

**COMMUNITY CUSTOMER AND ORGANISATIONAL SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

Thursday, 20th November, 2014

Present:-

Councillor Innes (Chair)

Councillors	Bagley	Simmons
	Blank ++	Tom Murphy
	Borrell	

Andy Bond – Town Centre Operations Manager +
Damon Bruce – Customer Services Manager ++
Anita Cunningham – Policy and Scrutiny Officer
Brian Offiler – Committee and Scrutiny Coordinator
Bernadette Wainwright – Cultural and Visitor Services Manager +
Scott Webster – Great Place; Great Service Project Officer ++

+ Attended for Minute No. 25

++ Attended for Minute No. 26

**23 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' AND OFFICERS' INTERESTS
RELATING TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.**

No declarations of interest were received.

24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

**25 EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR LEISURE, CULTURE AND TOURISM -
BUSINESS CASE FOR PROPOSED OPEN MARKET
CONFIGURATION**

The Cultural and Visitor Services Manager and the Town Centre Operations Manager presented a report outlining the issues that inhibited the development of the open market and including a business case on how any proposed improvements to the open market could be funded.

The report included details of the current layout of the Market Place, the stall rents for 2014/15 and occupancy levels for the general market days and for the flea market. Following consultation with market traders through the Markets Consultative Committee, their aspirations for the market were summarised within the report.

It was anticipated that any proposed improvements to the Market Place would probably reduce the number of stalls, in order to improve sightlines and aisle widths, but result in increased income from a simplified pricing structure.

A proposal would be submitted to the Council's Cabinet in December for £15,000 to be allocated from the Service Improvement Fund to appoint a consultant to undertake a feasibility study in liaison with Members, officers and market traders to provide options and estimated costs for redesign and upgrade of the Market Place. It was expected that this would then be reported with recommendations to Cabinet in May 2015.

In response to questions from Members, it was confirmed that the required retail expertise that could be obtained through use of a consultant was not currently available within the Council and it was hoped that this expertise would lead to options to secure the long term future of the market, providing positive options to attract traders from street stalls to locate in the Market Place. It was explained that benchmarking exercises had shown the current level of stall rents to be competitive, albeit unnecessarily complicated.

Members of the Committee thanked the officers for attending and presenting the report.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the proposal to appoint a consultant to provide options and costs for the redesign and upgrade of the Market Place be supported and that officers be requested to circulate a copy of the tender specification for the appointment of the consultant to Members of the Committee once available.
- (2) That the Committee be given opportunity to consider the final report including proposed options prior to this being submitted to Cabinet in May 2015.

26 **EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CUSTOMERS AND COMMUNITIES -
PROGRESS REPORT ON CUSTOMER SERVICES STRATEGY**

The Executive Member for Customers and Communities, the Customer Services Manager and the Great Place; Great Service Project Officer presented a progress report on the Customer Service Strategy Action Plan 2012 - 2014.

The report included details of progress achieved against each of the following elements of the Strategy:

- Avoidable contact strategy
- Channel shift strategy
- Accessibility of contact strategy
- Telephone strategy
- Mobile phone strategy
- Web strategy
- Face to face strategy
- Post/paper communication strategy
- Email strategy
- New media strategy

It was explained that the Channel shift strategy aimed to move more customer transactions to lower cost channels, such as telephone or online, in order to reduce transaction costs and provide a higher standard service available for longer periods. The Great Place; Great Service Board had approved business cases to purchase online self service technology and to appoint a Web Editor.

In response to questions from Members, it was confirmed that careful consideration would be given to the most appropriate channels to be used for each type of transaction, taking account of evidence, research and consultation with users. Support would be provided to encourage customers to use new channels. The Customer Services Manager agreed to provide further information on comparative costs of using text messaging services.

Members of the Committee thanked the Executive member and officers for attending and presenting the report.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the progress report on the Customer Service Strategy Action Plan be noted.
- (2) That the Channel shift action plan 2015-17 be supported.

27 FORWARD PLAN

The Committee considered the Forward Plan for the period 1 December, 2014 to 31 March, 2015.

RESOLVED –

That the Forward Plan be noted.

28 SCRUTINY MONITORING

The Scrutiny Monitoring report was considered.

RESOLVED –

That the Scrutiny Monitoring report be noted.

29 SCRUTINY PROJECT GROUP PROGRESS UPDATES

Health Inequalities Scrutiny Project Group

No report was available.

RESOLVED –

That a report from the Health Inequalities Project group be considered at the next meeting of the Committee.

30 WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE COMMUNITY, CUSTOMER AND ORGANISATIONAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Committee considered a list of items raised to date for its Work Programme.

It was noted that the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny meeting was scheduled to be held on 4 December, 2014

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the progress report on implementation of the Workforce Strategy be considered at the January, 2015 meeting.
- (2) That the progress report on the Equality, Diversity and Social Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan be considered at the June, 2015 meeting in order to fit in with the annual report to Council.
- (3) That the report on the options for the Market reconfiguration be considered in May/June, 2015.
- (4) That Members of the Committee be provided with a brief written update on the progress on the Cemeteries Strategy and Action Plan prior to the Cemeteries strategy being considered by Cabinet in January, 2015.

31 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY DEVELOPMENTS

The Policy and Scrutiny Officer reported that the corporate review of Overview and Scrutiny was progressing well.

Members welcomed the presentation which had been given on the Forward Plan.

32 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee held on 18 September, 2014 were presented.

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.