

## **AGENDA ITEM 9b(i)**

### **NOTES OF THE ZOOM MEETING of the TOWN HALL & MARKETS CONSULTATIVE GROUP held on WEDNESDAY 20<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023 at 5.00pm.**

#### **PRESENT**

Representing Tavistock Town Council

Councillors P Squire, S Hipsey

Representing Market Traders' – Mr R Jones & Mrs S King

Representing shops in the Pannier Market surround – Mr S Bowyer

Representing Users of the Town Hall & Butchers Hall – Mrs B Ball

Representing BID – None Present

Representing the Chamber of Commerce – None Present

Officers – Town Clerk (TC), General Manager (GM), Market Reeve & Designated Premises Supervisor (MRDPS), Town Hall & Events Manager (TH&EM)

#### **1. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Mrs J Sanders.

#### **2. Confirmation of Notes**

- a) The Notes of the Meeting of the Town Hall & Markets Consultative Group held on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2023 were confirmed.
- b) There were no matters arising.

#### **3. Matters raised by Pannier Market, Market Perimeter, and Town Hall & Butchers' Hall Representatives;**

- A Pannier Market representative raised concerns around an increase in incidents of dog urination within the market which is causing damage to stalls in the Pannier Market. A discussion was had about adding signage relating to customers being conscious of their dog's behaviour whilst inside the market, as well as other possible measures to reduce incidents and mitigate damages.
- A Pannier Market representative asked about whether there was scope for an increase in the frequency of use of the Pannier Market heating for the winter period of 2023/24, following a reduced level of use in 2022/23 due to the significant increase in energy bills following a re-tender exercise. A discussion was had relating to measures that could be put in place by traders, as well as by TTC in order to reduce heat loss where possible. It was noted by the MRDPS that there is scope for a small increase in overall heating use from winter 2022/23.

#### **4. Any Matters Raised by BID Representatives;**

- Cllr S Hipsey spoke on behalf of J Sanders who had provided a report with some key notes relating to BID activities, these were as follows;
- There would be an upcoming BID meeting to discuss parking meter proposals put forward by Devon County Council.
- New Christmas lights have been purchased for certain streets, including Brook Street, within the town centre area with a view to improving the overall look of the town centre's display.
- There will be a Halloween trail running from 23<sup>rd</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> October which will take participants around various high street shops.
- The Fiver Fest event would return under the new name of "Magic Tenner", with participating shops putting on various £10 deals from the 7<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> October.
- There is work being undertaken to produce a map of "Sustainable Businesses" on Tavistock high-street.
- Tavistock BID are in discussions with cruise ship companies docking in Plymouth regarding adding Tavistock to their register for possible passenger excursions.
- Dickensian Evening 2023 is to operate under new times of 5pm – 8pm, this brings the close of the event forward by one hour for 2023.

#### **5. Updates** – The consultative group received the following verbal updates;

##### **Pannier Market & Bedford Square**

- i) The six weeks of Summer Monday Openings were a mixed bag, with the first two being quiet followed by four with good footfall and good sales reported by traders.
- ii) The Summer Superhero trail was a big success, with between 300 and 400 children taking part over the two-week period. The event was funded partially by TTC and partly by the Pannier Market traders, and was considered to be a great advert for the Pannier Market, with visitors offering good feedback on their experience. It was noted that a theme of "Witches and Wizards" was being discussed for the Summer 2024 trail.
- iii) It was noted that whilst new trader applications had slowly begun to increase, trader retention was still proving to be a challenge, most likely due to factors in the wider economy.
- iv) Members were informed that Barclays have arranged for the Barclay's Premier League and Women's Super League trophies to visit Tavistock Pannier Market on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> September for the day as part of the launch of the new Barclay's Pod in the Pannier Market. There would be

a photo booth style arrangement set up so that visitors could have their pictures taken with the trophies.

- v) Bedford Square trading had continued to be steady across the summer period, with a number of new traders holding regular market stalls on a weekly basis. Members were informed that the regular fishmonger "Dan the Fish Man" had now retired, but that a new fishmonger would be attending on Fridays to keep a presence of fresh fish on Bedford Square.

### **Town Hall**

- i) The TH&EM discussed the regular hirers who continue to use the Town Hall, and noted that we were receiving new enquiries for potential new regular hirers as well.
- ii) The scaffolding had not proven to be too much of an issue during the summer period for the event hirers. Boarding and Banners have been ordered in order to make the entrance area as attractive as possible whilst the scaffolding is in place.
- iii) Targeted advertising has continued to be placed in publications such as the Links magazine and the Tavistock Times to promote the venue and attract new hirers.
- iv) Cllr S Hipsey asked whether hirers are provided with information relating to town amenities such as parking locations, hotels etc. The TH&EM addressed this by discussing the information pack provided to new hirers when they attend their site visit to discuss their event.
- v) The General Manager gave an update on changes to the operation of the Guildhall, and advised members that TTC would now be operating the exhibition side of the Guildhall, with Tavistock Heritage Trust continuing to run the VIC and shop. Members were advised that the existing part time cleaner role for the Guildhall had been increased to full time and amended to Heritage Centre Assistant, with the existing post holder moving into the new role on 6<sup>th</sup> October. Members were advised that a new fixed term contract was being advertised for a "Heritage Centre Duty Officer", who would be contracted until March 2025.

### **Butchers' Hall**

- i) Mrs B Ball was introduced to the committee as being a regular Butchers Hall trader over a number of years, and the new Trader Representative for Butchers Hall users.
- ii) It was noted that there had been an issue achieving maximum capacity for Butchers Hall Markets through 2023 due to economic factors and some regular traders leaving. New trader applications were continuing to come in, however a higher percentage of new applications were for

one or two days rather than a commitment to all three days of certain markets.

- iii) Footfall continues to be up and down, with additional focus being put onto social media to complement the printed advertising in an effort to draw more consistent footfall to the markets.
- iv) There had been good engagement with social media posts across the summer period and this has also proven to be a good avenue for attracting new potential traders.
- v) The internet in Butchers Hall has now been upgraded from the existing copper lines to Full Fibre, giving a better overall internet connection for hirers and traders in Butchers Hall.

## **6. Capital update for works impacting on the market complex,**

reference was made, in particular, to: -

- i) The General Manager gave details to members on the cost and scope of the current projects being undertaken. These include the work to Market Road and the work to the Town Hall.
- ii) Members were advised that additional funding had been allocated to the Town Hall works, which would be extended to include the repointing and plastic repairs on the Town Hall tower.
- iii) Members were advised that Market Road was to be resurfaced in areas, and fully re-lined in early October and that Market Road parking restrictions would be fully enforceable following the completion of the re-lining. The MRDPS added that this should be a positive step towards attracting more customers to visit the Pannier Market and Perimeter Shops, as there has been a lack of free short stay parking in the Town centre.
- iv) Trader representatives were advised that traders may benefit from being directed to the available parking permits for Tavistock Town Centre, as this may constitute a financial saving over paying the parking daily.

## **7. OPERATIONAL MATTERS**

### **a) Appoint a representative for Town Hall and Butchers Hall users;**

Mrs B Ball was nominated and duly elected as a representative.

She noted that one area of concern for Butchers' Hall users was that dates for 2024 were yet to be released, and that it was important for dates to be sent out soon so as to not lose traders to other events that were already releasing 2024 dates. The TH&EM agreed to ensure dates were released as soon as possible.

**b) Waste Management;**

- i) The Market Reeve discussed the future plans for the recycling area, including extending it into existing storage areas and looking at measures to reduce fly tipping. He noted that there would be additional measures relating to waste management which would be included in the new revised Rules and Regulations.

**c) Rules and Regulations;**

- i) The General Manager advised that the Pannier Market Rules and Regulations are currently under review, and that a new set are being drafted which are more appropriate for the Pannier Market in its current format.
- ii) It was added that the Guildhall will have its own set of Rules and Regulations specific to the hire and use.
- iii) The Market Reeve added that the intention is to clear up existing grey areas within the current Rules and Regulations, giving greater overall transparency, as well as tightening up on existing rules.

**d) Fees and Charges;**

- i) The General Manager advised that a consistent approach was taken across the council relating to fees and charges of a 10% increase in April 2023.
- ii) The table price for the Pannier Market was discussed, with an agreement at the time being that the 10% would be split over two years, with 50p being added in April 2023 and April 2024.
- iii) The Pannier Market Representatives raised concerns about an increase in April 2024 due to the impact already being felt by the cost of living crisis.
- iv) It was discussed that the 50p increase for 2024 had already been agreed, however Tavistock Town Council would arrange for an open meeting between Council Officers and traders in mid-2024 to have a full discussion on fees and charges, as well as any other significant issues and concerns that traders may have.

**8. EVENTS**

**a) Goose Fair;**

- i) Members were informed by the General Manager that Goose Fair would for the first time have an official closing time which would be 9pm. The event would remain closed to vehicles until such time as it is deemed safe to reopen due to crowds having dispersed. The Market Reeve noted that the Pannier Market would return to a closing time of 6:30pm, having found that opening until 8pm in 2022 was not particularly successful in terms of benefiting from additional footfall.

**b) Dickensian Evening;**

- i) The General manager discussed that the Dickensian Evening event would operate under the new times of 5pm – 8pm, as decided by the organisers Tavistock BID.
- ii) The Market Reeve noted that the Pannier Market would likely want to remain open until 9pm as usual, as this evening is very good for foot fall for the Pannier Market and Butchers Hall, and that traders would be keen to capitalise on this.

**c) Christmas Opening Hours;**

- i) The Market Reeve informed members that the opening hours for the Christmas Period had been agreed as being every day from December 5<sup>th</sup>, up to and including December 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- ii) It was decided that as Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday this year, that the Pannier Market would not open for it. This is in line with the opening hours on the last occurrence of Christmas Eve being on a Sunday.
- iii) He added that the Market would reopen on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> December for three days, these being Thursday 28<sup>th</sup>, Friday 29<sup>th</sup> & Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> December. The Pannier Market would then reopen on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> January and return to normal trading days from that point onwards.
- iv) Butchers’ Hall Christmas Markets will also close on December 23<sup>rd</sup> in line with the Pannier Market.
- v) The Market Reeve added that a memo would be drafted to be given to all Pannier Market Traders and Perimeter shops with a full breakdown of the opening hours over the festive period.

**11. URGENT BUSINESS BROUGHT FORWARD AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN**

No urgent business was brought forward.

**12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next Town Hall & Markets Consultative Group Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 12 December at 5.00pm.

The Meeting closed at 6.55pm.

Signed.....

Chairman

Dated.....