

**CORPORATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE**

**WORKSHOP SESSION: 19 JANUARY 2016  
'A MARKET STRATEGY FOR ORMSKIRK'  
WORKSHOP 2**

**Present:**

Councillors	Dowling (Chairman)	
	Bailey	Delaney
	Barron	G Hodson
	Mrs Blake	Marshall
	Blane	West

Officers:	Assistant Director Community Services (Mr D Tilleray)
	Technical Services Manager (Mr C Brady)
	Senior Planning Officer Housing and Regeneration (Mr D Carr)
	Senior Economic Regeneration Officer (Ms K Mulhearn)
	Principal Overview and Scrutiny Officer (Mrs C A Jackson)

**1. Welcome and Apologies**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Workshop.

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Mrs Atherley, Oliver, O'Toole, Savage and the Assistant Director Housing and Regeneration.

**2. Groupwork**

The Assistant Director Community Services explained the format and purpose of the Workshop.

Members broke into three groups and each group discussed key actions related to the Ormskirk Town Centre Strategy which was in its final stage of being adopted. It was had been noted, at the last meeting of the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee that three sub-groups were to be set up that would be looking at implementing the actions set out in the strategy. Therefore key areas, relevant to the review, were covered by each group. These were The Market; Marketing and Branding and Buildings and the Public Realm. The themes addressed and summary of the group work are appended below:

## 2.1 “THE MARKET”

Led by the Technical Services Manager it was explained that Ormskirk Market is scheduled for re-launch in Spring 2016. Members discussed what had been undertaken so far in relation to refurbishment and its environment and looked to the future as to what else could be done to revitalise it.

### Summary Feedback

- All groups recognised that there was a need for the Market to acquire its own unique identity.
- That the canopies needed to be replaced. A variety of ideas came forward in relation to this including – canopies to be all one colour; a variety of colour canopies to reflect certain goods, for example food; haberdashery; women’s clothing etc. Canopies with a town logo – an “historical” figure; use of the “tower & steeple” of the Parish Church.
- The positioning of traders was discussed – should clustering of certain goods be together, again the use of colour canopies was referenced.
- Promoting the market – using technology; wi-fi; twitter; facebook. Other forms of publicity – ‘coach’ magazines; promotional bags; ‘meal deals’ with town centre traders.
- Incentive schemes – It was recognised that between January and March is a quiet period for market traders. What approach should be used to encourage visitors at these times?
- Diversification of stall trades was recognised to give a broad spectrum of goods for visitors to choose from.

Additionally Members referred to:

- Vehicle and enforcement in the town centre – the possible introduction of physical barriers / gates.
- Exploration of a ‘bus service’ – bespoke service on Market Days, with possible promotional subsidy.
- Promotion of additional ‘markets’ in West Lancashire
- Handcrafted stalls – smaller stall space for handcrafted goods, jewellery; clothing; etc. Working with Edge Hill and Chapel Gallery.
- Logo – use of local schools; Edge Hill to achieve.

In conclusion it was noted that there was a need for a unique identity to be portrayed via a logo, which should reflect the ‘historical’ elements of the town. That any logo approved for adoption should not be fussy but simple / unique

for transference onto a whole range of promotional materials, as well as, for example the market stall canopies.

## **2.3 MARKETING AND BRANDING**

Led by the Senior Economic Regeneration Officer Members considered one of the actions within the Ormskirk Town Centre Strategy in relation to developing a dedicated website for Ormskirk town centre. Members discussed the practicalities of the arrangements, including regular updating, existing websites already promoting Ormskirk and looked at snapshots of some of web-sites currently promoting Ormskirk including the Council's; Chapel Gallery; Visit Lancashire and Love Ormskirk websites.

### Summary Feedback

- All groups recognised the need for a strong and prominent brand identity to promote Ormskirk.
- Promotions and events need to be pulled together in one place. Ideas included: a calendar of events; imaginative activities for visitors, for example, town trails.
- Websites that appeal to different audiences / greater use of new technologies ("apps"; interactive screens)
- Utilisation of skills locally (Edge Hill's Creative Edge; Web Factory projects for students)

Additionally Members referred to:

- Advantages/disadvantages of existing web-site or creation of a new website; financial / resource implications; cross-promotion via other external web-sites (link to redirect back to "Ormskirk" site/s).

In conclusion whatever web-site option was chosen it was important that WLBC maintained control / access and that the chosen option (new or existing web-site) that all related options be thoroughly explored.

## **2.4 BUILDINGS AND THE PUBLIC REALM**

Led by the Senior Planning Officer Housing and Regeneration the physical environment of Ormskirk Town Centre was discussed with a focus on the main issues / ranking of priorities for street scene improvement.

### Summary Feedback

- All groups recognised the important of the historical / character of Ormskirk.
- The selection of an easily recognised logo that could be used not just on promotional material but externally on street furniture, was highlighted.
- Building on improvements in the town (Moor Street) to other locations.
- Vacant shops / units – exploring ideas for improvements (public art work; historical story boards)
- Lighting in the Town Centre (“logo” street lighting; lit buildings)
- Information Boards (introduction of interactive visitor boards; advantages/disadvantages of A boards (promotional; nuisance)
- Walkway from Ormskirk rail station to bus station (improvements (encourage use); cycle scheme.
- Shop fronts (traditional) – to build on “character” of town.
- Cornation Park – increasing usage (festivals; family friendly events; seating improvements)
- Parish Church – promoting (uniqueness); encouraging visitors (cruise ships)

In conclusion environmental improvements to the physical appearance of Ormskirk Town Centre were important to help with the promotion of Ormskirk as a visitor destination as well as creating a sense of pride for residents and local business users

In relation to ideas for a “town logo”, referred to during group discussions, the involvement of local schools / colleges in this, perhaps through an Arts competition, it was agreed that this was something that should be considered.

The Chairman thanked Members and Officers for their attendance.

The workshop concluded at 9.00pm.