

## FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the MARKET AND BUSINESS LIAISON SUB COMMITTEE held at Mountfield, Bridport on Tuesday, 23 October 2012 at 10.00 a.m.

PRESENT: Cllr: G.J. Ackerman (Chairman from item 2 onwards)

Cllrs: Mrs M.J. Ray            D.G. Rickard

Also in attendance: Ray McLaren (Market Superintendent) and Steve Hibbs (Market Traders' Association representative).

### **PUBLIC FORUM**

There were no speakers in the Public Forum.

#### **1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED that Cllr: G.J. Ackerman be elected Chairman of the Sub Committee for the ensuing municipal year 2012/2013.

#### **2. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Miss S.A. Brown, C.M. Ray (ex officio) and Ms S.J. Williams.

#### **3. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 February 2012, which had been previously circulated, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### **4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **5. MARKET OPERATION**

(a) The Market Superintendent provided a verbal update on issues including:

- the impact of the gas works,
- the poor weather over the summer and its effect on the market, particularly on Wednesdays,
- the good partnership working with the traffic wardens.

These issues were also reported under (d) below.

It was asked if, bearing in mind the gas works, whether there was any scope for stalls being located in Barrack Street. The Town Surveyor said that all options were being looked at to assist traders and the situation was being monitored closely.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

(b) Stall numbers and takings April 2012 to date, ENCL: 2594

The Town Clerk reported on the figures up until the end of September. Whilst there had been a reduction in takings and attendances on the market, compared to the last two years, the figures for Saturdays were still good. It was also hoped that the income figures would be on budget for the year end.

Traders were thanked for their continued support of the market, although it was recognised that there was still a need to continue to support and promote the Wednesday market.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

(c) Stalls – registered/casual traders April 2012 to date, ENCL: 2595

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

(d) The Town Surveyor provided an update on the following matters: -

(i) Market Parking:

This will be taken up again with the District Council, to see if any further support could be offered for traders.

It was reported that it was understood that traders in Dorchester received concessionary rates on market day.

The update was noted.

(ii) Christmas Market times:

The traders had suggested holding a market on Christmas Eve, to replace that week's Wednesday market, which would be on Boxing Day.

RECOMMEND: that, subject to the agreement of West Dorset District Council and the support of traders, the midweek market over Christmas takes place on Christmas Eve, not Boxing Day.

(iii) Licensing:

The Town Surveyor reported on a proposed licensing application by Fivepenny Farm for a premises licence, for the sale of alcohol from their stall. It was felt that this would seem to

indicate that the stall would always be in the same place, which could not be guaranteed, in accordance with the market conditions. It was felt that it would be better to apply for temporary licences.

Whilst members noted that the licensing issues would be dealt with by the District Council, it was agreed that concerns regarding the implication for the market, particularly of a premises licence for one stall being granted and it being in contravention of market conditions, be raised with the District Council.

RESOLVED: that concerns, as detailed above, be raised with the District Council, in respect of the proposed designation of a stall for licensing purposes.

(iv) Gas Works:

The works were ahead of schedule and should be finished by December. The Town Surveyor was in regular contact with the contractors.

The update was noted.

(v) Health and Safety:

The Town Surveyor continued to monitor health and safety on the market.

(vi) Other Matters:

The Town Surveyor also reported on other matters, which had been raised by traders at a recent meeting he had with them, including:

- it was felt that options to help secure stalls, in the event of high winds, should be looked. It was understood that a system was in place at the Yeovil market and information was being obtained from Yeovil.
- traffic wardens would be asked to visit early, if they could, to stop people parking in traders' spaces.
- public toilets – this was being discussed with the District Council.

RESOLVED: that the updates be noted.

## 6. **MARKET TRADERS**

Steve Hibbs from the local branch of the National Market Traders' Federation raised the following issues:

Web site – would it be possible for traders to have a free link from the Council's web site ?

The Town Clerk reported that traders could have a link from the newly updated community site, but there was a small annual charge of £5 for a link and £10 for a page.

Parking – Honiton Market charged traders an additional £1 to subsidise parking and it was felt that more needed to be done to help traders park in Bridport.

As reported in the previous item, it was noted that the issue of parking would be discussed again with West Dorset District Council.

Christmas Eve market – this had been requested by traders and it was noted that this was supported by the Sub Committee. However, the Sub Committee agreed that traders would need to show their support, before it could be confirmed.

Wednesday Evening Markets – the traders had asked if this could be tried on a regular basis throughout the summer. The Sub Committee generally felt that there had not been a sufficient level of support for the evening markets two years ago, when these were tried, and it was unlikely that enough traders would be able, or willing, to attend in the evenings to make this viable. It was felt that it would be better to look at other ways to promote and support the existing Wednesday market.

Market Promotion – the traders also felt that other ways to promote the market should be looked at, including more local advertising. There was also a need to continue to support regular traders.

Members agreed that advertising material for the market should be placed in holiday and caravan parks in the area and also to look to publicise the market in areas surrounding Bridport. The Town Council would continue to support registered traders through the fees system and recognised and appreciated their support for the market. However, it also had to try to ensure a balance and bring new traders on to the market, where this was possible. The Sub Committee thanked all market traders for their continued support of the market, which was so important to the Town Council and the town.

RESOLVED: that the issues raised by the National Market Traders' Federation be noted, with the comments above.

## **7. MARKET CHARGES**

The Town Clerk reported that, in line with the process in previous years, discussions would take place with the National Market Traders' Federation, prior to making recommendations on the fees for the next financial year.

It was also noted that fees remained unchanged this year for registered traders, the reduced winter rates also applied for November and December

for Wednesdays and in January and February 2013, registered traders would once again on Wednesdays be charged no more than £5 per stall.

RECOMMEND: that the Town Clerk discuss the fees for 2013/14 with the National Market Traders' Federation, to be reported back to the next meeting of this Sub Committee, prior to approval.

## **8. ADVERTISING, PROMOTION AND SUPPORT FOR MARKET**

The Town Clerk reported on the advertising undertaken this year and stated that over the summer, there were a large number of events in the town. This included the Spirit of Bridport, which as well as making good use of Bucky Doo Square for activities, also sought to promote and advertise Bridport more widely, including the market, which featured in the Spirit publicity.

The Town Council would be looking at publicity and promotion for the market, as mentioned earlier in the meeting and it was also hoped that all interested bodies in the town, including the Market Federation, would look at the past summer and what went well and plan support for events next summer. One possibility was to make more use of Bucky Doo Square for activities on market days.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

## **9. CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL**

A new Festival Committee had been formed, including Rebecca Kingston, who was the event co-ordinator. Preparations for the event were going well. The Festival would be known as "Bridport Christmas Cheer."

RESOLVED: that the arrangements for the Festival, to be held on Wednesday 5 December 2012, be noted.

## **10. BRIDPORT CHAMBER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE**

It was reported that the Chamber of Trade and Commerce had agreed to accept £1,500 from West Dorset District Council for Christmas lighting for shops, rather than concessionary parking. This was generally supported by the Sub Committee.

The update was noted.

**The meeting closed at 11:20 am.**

**The next meeting of the Market and Business Liaison Sub Committee will be held on 12 March 2013**