

Victorian Market Stakeholders Group Meeting

The Chamber, Town House
Tuesday 6th February 2018 at 5.30pm

Present: Cllr Janet Campbell (**CJC**), Cllr Graham Ross (**GR**), Cllr Bet McAllister (**BM**), Cllr Isabelle MacKenzie (**IM**), David Haas (Inverness City Area Manager – Highland Council) (**DH**), Jo Murray (Victorian Market Manager) (**JM**), Mike Smith (Inverness BID) (**MS**), Malcolm Fraser (Duncan Fraser Butchers, Queensgate Arcade, Victorian Market (**MF**), Jane Cuthbert (MCM Investments, Queensgate) (**JC**), John Ewart (The Milk Bar, Victorian Market) (**JE**), Donald Maclean (Primo Menswear, Academy Street) (**DM**), Hilary Tolmie (Business Support – Highland Council) (**HT**)

Apologies: Provost Helen Carmichael (**HC**), Cllr Richard Laird (**RL**), Claire Armstrong (Inverness Chamber of Commerce) (**CA**), William Morison (William Morrison Jewellers, Market Arcade, Victorian Market) (**WM**), David Richardson (Federation of Small Businesses) (**DR**), Kasia Pogodzinska (Saffron Oriental Food, Market Hall, Victorian Market) (**KP**), Brian Philip (The Music Station, Church Street) (**BP**), Colin Craig (Oil and Vinegar, Union Street) (**CC**), Jackie Cuddy (Eastgate Centre) (**JCE**),

| No. | Item | ACTIONS | Action |
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| 1. | Nominations for Chair | Deferred to next meeting | |
| 2. | Victorian Market Managers Update | <p>JM gave a presentation of her work to date within the Market</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moved office into one of the smaller units in the Market Hall In most days - Monday to Friday Market Retailer engagement has improved due to the Manager being based in the Market Recent areas of focus have been the Queensgate Arcade Roof and public safety, compliance with the Fire Report, the Market Hall Clock which is now working, replacement of broken glass at the Queensgate Entrance and the Market Superintendent's training and development Awaiting initial data to measure and monitor footfall Leases – making sure they are fit for purpose Reviewing Opening Times Occupancy at 89% for January 2018 with interest being shown in the empty units and one potential tenant just about to sign. There will be a dip in occupancy once the improvement works start and something will need to be put in place to support | |

those retailers affected by the changes.

Action Plan Update

Discussions have been held with the Academy Street Heritage Project and Threesixty Architects.

Projects can be split into three phases:

1. Academy Street Entrance – this is to refurbish the Entrance by looking at the glass panels, cleaning the stonework etc. JM is meeting with the architects again next week and will be able to update at next meeting.
2. Market Arcade Shopfronts – 50/50 funding is potentially available for this project through the Academy Street Townscape Heritage Project.
3. Market Hall Refurbishment – seen initial plans for this. Public toilets are included in the plans several options will be considered. Will have more details next week after the meeting with the architects.

Phases 1 and 2 need to be put in place quickly as the funding for them runs out in 2020.

Also looking at the rebranding of the Market with two options:

1. A quick short term rebranding for 2018 which is to be launched in time for Easter. This will include the setting up of a Victorian Market Website. Needs to happen sooner rather than later so this year's trade is not missed..
2. Long term rebranding in line with the redevelopment of the Market.

Christmas Decorations

The Eastgate Centre have gifted the Market their old decorations which are now in storage until November. Planning will start next month on how to re-use them for Christmas 2018.

Marketing

Adverts have been taken in the Port of Call Cruise Ship Booklet and in the Landmark Press Welcome to Scotland Bedroom Folders. A full page Valentines Special will appear in the Press and Journal and a Valentine's Day Competition will run in the Inverness Courier. The Market Retailers have donated prizes with a value of £550 for this competition. The competition is also being advertised on Facebook. There will be a photo opportunity with the prizewinner and names and addresses will be captured for a mailing list.

HighlandARLegends

This is to be launched in Spring 2018 and the Market will have a dedicated plaque

featuring the Market Dog which perished in the fire of 1889. There will also be merchandise associated to this.

Market History

Historians have been engaged to research the history of the market.

New Entrance Signs

New entrance signs have been installed as the current ones were out of date

Community Engagement

Raigmore Primary School – a visit from 25 pupils and 3 teachers was a great success.

The Retailers were very welcoming to the children and the children enjoyed their visit.

Highland Dementia Group – currently working with them to improve facilities in the Market for dementia sufferers. Hoping to hold workshops for the retailers.

Workplace Chaplaincy Scotland – Lunchtime sessions planned

Cookery Demonstrations – a chef has been in touch with possibility of holding cookery demonstrations in the Market.

More and more people and organisations have been in contact with suggestions for events and using the Market as a venue.

Following the presentation the following comments were made:

- Public toilets (including Disabled toilets) viewed as being essential – may need to charge for them as very expensive to run. Unlikely customers would object to this as people like to go into a nice clean toilet.
- In the past everyone knew everyone in the Market so would like to see the camaraderie return to the Market.
- Anything new done in the Market will be DDA compliant and will also be environmentally friendly.
- Any applications for new leases are first given to JM who assesses the application against the tenancy framework to make sure the proposed business will comply with the new letting policy before Central Ward Members are consulted on appropriate recommendations .
- Any unit in the quadrangle in the Market Hall will be let on a short term lease and the current tenants will be supported through all the changes for the area.
- Can links to the Retailers own Facebook pages be included in the Website and vice versa. JM confirmed this will happen.

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| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JM has had initial feedback from the public using the Market that the 15 minutes free parking recently introduced is not adequate enough. However It was felt it was too early to assess as the scheme just started in January. • Can the Victorian Market be linked into the River Ness Walk Trail to encourage tourists to visit the Victorian Market after they have completed the River Walk? DH confirmed this would be considered . • JC asked about the timeframe and the realistic time it is going to take. DH confirmed that it will take time. More detail will be provided at the next Stakeholders meeting on the branding of the Market. It is hoped to present a proposal for the Academy Street Entrance to the Members at the City of Inverness Area Committee in May. Plans for delivery of the Shopfront scheme are intended to be in place by December 2018. . • Occupancy figures good compared to the rest of the City Centre • The Market Dog was burnt in the fire of 1889 as he refused to leave the market during the fire and remaining guarding his shop. He doesn't have a name as no accurate records can be found at present giving his name so meantime he will be called the Market Dog.. • Could a Virtual Tour be developed? This could be shown in the buses taking tourists into the City from the cruise ships. JM confirmed that she is aware of the potential to do this and research is currently being undertaken but before this can happen the Market Branding will need to be in place. • JM has identified the Market as satisfying three things: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A retail environment 2. A thoroughfare 3. A tourist destination – a tourist may not necessarily shop but have just come into see the building. • Phase 3 is the key element in the future for the Market. This has the potential to provide the missing atmosphere and to become a venue/gathering place. DH confirmed appropriate support will be given to any Retailer affected by the works. JM has a meeting with the Architects next week. • This minute will be circulated to all Stakeholders and will be presented to the CIAC. • The Summer months present an opportunity to extend trading hours and this is being progressed with Market Retailers shortly.. • The Inverness Events Manager is currently checking the potential of using the Streetscene in Union Street and Queensgate to hold events there during the | |
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| | | | <p>summer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MF advised that local trade is required all year round. Problems in the retail industry at the present. • Local produce will be marketed in the future and customer service will be focussed upon. The Customer Service in the Market is second to none and can certainly be exploited. Everyone coming into the Market is meeting with the business owner. Customer Service so important along with Word of Mouth. • Feedback from the recent school visit has been incredible and will be rolled out to other schools and community groups. • We need to attract Families to the Market • Planning to engage with Charity Groups, Eden Court etc, there is the potential to have something on in the Market every weekend. Not quite ready to this at the moment but there are plans for the future. • A timeline has to be produced so everyone is aware of the process hopefully by the end of next week something will be produced. • Leases are complicated at the moment and JM will be looking at how they can be improved. • The Action Plan is on the website and any potential tenants are directed to read it and make themselves aware of its terms. • Phase 3 is still being developed with several options being considered. Although plans are fluid at the moment but we need to create a venue space. Suggestions are welcome and there will be a consultation process before anything is decided. • Challenges around changes to the Market Arcade • DH, JM and MF have had discussions regarding the Queensgate Arcade. Public do not know the Queensgate Arcade is privately owned • All Entrances need to be treated in the same way with a continuity of branding. • Architects have come up with some very good ideas for the Entrances and these will be available as the projects develop.. • Opportunity to exploit the history of the building on the outside. • MF feeling encouraged • Aim to have plans for next meeting • Communication required between Stakeholders in-between meetings. JM to email the group on a regular basis. • Please pop into see Jo in her office in the Market and give your feedback and input. Everyone's opinion is valuable | |
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| 3. | | Altrincham Trip | <p>JM gave an update on the trip to Altrincham which she found very inspiring.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The trip was funded by Hi-Trans and included the Provost, DH, JM, WM, personnel from D&I and representatives from Hi-Trans. • Presentations were given on the development work undertaken over the last seven years in Altrincham. • Altrincham is a very good model to compare to Inverness • Altrincham Market was owned by the Council and seven years ago they decided to invest some money in redeveloping their City Centre which was In need of investment. . • They started with the Market which is in the centre of the city and in a short space of seven years it has gone from a very rundown unloved centre to a thriving community with lots of independent shops and retailers. • The Market is in two sections the Foodhall part is permanent and the other part is a traditional daily market (different every day) and the atmosphere is buzzing. • The signage is very simple and quirky – not quite the look for Inverness but useful to get some ideas. Same all the way through the Market including the menus. Written in a very clear way making all information very accessible. • JM hopes to return to Altrincham to meet the Market Managers. | |
| 5. | | AOCB | <p><u>Stakeholder Group Vacancy</u></p> <p>There is currently one vacancy for a Stakeholder and there is one Retailer who is interested in joining. DH to clarify process.</p> <p>It was agreed that Stakeholder Meetings be held every six weeks with the next one to be arranged for the 20th March at 5.30pm</p> <p>Date of Next Meeting agreed as Tuesday 20th March 2018</p> | DH |
| | | | The meeting ended at around 7.15pm | |