Operations meeting.

AGREED that the report be noted.