

Markets Forum

A meeting of Markets Forum was held on Wednesday, 8th December, 2010.

Present: Cllr Robert Cook (Chairman), Cllr Aidan Cockerill (Vice Councillor Mrs Beaumont), Cllr Mrs Suzanne Fletcher

Officers: R Bradley, Mrs A Brayshaw, J Glancey, N Laws, C Watson (DNS); Mrs T Harrison (LD)

Also in attendance: No other persons were present

Apologies: Cllr Mrs Jennie Beaumont, Cllr Ian Dalgarno

M Declarations of Interest

38/10

There were no declarations of interest.

M Minutes of the meeting held on 22nd September 2010.

39/10

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd September 2010.

The minutes of the meeting were agreed subject to the inclusion of 'however, this view was not shared by all Members' at the end of the seventh paragraph of minute number M 32/10.

CONCLUDED that the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd September 2010 be agreed as a correct record following the inclusion of 'however, this view was not shared by all Members' at the end of the seventh paragraph of minute number M 32/10.

M Thornaby Market Update

40/10

Officers advised that they were still chasing feedback from the owners of Thornaby Town Centre on the suggested layout improvements to the market. Suggested improvements included altering the existing layout and providing new canopies to improve the appearance of market stalls.

Proposals to refurbish the Inshops into smaller sized retail units for local businesses was also being considered.

CONCLUDED that the report be noted.

M Billingham Market Update

41/10

Members were advised that the owners continued to discuss operational issues with the Council regarding the twice weekly market. Progress had been made and action taken on a number of matters such as refuse and ensuring walkways are kept clear. Stockland had attempted to gain compensation from the Council for damaged paving which they believed had resulted from the market traders' vehicles, however Stockland had been advised that they would be responsible for the replacement of the paving, not Stockton Council.

Discussion took place regarding an application for a food store in Billingham Town Centre.

CONCLUDED that the report be noted.

M
42/10

Christmas Festival

Members were advised that the Christmas festival and the street theatre had been received very well.

All 28 stall users had turned out for the full duration and all requested to stand next year.

The Forum agreed that the Christmas Festival had been the best since it began and had been held on the right week. It was observed that television advertising and good signage had also helped in the festival's success.

Officers advised that feedback was being collated, however only one complaint had been received from early feedback which was that the duration of the festival had not been long enough.

Members queried the cost of the event to the Council and were advised that it had been less than previous years; however the actual figures were not yet known but would be presented to Cabinet on completion of calculations.

It was observed that the cabins could be re-used for other events and could be hired out to help re-coup the purchase costs of the cabins.

The query was raised as to if and how, trade had been boosted for the Town Centre and Traders by holding the Christmas Festival, however officers noted that it would be difficult to identify as there were many events so it would have to be considered under the whole Stockton Sparkles campaign.

Members requested that questions relating to Stockton Sparkles were included in the viewpoint surveys.

It was noted that many Christmas markets had been cancelled due to the weather but the Council's Care For Your Area teams had done a great job in clearing the way along with erecting and removing the cabins.

CONCLUDED that:

1. The report be noted.
2. Feedback of the Christmas Festival will be provided once the information has been collated.
3. Questions relating to Stockton Sparkles be included in the Viewpoint surveys.

M
43/10

European Services Directive

Officers reported that following the issue of other towns holding markets on the same day as Stockton Town Centre, the Council's legal department advised that

it would be difficult to prove that shoppers would have visited the markets in Stockton. The legal department recommended that officers should work in a complementary rather than competitive basis.

Members suggested that a licence agreement could be drawn up or an arrangement could be made between other managers in the Borough to take it in turns to hold farmers markets and other specialist markets to ensure there would be no clashes.

Members were advised that the European Service Directive applied to the provision of services at a market (such as key cutting, shoe and watch repairs etc), however, it did not cover the sale of goods, which was governed by other public procurement regulations.

Officers also advised that the European Service Directive did not recognise familial rights to pass on market licenses like a piece of property. This was reflected in the Council's current regulations, whereby a market business could be passed on or sold to a third party, but any new owner would still have to approach the Council for a new market licence. There were no plans to change this arrangement under the review of the market, as it could incur more administration and there was ambiguity associated with establishing a definition for immediate family or association with a stall.

CONCLUDED that the report be noted.

M
44/10

Markets Review

Officers advised that work was ongoing on a full review of the markets service and its governing regulations. Officers were working with the owners of Thornaby and Billingham Town Centres as well as other local authorities to examine and adopt best practice and government guidance. Officers were lobbying for the working group set up by the previous Government to continue and would be in a better position to present findings on how best to improve the market service across the Borough at a future Forum meeting.

CONCLUDED that:

1. The report be noted.
2. Findings on how best to improve the market service across the Borough will be presented at a future Forum meeting.

M
45/10

Farmers Market and Specialist Markets

Members were informed that discussions were taking place to provide 6 more farmers markets in Wellington Square in 2011 following the success from 2010. The proposed dates for the market are as follows: May 28th, June 25th, July 23rd, Sep 24th, Oct 22nd and Nov 26th.

An additional programme of specialist markets was planned for 2011 to coincide with the farmers markets; which included collectables/antiques fair, Stockton Bazaar (an Asian inspired market) and a possible continental market.

Members requested that dates were emailed to Members and Staff once the calendar had been agreed.

CONCLUDED that:

1. The report be noted.
2. Officers will email the dates of future markets to Members and staff.

M
46/10 **Markets Forum Terms of Reference**

Members were advised that the Markets Forum was first established in January 2000, by agreement of Cabinet to replace the existing Markets Sub-Committee. The Cabinet report set out brief terms of reference, such as the Forum's purpose which was to act as a consultative body on market related issues; membership was agreed as 5 Members and would be chaired by the Cabinet Member with responsibility for market matters; the frequency of meetings was to be quarterly; and that the minutes of meetings be forwarded to Council.

In March 2003, further clarity was sought from the Forum on its status, and more formal terms of reference sought, however this had not been addressed.

Officers were willing to prepare more detailed Terms of Reference for the Forum.

Discussion took place in relation to:

- Purpose of the Forum
- Membership
- Frequency of meetings
- Expected behaviour of attendees
- Whether meetings were open or closed to the general public (not including market traders) and how attendance was recorded.

It was advised that any changes to the Terms of Reference of the Forum would have to be ratified by Cabinet and Council in the future.

CONCLUDED that the report be noted and the item will be put on the next agenda for further discussions after which a terms of reference will be presented to the Forum for their approval. The Terms of Reference will then go to Cabinet and Council for approval and adoption.

M
47/10 **Market Traders Promotional Fund**

Further to discussions in a previous meeting, officers had consulted with the Council's legal department as to how to proceed with the Market Traders Promotional Fund.

Officers advised that it would have been preferable for Stockton-on-Tees borough Council to manage the Market Traders Promotional Fund; however this was rejected by market traders. Legal therefore advised that the Council should no longer be involved with the fund. Officers could provide initial advice but traders would then have sole responsibility for the servicing of the fund.

The fund would therefore be returned to the market traders.

CONCLUDED that the fund will be returned to the market traders who would have sole responsibility for the fund.