



Leicester
City Council

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

Held: MONDAY, 27 APRIL 2009 at 4.00pm

P R E S E N T :

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

Councillor Bhavsar

Councillor Newcombe

Dawn Alfonso – Leicester Market Traders' Federation
Jerry Connolly – Member Support Officer
Paddy Deevey – Leicester Market Traders' Federation
Nick Rhodes – Head of Markets and Enterprise
Francis Connolly – Democratic Services Officer

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24. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Byrne, Palmer and Shelton.

25. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

26. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 25 February 2009 be confirmed as a correct record.

Matters Arising:

Councillor Naylor agreed to provide further information on the 'Change4Life' campaign. Nick Rhodes explained that the Council was registered as a 'Change4Life' partner.

In response to a query from Dawn Alfonso, Nick agreed to organise distributing leaflets to council employees to promote the use of the market.

27. LEICESTER MARKET - CURRENT AND FUTURE PROVISION

Nick Rhodes, Head of Markets and Enterprise explained that the outdoor market consisted of 261 fixed wooden stalls, which comprised approximately 70 blocks. Further to this, Nick stated that there were fifteen fixed units within the outdoor market. The overall occupancy rate was currently 82%, with fewer vacant stalls on Fridays and Saturdays.

In terms of the composition of the outside market stalls, it was reported that approximately 40% were food stalls with the remaining 60% of stalls selling non-food goods.

In terms of the indoor market, Nick explained that there were five levels of trading space. He reported that there were 13 non-food units on the ground floor, all of which were currently let. The first floor had 13 non food units and 4 food units out of a total of 21 available units, with 22 out of 26 let on Floor 2, 12 out of 12 let on Floor 3 and 18 out of 19 let on Floor 4. The market cafeteria was situated on Floor 5. It was also stated that a number of non-fixed stalls often traded within the market square.

In was reported that the following food goods could be consumed from the market:

Fruit and vegetables	Bread	Salad	Pre-baked bread and cakes	Asian food
Caribbean food	Herbs and spices	Flowers and plants, including dried-flowers	Fish – including frozen	Pet foods
Fresh meat	Delicatessen	Cheese	Game	Cooked meats
Sweets	Polish bread and produce	Olives	Tripe-offal	Canned food

The following non-food goods and services that could be consumed from the market were listed:

Underwear/ lingerie	Outerwear (male and female)	Shoes and hats	Gloves and scarves	Socks/tights
Make-up	Leatherwear	Hand-bags	Toys	Greeting cards
Net curtains	Luggage	Fire-wood	Wool	Phones
Hairdressing	Evening-wear	Retro clothing	Records	Pottery
Books	Magazines	Dress-making	Heel-bar	Key cutting/ engraving

Cameras	General second-hand goods	Jewellery	Antiques	Ornaments
Memorabilia	Baby-wear	Baby accessories	Kitchen utensils	Hoovers
Crystal	Smoking paraphernalia	Computer software/repairs	Computer games/consoles	Fabric

Please note that it was made clear that this list was not exhaustive of all goods and services that could be consumed at the market.

Some Members were of the view that the general second-hand stall lowered the overall feel of the market due to the way the goods were displayed on the table. Nick explained that there was a demand for quality second hand goods, and that this stall was often the busiest one within the market. Whilst discussing the layout of the market, it was also felt that some level of re-organisation was needed, which could encourage people to walk towards the indoor market. Nick acknowledged the suggestion, but felt that it would difficult to persuade more established traders to move towards the indoor market. It was suggested that stall-holders, particularly those who provided second-hand goods, could be offered assistance with displaying their goods on their stalls.

The Task Group discussed some of the problems around the distribution of stolen goods, and the possibility of customer fear from shopping at the market. It was acknowledged that a greater level of camera/CCTV protection was required to help to alleviate such problems.

A Member of the Task Group queried the impact that the emergence of several low-budget high street retailers had had on the market, particularly in relation to the clothing stalls. Market traders felt that the effect of these stores had been detrimental to trader profits. It was also mentioned that the emergence of such larger stalls had also led to the closure of several smaller retail units situated close to the market.

In terms of possible alternative services to be provided at the market, one member suggested the creation of a virtual stall to allow people to purchase goods online at a small cost. It was pointed out that the central lending library offered free internet use, and that any charging policy would have to be carefully thought through.

It was also suggested that work could be undertaken to encourage more craft stalls to operate at the market.

One Member asked for figures on the number of stalls that had left the market and those that had began trading in the last three years. Nick did not have such information to hand but agreed to supply members with an accurate set of figures. He estimated that there had been a net loss of approximately twenty stalls over the last three years. However, he did point out that there had been a significant increase recently in the number of casual market traders, and that

this could be a consequence of rising unemployment. In terms of food stalls, Nick explained that virtually all of those that were currently operating had done so for at least three years.

One commonly raised theme concerned how the market was advertised. It was felt that wider advertising was required to remind the public of the vast range of goods and services offered at the market. Members felt that there were many specialist services available at the market that added tremendous value to the market and could attract people who would not normally access the market. It was felt that advertising campaigns could be used to target this element of service provision at the market in order to widen the scope of people who regularly used it.

28. NEXT STEPS

The Task Group agreed to undertake a site visit to a market similar to Leicester to particularly look to alternative non-food items that could be offered at the market. It was agreed that Birmingham Market would be an appropriate destination for this site visit, and that this would be undertaken by Councillors Naylor and Newcombe. Furthermore, Councillor Russell agreed to similarly visit Bury Market.

It was agreed that the site visit to Leicester Market would take place on Friday 8 May at 11am to view the storage units within the indoor market, before looking at some of the problems with waste collection at the outdoor market.

It was also agreed that Councillors Naylor and Newcombe would undertake a questionnaire survey with both users and non-users of the market. In addition, both councillors agreed to set up a focus group with users to discuss what could be done to improve the facilities and experience of shopping at the market.

A date for the next meeting would be determined following the completion of the research exercises by Councillors Naylor and Newcombe.

29. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 5:45pm.

