

AGENDA ITEM 16 i

Victorian Market Stakeholders/Traders Group Meeting

Unit 15, Victorian Market

Tuesday 8th January 2019 at 5.30pm

Present: Cllr Isabelle MacKenzie (**IM**), Cllr Graham Ross (**GR**), Cllr Janet Campbell (**CJC**), Cllr Bet McAllister (**BM**), Cllr Ron MacWilliam (**RM**), Jo Murray (Victorian Market Manager) (**JM**), William Morrison (William Morrison Jewellers, Market Arcade, Victorian Market) (**WM**), John Ewart (The Milk Bar, Victorian Market) (**JE**), Kasia Pogodzinska (Saffron Oriental Food, Market Hall, Victorian Market) (**KP**), Mike Smith (Inverness BID) (**MS**), Jackie Cuddy (Eastgate Centre) (**JCE**), Jane Cuthbert (MCM Investments, Queensgate) (**JC**), Clare Armstrong (Inverness Chamber) (**CA**), Malcolm Morrison (William Morrison Jewellers, Market Arcade, Victorian Market) (**MM**), Ann Peach (Victorian Gift Shop, Market Arcade, Victorian Market) (**AP**), Toni Rutherford (The Little Teapot, Queensgate Arcade, Victorian Market) (**TR**), Andrew Ross (The Little Teapot, Queensgate Arcade, Victorian Market) (**AR**), Lauren (**L**) (Hilary Tolmie (Business Support – Highland Council) (**HT**)

Apologies: Provost Helen Carmichael (**HC**), Cllr Richard Laird (**RL**), David Haas (Inverness City Area Manager – Highland Council) (**DH**), Malcolm Fraser (Duncan Fraser Butchers, Queensgate Arcade, Victorian Market) (**MF**), Caroline MacKenzie, Inverness Souvenirs, Market Arcade, Victorian Market (**CM**), David Richardson (Federation of Small Businesses) (**DR**), Colin Craig (Oil and Vinegar, Union Street) (**CC**), Nancy Rattray (Joke Shop, Market Hall, Victorian Market) (**NR**)

Cllr Isabelle MacKenzie in the Chair

No.	Item	ACTIONS	Action
1.	Actions from previous Minutes	<p><u>Footfall Counters</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmed that an average of 400-500 people pass through the Academy Street entrance per hour on an average day going both ways. <p>No further actions from the previous minutes.</p>	
2.	Victorian Market Managers Update	<p><u>Occupancy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several changes since the last meeting • Occupancy Rate for the Common Good Fund part of the Market is 91% full 9% vacant. • The unit that was previously Hood News has been taken of the market meantime as it will be used as a site office once the works start on the Academy Street Entrance. It will remain off the market until about May 2019 when the works should be completed. There have been several enquiries about this unit but no actual applications have been received. • The Picture Framer vacated their unit at the end of December 2018. Their reason for leaving unrelated to any issues with the Market they want to concentrate their 	

			<p>business in the Forres/Elgin area. They may come back in the future to hold a pop-up shop.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have already had three enquiries for the Picture Framer unit. • An enquiry has been received for Unit 13A in the Market Hall and a closing date has been set for Wednesday 16th January. JM will not know who has then outcome until after the closing date. This unit has been vacant for a while. • Profish are now open and have had a great Christmas getting established in the Market. • It may not be that highest rent offer is always accepted. Each application is scrutinised to see which fits the Lettings Framework best. • The entire Market is at 6.4% vacancy rate. Queensgate is 100% full. <p><u>Unit 15</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Now a rentable/usable space. • When Erskine were in the unit before Christmas they raised about £2k and are provisionally booked in for November during Remembrance fortnight. • At present the Accessing Inverness public consultation exhibition is on. It is not manned so door is locked but if someone wants in they can get in. • Several enquiries have been received from people wanting to use the space. • Will charge for using the space and invoices for December will soon be raised. • Next planned event in the Unit is the Inverness Harbour Trust who are a doing public consultation on the Heritage Trail from the City Centre down to the Harbour. This is planned for some time in March. Also plans to link in with the Harbour Trust on the Cruise Ships that are coming in to Inverness this year. Hope to arrange exclusive events for the Cruise ship passengers. • Potential to showcase the market over the summer is massive with 10 opportunities during the summer. • WM mentioned that the entrances are a disgrace and it is essential that something is done with them. Essential to have a welcoming entrance. • JM to look at possible options. <p><u>Christmas</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WM complemented the Christmas Decorations and enquired if they could be kept up all year. JM advised that they were coming down but there are plans for 	<p>JM</p>
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something to be put up in their place when seasonally appropriate.

- Started discussing Christmas end September/beginning October and it was agreed that there would be a Santa's Grotto and would raise money MFR Cash for Kids and there would be a Prize Hamper. For the effort put in it wasn't a success. Santa's Grotto was only busy on the Elf on the Shelf day and only £85 was raised for Cash for Kids in total over 4 weekends.
- Need to look at ideas for next year
- JCE advised that Eastgate Centre kit out the grotto but give it over to a charity to provide Santa, presents etc.
- It was the only free Santa in town but there are a lot of Santa's in town. Leaflets were handed out for the Taxi firm in Church Street's Santa.
- The Little Teapot had planned to do "Breakfast with Santa" but were unable to this year but will consider it again next year.
- Could have a Santa just wandering about the Market speaking to the children.
- Elf on the Shelf was very successful
- GR commented that there was a magic atmosphere during the carol singing.
- Will start planning for next Christmas sooner.

Forthcoming Promotions

- January and February are considered to be the worst months in the Market.
- Linked in with the P&J to do a large footfall driving campaign starting imminently
- **JM** has spoken to **WM** and other jewellers regarding this.
- A large block of ice with a diamond ring inside it will be placed in Unit 15. This will be filmed 24 hours a day and there will be competition to guess the moment the ice will melt and the ring will be released. The winner will win a diamond solitaire ring to the value of £1k.
- The competition will be heavily covered in the P&J and online and all the entrances (apart from Academy Street) will be branded with posters and banners. An advertising truck will also be driving round Inverness inviting everyone into the Market to take part in the competition.
- Everyone wanting to enter the competition should do so in the Market and maybe the businesses could have entry forms.
- Last year's Valentine's competition didn't really bring in footfall but generated a lot of publicity

- **JM** hoping all the traders will embrace the Valentine's theme
- As soon as Valentine's is over it will be straight into an Easter promotion.
- There will be an Easter Bunny Hunt in the Market as previously, facilitated by BID.
- Huge potential for events that can take place in the summer for the tourists.
- Doggy day with Munloch Animal Aid was proposed.
- Getting an Oor Wullies statue for the Market during the Archie Oor Wullie Trail campaign and possibly a hospice squirrel.
- **JM** intends producing a leaflet for the market this summer which will have a little map showing all the shops. Each shop will be provided with copies to hand out and they will be given to B&Bs, Hotel etc.
- Advertising in bedroom folders and a new hard back book SPP are producing.

Proposed Improvements

- Temporary wayfinding signage to direct customers into the Market Hall with a list of the traders.
- **JM** feels it is too dark in the Market Hall so looking at painting the Hall to brighten it up and also increasing the Hall lighting. These are quick fixes which can be done fairly quickly and relatively cheaply.
- Will communicate this to the Market Hall traders.
- **KP** enquired if the toilets could be opened up as it is quite intimidating for people to ask for the key. **JM** feels it is better for it to be locked so it can be controlled.
- **JM** advised that new toilets are planned for the future and will be phased into the works.
- There is a separate toilet for staff and a disabled toilet which members of the public are welcome to use
- There are also baby changing facilities provided.
- Signage should be changed from Disabled to Accessible Toilet and the new signage will help.
- **JM** will review the toilet situation and report back at the next meeting
- Had hoped to get the Entrances painted before Christmas but this didn't happen they will hopefully be done by the end of the month along with the toilets. **JM** has received quotes (Since the meeting – expenditure on some Maintenance, including painting, will now be delayed until April 2019)

JM

Project Update

- Proposed dates were circulated to the traders before Christmas.
- The work is currently out to tender and applications have started coming in.
- Originally thought work would start on the 25th January but this may slip slightly due to Planning Applications and Budgetary issues.
- The work will now continue past Easter now but Easter week will be kept free so activities can take place in the Market.
- Timelines will change but as soon as **JM** has an update she will circulate.
- Hoping completion date will be mid May but until work start and the condition of the stonework is known this may change.
- There will be no closure of the Entrance but there will be occasional out of hours work.
- If the entrance does need to close it will be for the minimum period possible. Hours rather than days.
- **JM** meeting with the scaffolding people. There will be signage on the scaffolding to say that the Market is open as normal and the P&J signage will also linked in if appropriate
- The message will be “Business as usual.”
- The work will make a huge improvement to the Entrance and will link in with the Station improvements. Having a dedicated crossing will be very beneficial – as proposed in the Street Scaping designs
- **WM** enquired about the timescale for the other proposed projects. **JM** advised that at present they are concentrating on phase one the Academy Street Entrance and the other proposals have been shelved meantime but will pick up once phase one gets underway.
- There are a few different proposals for the Arcade and some costings.
- A basic feasibility study has been done on the Market Hall which will be looked at in more detail once phase 2 is up and running.
- There will be more consultations for phases 2 and 3 as they affect more people.
- Not anticipating any hic-ups with phase 1.
- There will be a temporary partial road closure at the entrance for the duration of the works as there will be a portacabin on the street. Similar situation to when the roof was repaired.
- The Coyote Café maybe slightly affected by the works but **JM** has spoken with them and will speak with Mikeysline.
- Will monitor the disruption very closely once works starts.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be a lighting system installed that can be controlled. • Costs have prohibited a wrap being used as the scaffolding will only be up for four months. There will banners on the scaffolding and clear signage put up. It may also be able to put banners/signage on the poracabin. • Please let JM or IM know of any problems or issues that arise during the works so they can be fixed as soon as possible. 	
5.		AOCB	<p><u>Smoking</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JC advised that the entrances are the first impression people get of the Market and it doesn't look good seeing people standing at them smoking. • JM has sent out two letters asking traders not to smoke at the entrances but this has had no effect • The smoke bins will be removed from Academy Street during the works and will not be replaced. • Where there is a smoke bin people linger. • The Stakeholders agreed that the bins should be removed from all entrances. • JM to check with the Fire Officer that there is no legislation to prevent doing this. • Littering maybe a resulting problem but wardens can fine offenders. • Unfortunately nothing can be done at the Market Bar entrance. • All future literature will state that the Market is a smoke free zone. <p>Date of the next meeting Tuesday 26th February at 5.30pm Unit 15, Victorian Market.</p>	JM
			The meeting ended at around 7.15pm	