

**CORPORATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

**WORKSHOP SESSION: 20 JANUARY 2015
'A MARKET STRATEGY FOR ORMSKIRK'
WORKSHOP 1: "THE MARKET"**

Present:

Councillors R Bailey (Chairman) J Hodson
Mrs Baybutt Ms Melling

In attendance:

Councillors Griffiths (Portfolio Holder Town and Village Centres)
Barron O'Toole
S Bailey Owens
Delaney Pendleton
Dowling

Officers: Assistant Director Community Services (Mr D Tilleray)
Deputy Assistant Director Housing and Regeneration (Mr I Gill)
Technical Services Manager (Mr C Brady)
Senior Planning Officer Housing and Regeneration (Mr D Carr)
Market and Parking Officer (Mr K Knowles)
Principal Overview and Scrutiny Officer (Mrs C A Jackson)

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Workshop and explained the background to the review, the purpose and format of the session.

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Mrs Blake, Dereli, Mrs C Evans, Mrs R Evans and Oliver. Apologies were also proffered on behalf of the Leader (Councillor Westley) and Portfolio Holder Resources (Councillor Whittington).

2. Groupwork

Members broke into three groups, led by the Technical Services Manager, Market and Parking Officer and Senior Planning Officer (Housing and Regeneration). The questions / themes addressed and summary of the group work are appended below:

2.1 Moor Street Improvement Works – siting/relocation of the Market

Sites identified

- Coronation Park
- Morrisons Car Park
- Market Way
- Retention in Town Centre (Church Street; Burscough Street)
- Rows of stalls in Aughton Street
- Council Car Park (behind Tesco)
- Council Car Park (Bus Station)
- Bus Station (with stalls on Moor Street to link)

Summary feedback

In relation to the main locations identified it was noted that:

Bus Station Car Park is in close proximity to the existing market and public transport links and retention of some stalls on Moor Street could provide a link to the town centre.

Church Street / Burscough Street traffic concerns during the improvement works and problems relating to access, egress and safety, for both vehicles and pedestrians.

Council Car Park (rear of “Tesco”), with retention of some stalls in Church Street. Practicalities relating to loading, unloading of trade vehicles, overall pedestrian safety, particularly in Church Street from mix of vehicles during the improvement works.

Coronation Park /Park Pool car park. Setting the market out-of-town (Coronation Park) has previously been looked at. Difficulties raised included the impact on the town centre trade as shop retailers could lose the benefit of the busier footfall on Thursdays and Saturdays.

In conclusion, whilst there was no ‘perfect fit’ for an alternative site, the Bus Station Car Park was felt by the majority to be the best one.

2.2 The ‘Events Square’ – ideas for its use on market days.

Practicalities

- Should the space be covered? (semi-permanent; canopied) – weather dependent.
- Is a dais required?
- Flexibility / Management of the space.

Ideas for Use

- As a multi-functional area.
- Specialist stalls (pop-up shop area for use on non-market days).
- Prestigious events
- 'Themed' events
- Music festivals / events.
- Piazza area (night-time economy/bars?)
- Street arts / street entertainers (clog dancers; university students; ideas of others (Covent Garden – performers hourly)

Partnership Working

- Chapel Gallery
- Edge Hill University (EHU) – utilising/linking with creative arts/media at EHU; street theatre; business school
- Local Schools / Colleges (West Lancashire College)
- Local Community Groups (Lions; Rugby; Football Clubs et al)
- Town Twinning Liaison
- LCC Cultural Department: Culture of Lancashire

Summary Feedback

In conclusion it was noted that overall the space must be well-managed. It needs to be flexible and multifunctional in its use, be it for specialists' stalls, promotional events; entertainment (day and night), wider community use and embrace new technology. Thought should also be given to whether the space should be semi or permanently covered.

2.3 What are the differences between the Thursday and Saturday market? What could be done to improve the Saturday market?

Thursday Market (perceptions)

- Shoppers attracted (women / 'older' visitors)
- Judged to be Ormskirk's 'Market Day'

Saturday Market (perceptions)

- Shoppers attracted (families / couples / younger visitors)
- Number of empty stalls.

Improvements for change (ideas / themes)

- Identifying target audience
- Creating a Unique Selling Point (USP)
- Re-branding to a market day name (Thursday is 'Gingerbread Market')

- Setting a 'theme' (Marketing Lancashire; 'Farmers Market' (promoting local food / drink products); Cluster stalls; 'specialist' (Hog roast/paella)
- Re-think on stall-holder position (volume by 'Taylors', promotion of other positions – Saturday)

Look of stalls / environment (ideas / themes)

- Attracting non-traditional / experimental stalls (vintage (crafts/jewellery; high quality/niche end; local sourced products; 'would be' or 'start-up' entrepreneurs).
- Themed – entry stall; core stalls; themed spaces/cluster stalls.
- Using 'columns': lighting; banner arms
- Appearance (Single coloured awnings (Burgandy/red with Borough crest); Striped awnings scalloped edges; displays and management of individual stalls.
- Use of technology (lighting; light shows; screens)
- Trialling 'pop-up' stalls.

Summary Feedback

In conclusion it was noted that the Moor Street improvement works were providing an opportunity to look at how the Market is identified and positioned both locally and in the wider community. It was felt that market research and publicity could assist in ascertaining information in relation to current, future use and attraction.

2.4 What about the aesthetics of the Market? (its overall appearance, layout/look of the stalls and accessibility)

Improvements for change – links to ideas already raised

- Stop passages being blocked
- Colour code awnings by product; colour mark ups for awning reps.
- Uniformity with all the stalls.
- Group products together (cluster of similar products in designated areas – comparative shopping)
- Better seating arrangements
- Light shows
- Accommodate outside tables and chairs in cafes
- More traditional layout (flexibility of spacing of stalls).

Summary Feedback

In relation to the aesthetics and layout of the market the overall opinion was that there should be a uniformity in the stalls with matching canopies; clustering; better seating and landscaping.

The workshop concluded at 9.00pm.