

AGENDA ITEM 11b

TOWN HALL AND MARKETS CONSULTATIVE GROUP

NOTES OF THE MEETING of the **TOWN HALL AND MARKETS CONSULTATIVE GROUP** held at the Council Chamber, Drake Road, Tavistock on **Tuesday** the **13th March 2018** at **5.15pm**

PRESENT Councillors Mrs Julia Whitcomb (Chairman),
Mrs Lyn Roberts, Harry Smith, and Paul Ward

Representing Members of the National Market Traders Federation and other Traders; Christine Rickard

Representing Non-Members of the National Market Traders Federation;
Sian King

Representing shops in the Pannier Market surround - Representation Pending

Representing Users of the Town Hall – Malcolm White

Representing BID - Robin Rich (Chairman)

Representing the Chamber of Commerce – Absent

Officers - Town Clerk, General Manager, Market Development Officer
Town Hall Manager, Town Hall Duty Officer, Market Reeve, Pannier Market Duty Officer

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence had been received from:

Sharon Weicha (NMTF), Corrie Planting (NMTF) and Tim Randell (Tavistock & District Chamber of Commerce)

2. Notes of last Meeting

- a) The Consultative Group received the Notes of the Meeting of the Town Hall and Markets Consultative Group held on Wednesday 7th February 2018 and endorsed their accuracy.
- b) It was noted Mr Paul Rowland; the Chairman of the MNTF had resigned from his position in February and subsequently

expressions of interest for the vacant position were welcome. The General Manager welcomed Mr Qasim Ulhaq of Rafee Clothing to the Meeting as an interested candidate for the position. The Market Reeve explained it was the responsibility of NMTF members to elect Mr Qasim Ulhaq as Chairman.

3. Reports

The Consultative Group received the following verbal reports.

a) Town Hall Verbal Report

The Town Hall Manager reported event bookings were still coming in, with a total of 14 bookings taken since the last Consultative Group Meeting in February. It was noted that the Town Hall Manager remained confident the Town Hall was seen as a reasonable and obliging events venue within the town.

It was reported an in-house event had been organised in partnership with the Western Union Jive Club. The event; a 1940's night was scheduled to take place on Saturday 30th June 2018 and would include a two course meal and live band.

The Town Hall Manager advised trading of the Pannier Market traders within the Town Hall was going well, with Tuesday, Fridays and Saturdays well supported in terms of trader presence and the visiting public. It was noted Wednesday and Thursdays remained the quietest days of the week in terms of both traders and footfall.

It was noted despite hosting the Pannier Market traders, Officers had seen an increase since January in Town Hall bookings and in the bar takings compared to the same period in 2017. Events include the Young Farmers' event and the local Hunt Ball, both of which were well attended and proved to be very successful on the bar.

The Town Hall Manager reported no licensing issues had arisen in the last month.

Discussions ensued regarding trading in the Town Hall and what else could be done in order to encourage footfall, especially on the days which were quieter (Wednesday and Thursday). The Market Reeve explained it was a difficult balance to get right, on days where the market offer was well supported in terms of footfall, it

was less so in respect of trader presence and vice versa. It was mutually agreed by members a full Market offer was vital and Officers should continue to attract traders for the Town Hall as well as Bedford Square.

The General Manager explained there would be an increase in trading on Bedford Square during April due to reduction in Town Hall availability, with the Charter Market taking place in the large marquee every Friday. Concerns were noted reference the early morning condensation from within the marquee damaging trader set up/ stock but it was agreed trading on the Square was a draw and increased footfall.

It was noted the Market Reeve would issue a schedule of dates to all traders for when the marquee would be erected on Bedford Square.

b) Pannier Market Verbal Report

The Market Reeve advised he was working with the Tavistock BID Company reference the town achieving the "Coach Friendly Destination" status. It was noted judging would take place the following day, and would involve a presentation and walk around the town to showcase its offer, and the facilities available to coach drivers.

It was reported the organiser of the Tavi Arts Market had stepped down from his position and subsequently, the Council were taking over the organisation of the event which runs once a month throughout April to December. Historically, Bedford Square hosts the themed market on the first Saturday of the month however consideration was being given to hosting the market in the newly refurbished Butchers' Hall. The Market Reeve explained with the space available and the protection from poor weather conditions, the Arts Market would be well suited to the indoor venue.

The Market Reeve explained social media was playing a key role in current promotions, with a post uploaded that day reference the ongoing works to the Pannier Market. It was noted a social media training course had been booked for Officers in order to improve their understanding of the capabilities available and enhance the TTC social media presence.

It was queried whether social media training could be extended to traders to which the Market Reeve confirmed he would look into this.

The Market Reeve referenced an email received from a member of the public requesting the Council review the use of plastic, in particular plastic bags within the Market due to its detrimental impact of the environment. It was noted the bags currently used by Market traders were bio degradable, however representatives believed there would be trader interest in supporting this potential initiative.

It was noted arrangements for the forthcoming Garden Festival were progressing well, with the event set to be a success. Members queried whether events such as the Plant Fair and Garden Festival would work better in Butchers' Hall so traders within the Pannier Market did not need to move during such events. The Market Development Officer explained part of the remit for Butchers' Hall was to complement the existing Market offer, not be in competition with it, and so whilst they were open to discussion they would not be looking to host either event at this stage.

c) Butchers' Hall Verbal Report

The Market Development Officer explained the next steps following on from the market strategy were to draft policy documents, implement promotional mediums and to start taking/generating bookings for the venue. This work would include setting the rules and regulations, developing a brand/website/social media/marketing campaign/booking system and agreeing a pricing schedule.

It was noted the proposed fees and charges would be presented to the Budget & Policy Committee at its meeting that evening and were derived by benchmarking against other comparable offers, consulting with NABMA and other markets/venues, liaising with local stakeholders such as the Tavistock BID Company and the Tavistock & District Chamber of Commerce, as well as reviewing the approach in both the Town Hall and Pannier Market regarding terms and conditions and operational considerations.

The Market Development Officer reported interest had been received from promoters reference events for August through to December and the first booking had been provisionally made for an event in May prior to the hard launch.

It was noted the launch of the Butchers' Hall would be in July 2018, once the venue had been fitted with toilet facilities and upon completion of the Public Realm works.

d) General operational issues including property maintenance and improvements – verbal update by General Manager

None.

4. Capital Projects

a) Pannier Market Planned Improvement Works

The General Manager explained that despite the poor weather conditions the original programme of works commissioned for the Pannier Market were on target to complete by 27th April 2018. It was noted the top section of the roof was now complete and it was anticipated the scaffolding would start to be taken down in the coming days.

It was reported the eleven glass doors, which Officers had received positive feedback on from the general public, were being installed and the majority of the internal and external paint work had been completed.

The General Manager advised that the Pannier Market floor was scheduled to be cleaned the following week and 90% of the carpentry had been finished.

It was noted that the remaining work included finishing the installation of the glass doors, replacing the box guttering and re-roofing the lower elevation. The General Manager explained that the Council were able to secure additional funds in order to deliver further improvements to the Pannier Market. The additional work would include new lighting, improvements to the heating system, refurbishment of the toilets and Market office as well as encasing Bob's Café in an enclosed, self contained unit.

The General Manager advised it would be extremely challenging to achieve all of the additional work by the 27th April 2018 and so envisaged a two week overrun on the contract.

It was noted Council were working on the basis of relocating traders back into the Pannier Market, week commencing 14th May, allowing approximately five days to set up with the view of re opening the Market on Friday 18th May.

Discussions ensued regarding the location of traders in the Pannier Market, and it was noted the layout prior to the temporary closure did not provide optimum trading in terms of trader presence and visitor dwell time. The General Manager explained that he and the Market Reeve were working on a new plan of the Market and a full consultation with traders would follow.

It was agreed by all members that the re launch of the Pannier Market was essential to get right, and should be a celebration of the works which have taken place as well as the Market offer.

Concerns were raised with regard to the loss of traders to the Market once it re opens in the Pannier Market, with some having chosen to trade in the retail unit, Lamberts Emporium as well as The Bedford Hotel during the works period. The General Manager explained he would expect to see no difference in the number of traders, with the trader occupancy target remaining at 95% from the 18th May 2018.

Additional concerns were shared with regard to the works schedule and the rumour of a two month overrun. The General Manager reiterated the original schedule of works was on schedule to complete by the 27th April 2018 and the additional work had created a two week overrun.

It was noted an update from the Architect had been issued to all traders.

b) Public Realm Design and Timings

The General Manager explained following completion of the measured survey, an Architect had been appointed for the Public

Realm work, of which a first design had been drafted in line with HLF approval.

It was noted that the Council would tender for the work over the course of the next two weeks, based on the concept of the design with an anticipated period of 6-8 weeks for the programme of works, subject to the awarded contractor's availability.

The General Manager advised he would undertake consultation with the perimeter shops and other key stakeholders (Tavistock BID, NMTF etc.) reference the design and the programme of works, and acknowledged the forthcoming works would be a challenging period for everyone.

The designs for the Public Realm were shared with members and discussions ensued. The General Manager advised any decisions made by the Council with regard the future usage of the Market perimeter would be based on a fair and consistent approach to traders, and the perimeter shops, whilst honouring the principles of the project.

c) Effective Communication

It was noted the attendance by members to the evening's Meeting was positive and encouraging, following a period where attendance was poor. The General Manager advised it was disappointing no expressions of interest had been received with regard to a perimeter shop representative, and explained the Consultative Group was a prime opportunity for key stakeholders to share their views in an open forum.

Concerns were raised with regard the lack of an Officer presence in the Town Hall. It was noted the General Manager would visit the Town Hall more often, but it was clearly articulated that Officer presence happened on a frequent basis on every Market day.

5. Any matters raised by representatives of the Pannier Market Traders, Pannier Market Shops, and / or Town Hall Users

A trader representative highlighted certain areas of concern in relation to challenges over attracting footfall in the Town Hall and its availability.

It was noted some members felt trader morale was down and queries were raised with regard the effectiveness of the advertisement and marketing campaign.

The General Manager explained in detail what the Council had implemented, and reiterated their commitment to honouring all previous bookings in the Town Hall.

6. Any matters raised by representatives of Tavistock BID Company
None.

7. Any Matters Raised by Representatives of Tavistock & District Chamber of Commerce
None.

8. Urgent Business Brought Forward at the Discretion of the Chairman
None.

9. Date of Next Meeting
To be confirmed.

The Meeting closed at 6.15pm.

Signed.....

Chairman

Dated.....