

**COMMUNITY, CUSTOMER AND ORGANISATIONAL SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE MEETING**

Thursday, 16th April, 2015

Present:-

Councillor Innes (Chair)

Councillors	Bagley	Simmons
	Borrell	Tom Murphy

Serjeant +
Blank ++

Wendy Blunt, Community Development Worker +++++
Donna Cairns, Committee and Scrutiny Co-ordinator
Anita Cunningham, Policy and Scrutiny Officer
Katy Marshall, Policy Officer +++
Bernadette Wainwright, Visitor and Cultural Services Manager +
David Gardner, IBI Group +

+ Attended for Minute Nos.47 -49
++ Attended for Minute Nos.50 – 51
+++ Attended for Minute Nos.47 – 50
++++ Attended for Minute Nos.47 – 51

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

No declarations were received.

48 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

**49 EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR LEISURE, CULTURE AND TOURISM -
REPORT ON OUTSIDE MARKET RECONFIGURATION**

The Executive Member for Leisure, Culture and Tourism and the Cultural and Visitor Services Manager submitted a progress report on the delivery

of a feasibility study on Chesterfield's outdoor market. The purpose of the study was to analyse the existing operation of the market and to propose a number of development options to make the market more sustainable and more attractive for traders and shoppers.

It was reported that IBI Group had been appointed as consultants for the project. A representative from IBI Group, Mr Gardener, also attended the meeting.

Since being appointed, IBI Group had conducted a desk-top analysis of the current operation of the market and its layout and an engagement plan was agreed to identify key principles and priorities for the traders, shoppers and local community.

Focus groups had been carried out with the flea and general market traders and with the Town Centre Forum. The Equality and Diversity Forum was also consulted. A public consultation day was carried out in the Market Place. All attendees were asked what they felt about the market was good and bad and what could be improved.

To date, 58 traders had attended the focus groups and 57 had completed the questionnaire that had been issued to all traders. It was discussed that the views of the traders were very important as markets do not work without traders. The proposals must take into account the retention of existing traders and attracting new traders.

Almost 300 responses were received from a public questionnaire available on the Council's website, and a further 51 responses were received from the paper version available from the Market Hall.

Members asked what added value and expertise did IBI Group bring to the project beyond the carrying out of the engagement events and consultation exercises. Mr Gardener advised the committee that IBI Group have a lot of experience in in the design and delivery of successful market developments, particularly in conservation areas, such as Kirkgate in Leeds and Ashton-under-Lyne. They also have a retail specialist as part of the project team who was experienced in advising owners and operators, within both the public and private sectors, in the operation and management of retail markets.

Members asked what steps had been taken to ensure the widest range of views had been sought to make sure all options would be considered.

The Visitor and Cultural Services Manager informed the Committee that IBI Group was brought into the project to provide fresh ideas from their experience with projects across the country. Consultation was carried out locally to reach as many people as possible, with all current traders and members of the public.

Members discussed the possibility of moving some of the stalls spread out around the town centre back into the Market Place to have a greater concentration of products in one area. This may demonstrate more clearly the variety that was already on offer. Members held different views on whether the market should be split into sections for each type of stall. The Visitor and Cultural Services Manager advised that currently the Market Handbook states that stalls selling the same goods must be spread out. This could be revisited if it was considered an issue during the design of reconfiguration proposals.

Members raised the issue of accessibility on the market, particularly for those in wheelchairs or with pushchairs. They also discussed the problems in wet conditions with water running off the sheets in between the rows of stalls. Members suggested that improving these problems may help to increase both the numbers of traders and shoppers on the market.

It was reported that the flea market traders felt the flea market was running well. Members discussed that this may be due to the full stalls being occupied, making the market look more attractive. Concentrating all stalls into the Market Place on general market days may have a similar effect. Members also commented that although there may be some views that the flea market is working fine, this should not restrict the research into whether there were possibilities to improve it for traders and to achieve the overall aims of the community and the Council for the market.

Members asked whether radical changes to the market were needed to respond to the competition from online shopping and other retail challenges. It was discussed that there were some recent trends in the retail market away from large out of town stores and there was a growth in more traditional shopping habits, such as an increase in vinyl record sales. The market could promote itself as offering a more social, customer service based shopping experience.

Mr Gardener advised the committee of some ideas that could be used to promote the market, such as offering regional food and drink, organising

speciality markets or tying in with the Fairtrade status of the town to offer more Fairtrade products on the market.

Mr Gardener advised the committee that when designing and drawing up proposals for the market, all possible options would be considered, steered by the feedback from the consultation. The proposals could vary from minimal intervention to more significant changes.

The design criteria would include whether the proposals would increase the trade, attract more traders and see a return in the investment. Robust business cases would need to be created for any recommended proposals. Very expensive options that would need a lot of investment would not be recommended if there was not enough budget for this or sufficient evidence of the financial returns. The final recommendations would be designed around all identified priorities for the market and would look to satisfy both the ambition of the Council for the market and the funding available to achieve this.

Members commented and agreed that whatever the final proposal might be it must be cost efficient, and must work for traders and work for Chesterfield.

The Visitor and Cultural Services Manager advised the committee that she expected a series of options to be drawn up before a second phase of consultation would be carried out to present the emerging proposals in July/August 2015.

Members thanked the Executive Member, officers and the representative from IBI Group, Mr Gardener, for presenting the report and answering the Committee's questions.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the views of the Community, Customer and Organisation Scrutiny Committee be considered in the feasibility study.
- (2) That a further report be presented to the Committee at its meeting in July 2015 on the proposed options.

50 **EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CUSTOMERS AND COMMUNITIES - REPORT ON DRAFT EQUALITIES ANNUAL REPORT**

The Executive Member for Customers and Communities and the Policy Officer submitted a report to present a draft of the Council's Equality and Diversity Annual Report for 2014/15.

An annual report was required under equalities legislation and best practice guidance. The report would summarise equalities progress during the year and would cover improvements, achievements and future plans. The draft report set out a lot of information already and would be added to with further information from other service areas.

The Executive Member for Customers and Communities advised the Committee that she felt that the Council was very successful in implementing the Equality, Diversity and Social Inclusion Strategy and achieved a high standard in this work, going beyond the legal requirements. The Council's policy covers all the protected characteristics under discrimination legislation, but also extends to groups experiencing deprivation, such as health or financial.

The Equality and Diversity Forum continued to play a significant role in consulting and engaging with local people and with the Council on its policies and activities. The Forum now had 187 members representing community groups, statutory organisations and other individuals from the community with an interest in the promotion of equality. It was discussed that this was a good example of the Council's successful partnership working.

During 2014/15, the Forum continued to organise and host a number of events on a range of equalities themes. These included:

- International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia
- Our History, Our Story – Polish Heritage Day
- Faith and World Views in our Community
- Holocaust Memorial Day

These events all received positive feedback and good attendance. The Holocaust Memorial Day, held at Chesterfield College, was oversubscribed.

Members suggested that these community events should be held in more schools to take the exhibitions and speakers out to the wider community, not just those with an existing interest in equalities issues. It was discussed whether equalities issues may be included in primary or secondary curriculums already, but the Council's officers or partners could offer more expertise to deliver sessions in the schools. Members recommended that the Equalities and Diversity Forum explore this possibility with local schools when considering the next year of events.

Members discussed that the Bite the Ballot sessions that Democratic Services had run in local schools were successful events in engaging with young people in democracy and suggested this could be included in the annual report.

Members thanked the Executive Member and the officer for the good work being undertaken, and for presenting the report and answering the Committee's questions.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the Executive Member for Customers and Communities be recommended to propose that the Equalities and Diversity Forum focus on holding events to promote equalities issues in local schools during 2015/16.
- (2) That it be recommended that the Bite the Ballot sessions be included in the Equality and Diversity Annual Report for 2014/15.
- (3) That the draft Equality and Diversity Annual Report for 2014/15 be supported.

51 EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CUSTOMERS AND COMMUNITIES - REPORT ON DRAFT COMMUNITY ASSEMBLIES ANNUAL REPORT

The Community Development Worker submitted a report to present a draft of the Council's Community Assemblies Annual Report for 2014/15.

Community Assemblies had been introduced following a corporate review of how the Council engages with its communities. Four Community Assemblies were created, covering the North, South, East and West areas of the Borough.

The Annual Report would provide evidence of the work, achievements and development of the Community Assemblies and the associated Community Development Programme; provide an overview of their effectiveness; and also promote their work and raise their profile.

The Community Development Worker advised that the meetings of the Community Assemblies had speakers on a wide range of topics. The Chairs and Vice-Chairs had met to evaluate lessons learned over the year and comments from this would be included in the Annual Report. The Community Assemblies also had a growing presence on social media.

Some of the feedback received from partners, such as Chesterfield College and the police was shared with the Committee. This described the Community Assemblies as a good method for engaging with the community, understanding local issues and supporting community work. These comments were to be included in the Annual Report.

Members discussed that the Community Assemblies were an improvement of the previous arrangements and that the growth in attendance was evidence of this.

The activities of the Community Development Programme during 2014/15 were also outlined. It was hoped that the Health and Well-being group in the South area would be replicated in other areas. Members also agreed that there had been several successful examples of good partnership working in the events that had taken place, such as the Financial Inclusion programme.

Members thanked the Executive Member and the officer for the good work being undertaken, and for presenting the report and answering the Committee's questions.

RESOLVED –

That the draft Community Assemblies Annual Report for 2014/15 be supported.

52 **FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee considered the Forward Plan for the period 1 May – 31 August 2015.

RESOLVED –

That the Forward Plan be noted.

53 **SCRUTINY MONITORING**

The Scrutiny Monitoring Report was considered.

RESOLVED –

That the Scrutiny Monitoring Report be agreed.

54 **WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE COMMUNITY, CUSTOMER AND ORGANISATIONAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

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

Members discussed the dates for the Committee in the Meeting Schedule for 2015/16. It was noted that the Executive Member for Governance and Organisational Development had approved the Schedule after consultation with the political group leaders and committee chairs, which included a meeting day change for all Scrutiny Committees to Tuesdays. The change had been proposed due to availability of staff resource and potential for more limited committee room availability on Thursdays and Fridays. Members discussed that this day was not suitable for this Committee's members and requested the dates revert to Thursdays.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the further report on the Markets Reconfiguration Project be considered in July 2015.
- (2) That the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee be held as part of the next meeting in July 2015.
- (3) That the meeting dates for 2015/16 for this Committee be rearranged to Thursdays.

55 **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY DEVELOPMENTS**

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

RESOLVED –

That the update be noted.

56 **SCRUTINY PROJECT GROUPS PROGRESS UPDATES****Health Inequalities Scrutiny Project Group**

No report was available.

RESOLVED –

That the continuation of the Health Inequalities Scrutiny Project Group be considered at the next meeting of the Committee.

57 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee held on 22 January 2015 were presented.

RESOLVED –

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