



Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the
LEICESTER MARKETS REVIEW (JOINT CULTURE AND LEISURE AND
REGENERATION AND TRANSPORT TASK GROUP)

Held: WEDNESDAY, 25 FEBRUARY 2009 at 10.30 am.

P R E S E N T :

Councillor Wayne Naylor – Co –Chair
Councillor Sarah Russell – Co-Chair

Councillor Bajaj

Councillor Bhavsar

Councillor Newcombe

Dawn Alfonso – Leicester Market Traders' Federation
Chris Calleja – Waste Minimization Officer
Jerry Connolly – Member Support Officer
Paddy Deevey – Leicester Market Traders' Federation
Ian Lomas – Contract Manager - Cleansing Services
Anita Patel – Member Support Officer
Geoff Soden – Waster Services Manager
Nick Rhodes – Head of Markets and Enterprise
Julie Harget – Democratic Services Officer

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16. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Shelton.

17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to declare any interests they may have in the business to be discussed on the agenda and/or indicate that Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 applied to them.

Councillor Naylor declared that he was Vice Chair of Calorie Killers.

18. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

that the minutes of the meeting of the Leicester Markets Review (Joint Culture and Leisure and Regeneration and Transport Task Group) held on 8 December 2008 were agreed as a correct record.

19. LEICESTER MARKET - ENVIRONMENT IMPACT ISSUES

Ian Lomas, Contract Manager, Cleansing Services and Geoff Soden, Waste Services Manager, provided Members with an overview of the procedure for collecting waste from Leicester Market.

Officers explained that an 18 ton vehicle was used to collect approximately 5 tons of waste per day, which included cardboard and plastic boxes. The waste was subsequently taken to the Ball Mill at Beaumont Leys, where it was broken down into four different wastes. Up to 70% of this could be recycled or re-used. Organic waste was taken to Wanlip where it could be used to produce methane. Metals were extracted and sent for recycling. Light material, such as cardboard and plastics were separated as floc and used as a substitute fossil fuel and the remaining waste was sent to land fill. Officers explained that plastic boxes and strapping from the market waste caused problems with the machinery and that it would be helpful if these wastes could be separated at the point of collection. Officers understood that space for separate bins was a factor at the market.

Members expressed concerns that the refuse vehicle, the associated problems of smell and an accumulation of empty boxes and waste, deterred potential customers. Members noted the usual location of the refuse vehicle and asked Officers to consider whether it could be re-located to alleviate its negative impact on the Market.

Two shifts of cleaners were employed and the market was cleaned at the end of the day, with a big clean and wash down of the area taking place every Sunday. Officers explained that Sunday was the only time that this work could be carried out. Members asked Officers to calculate how much it would cost to clean the area in the Market in the evening, where the refuse vehicle was usually located, to ease the smell.

Another member of the Task Group also expressed concerns that there were inadequate drains in Cheapside, which meant that there was a build up of stagnant water, which exacerbated the smell in the area.

Officers explained that there was a shift changeover at 12.30 pm, when the refuse vehicle was emptied and then cleaned. This process took over an hour and during that time, the rubbish accumulated before the second shift took over and the vehicle returned. Members questioned whether it would be possible to have two vehicles; one for cardboard waste and one for organic waste but Officers responded that they did not have the facilities for this.

A member of the Task Group stated that the staff on each shift appeared to take their breaks at the same time, and questioned whether their breaks could

be staggered in order that someone was always on duty. Officers responded that they could consider this possibility, but they could not leave the vehicle in charge of someone who did not have an HGV licence.

A Member expressed concerns over the use of plastic strapping as general packaging, and explained that the sharp edges of the strapping had previously resulted in very serious injuries to fingers. The meeting heard that other organisations had experienced health and safety problems with the strapping.

Thanks were given to the Officers and Members stated that they would return to this issue, later in the Review.

20. LEICESTER MARKET - PROMOTING HEALTHY EATING

Diane Talbot, Clinical Director, Leicestershire Nutrition and Dietetic Services gave a presentation to the Task Group on the prevention of obesity and the promotion of healthy eating.

Diane explained that obesity was not a new issue, but previous targets in 1992 and 2004, to reduce the obesity rate had failed. Statistics showed that there had been a rise in obesity, which included a marked rise in childhood obesity. This was higher for children in inner city areas.

Diane explained that a new initiative, “Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives” was introduced in 2008, which aimed to combat the rising tide of obesity. Members heard that its initial focus was to address obesity in children.

Diane explained that there were huge financial costs in relation to the rise in obesity and sickness related problems, both to the NHS and to the wider economy. There were also considerable health risks associated with obesity, which included an increased risk of heart disease, strokes, Type 2 Diabetes, and a direct link between some cancers and obesity.

The Task Group heard that there was a plethora of social and psychological factors, which had resulted in the rise of obesity. These included changes in family habits and general stress levels and low self esteem.

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence, (NICE) had brought out guidance to address obesity, which was aimed at Local Authorities and partners in the community. There were a number of policy initiatives, which included the implementation of the Healthy Start scheme, whereby tokens were given for families to obtain fruit, vegetables and milk. There were also schemes such as the provision of free fruit and vegetables in schools, school travel plans and the Five a Day initiatives.

Diane explained that the NHS had introduced the “Change4Life” scheme which aimed to address obesity by introducing “the 8 behaviours” to enable people to “eat well, move more and live longer”. The Task Group heard that “Change4Life” was a social marketing approach into influencing change, and resources would be provided to help families promote healthy eating in their

children. The “8 behaviours” were:

- Reducing sugar intake
- Increasing consumption of fruit and vegetables (“5 A Day”)
- Having structured meals, especially breakfast
- Reducing unhealthy snacking
- Reducing portion size
- Reducing fat consumption
- 60 minutes of moderate intensity activity every day.
- Reducing sedentary behaviour

Diane suggested that Leicester City Council and/or the Market could become a partner in the “Change4Life” campaign by implementing a number of strategies including market promotions of healthier food, providing a market stall for promotions of a healthy life style and by facilitating easier travel to Leicester Market.

Members heard that sometimes people were unsure how to cook or prepare certain foods and the Chair explained that at Calorie Killers, a men’s lifestyle group, cook and eat sessions had been held, which had been very useful.

The following suggestions were made:

- To provide simple straightforward recipes, with a shopping list, or a students cookbook with basic recipes, which utilised market produce.
- To arrange cookery demonstrations in the Market
- To work with schools to promote the Market and its produce, and encouraging more schools to bring children in for Market tours.
- To investigate the possibility of Leicester City Council as a whole, becoming a partner with “Change4Life”, rather than individual sections.
- To set up a Healthy Lifestyle referral unit in the Market.
- To use the Market to promote exercise and healthy eating.
- To promote the Market at Freshers Fairs, at University.
- To send a promotional leaflet to schools, reminding parents that they could purchase their 5 a Day at Leicester Market.

Members also heard that some stalls sold bowls of mixed fruit, vegetables and salad and suggested that it would be useful to raise awareness of these; as they would be advantageous in promoting the 5 a Day initiative.

Nick Rhodes, Head of Markets and Enterprise, commented that the Market was

renowned for its food stalls. A new post of Food Ambassador had been created within the City Council, and one of their responsibilities would be to raise awareness of the food that was sold in Leicester. A Member stated that assurance was needed over the quality of food that was on sale in the Market. He added that it was no longer as busy as it used to be and questioned whether this was because of the presentation or the quality of food. Other Members stated that they considered the quality was good and that stall holders would be happy to give advice as to whether food needed to be consumed quickly or would last a few days.

A Member suggested that a wider strategic change was necessary. He felt that a cashless payment system would be very beneficial and also that the opening times of the Market needed to be reviewed. He added that solutions were required as a matter of urgency; otherwise the Market would lose its competitive edge.

The Chair suggested that the implementation of a cashless payment system could be covered in a future meeting of the Task Group.

Diane was thanked for her presentation.

21. NEXT STEPS

Members of the Task Group discussed the next steps they wished to take in respect of this review. It was agreed that a site visit to Leicester Market would be beneficial with, in particular, an opportunity to look at the storage areas.

Members also discussed the possibility of consulting users and non-users of the Market, and one Member suggested that such a consultation could be carried out at his Ward Community Meeting. It was also suggested that a questionnaire could be sent to Leicester City Council employees to ask them whether or not they were Leicester Market users. There would then be an opportunity to ask non-users for their reasons why they did not shop at the Market.

22. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Members would be informed as to the date of the next meeting of the Task Group once it had been arranged.

23. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 12.00 noon.

