

Markets Forum

A meeting of Markets Forum was held on Wednesday, 16th March, 2011.

Present: Cllr Robert Cook (Chairman), Cllr Aidan Cockerill, Cllr Ian Dalgarno, Cllr Mrs Suzanne Fletcher, Cllr Bill Noble

Officers: J Glancey, N Laws, G McDonald, C Watson (DNS), Mrs T Harrison (LD)

Also in attendance: Market Traders, Cafe Owners and Members of the Public

Apologies: Cllr Mrs Jennie Beaumont, Mr P Johnson (Market Trader Representative),

M Declarations of Interest

56/10

There were no declarations of interest.

M Stockton Town Centre Prospectus

57/10

The Regeneration Projects Manager gave a presentation on the Stockton Town Centre Prospectus.

Members were given a brief history of Stockton Town Centre and were introduced to a vision of how Stockton High Street could look.

Officers acknowledged that leaving Stockton Town Centre as it was, could not an option; changes would have to be made to bring business and people into the Town. Stockton could not compete with Darlington and Middlesbrough Town Centres so it required finding a niche of its own.

Officers advised that with the proposed concepts for the High Street there would be a permanent events space that would not interfere with the proposed location of the market, which could be nothing but beneficial to the Market as it would eradicate yearly conflict with the events team.

Outside investment and interest had already been received on the back of the Globe announcement and it was believed that the proposals would bring further investment and interest.

The proposal suggested that the market be confined to the South side of the Town Hall and along Castlegate; this would result in a less spread out market.

Market traders raised the following concerns:

- The type of covers that would be used on the stalls.
- By moving the market it would take away business from the shops at the top of the High Street.
- The fountain could be problematic and be abused.
- Parking should be free
- By opening the Globe theatre it would have a detrimental effect on ARC; however officers advised that this would not be the case as they would hold different events.
- Market traders had been moved from the Castlegate previously as it was not a suitable location. Officers advised that proposed changes and the support of

the Castlegate manager would make the placement of traders outside Castlegate possible. It was felt that the move would enable traders to benefit from a greater footfall in that location.

- That officers were trying to minimize or destroy the market, however officers and elected Members confirmed that contrary to traders beliefs and subsequent reports in the local paper, this was not the case, they wished to save the market and by leaving it as it was would bring about its ultimate decline, therefore traders input had been requested to find a way to improve the Town Centre and the Market.

- Whether there would be a specialist market every week, however it was confirmed that this would not happen.

- Whether compensation would be given to traders who were required to move. Officers advised that Stockton Council would have to consider rent relief but it would be a matter for discussion once the decisions had been made on the Town Centre prospectus following the conclusion of the consultation.

Discussion took place regarding the cafe between the Shambles and Town Hall as to whether there would be space for it if the market was moved. Officers advised that discussions were taking place with the cafe owner. It was acknowledged that the cafe generated business for the market.

Market traders queried whether feedback from the consultation had been positive or negative and officers advised that it had received a mixed response to date. Officers also advised that the improvement of the Town Centre as a whole was the overall objective and that smaller scaled issues should not be to the detriment of this objective.

CONCLUDED that the report be noted.