

AGENDA ITEM 11c

NOTES OF THE MEETING of the TOWN HALL & MARKETS CONSULTATIVE GROUP held on WEDNESDAY 26th JUNE 2024 at 5.00pm.

PRESENT

Representing Tavistock Town Council - Councillors B Moody, J Moody, T Munro, N Martin,

Cllr S Hipsey (Deputy Mayor – ex officio)

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

Representing shops in the Pannier Market Surround – Mr D Fisher

Representing users of the Town Hall & Butchers' Hall – None Present

Representing Tavistock BID – Mr C Palmer

Representing the Chamber of Commerce – Mr T Randall

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

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

A nomination was received and seconded and Mr R Jones was duly elected as Chairman for the 2024-2025 Civic Year.

2. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

A nomination was received and seconded and Cllr T Munro was duly elected as Vice Chairman for the 2024-2025 Civic Year.

3. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mrs B Ball and Ms J Sanders.

Mr R Jones informed members that Mrs J Osborne had stepped down as a Market Trader Representative.

4. CONFIRMATION OF NOTES

- a) The Notes of the Meeting of the Town Hall & Markets Consultative Group held on 5th March 2024 were confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting.
- b) A Councillor asked whether a sign was now in place on the Market Road entrance doors to Butchers' Hall as discussed at the 5th March meeting. The TH&EM advised that a permanent sign had not yet been finalised, but added

that temporary signs which had been designed in-house were being utilized in the interim period.

5. ANY MATTERS RAISED BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PANNIER MARKET TRADERS, PANNIER MARKET SHOPS, AND/OR TOWN HALL/BUTCHERS' HALL USERS.

Representatives explained that they felt that the Trader Consultation Meeting held on 18th June 2024 had been very positive and well received, based on feedback post the event.

6. ANY MATTERS RAISED BY TAVISTOCK BID

The Representative of Tavistock BID updated attendees on the following items;

- Work on the Dickensian Evening event and Christmas lights was underway, in partnership with Tavistock Town Council, with a note that it has been agreed that the lights would be turned on around Mid-November this year due to the date of Dickensian Evening being later in December.
- That the hanging baskets were now in place around the town, with Tavistock Town Council installing and watering them.
- That new bunting had been sourced to be erected throughout the high street and that it would remain throughout the summer.
- It was explained that the Tavistock Customer Service Awards would be returning this year and that free business seminars for local businesses were being arranged in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce.
- The representative reported that the Cream Tea week had been very successful so far, concluding on 30th June with the Cream Tea & Bubbles Festival.
- Regarding issues around anti-social behaviour, Tavistock BID have recently signed up to a crime reporting system which will enable businesses in the town to more easily report small instances of crime to the police.

7. ANY MATTERS RAISED BY TAVISTOCK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Representative of Tavistock Chamber of Commerce discussed the following items;

- Further information was given on the free business seminars for local businesses which are being arranged in partnership with Tavistock BID.
- The Chamber of Commerce had agreed to sponsor the returning "Customer Service Awards" which Tavistock BID were organising.
- The representative noted that they thought that the Cream Tea week was very successful and that they were pleased to see so many businesses participating. A Councillor asked if the Cream Tea week would be returning annually and it was confirmed by the representative that it was intended to become a yearly event.

8. UPDATES

a) Pannier Market & Bedford Square;

The Market Reeve & Designated Premises Supervisor updated representatives on the following items;

- The Pannier Market summer Monday openings would begin on 15th July 2024, and run for 6 consecutive weeks. An update was given on the advertising strategy for the specific promotion of the Summer Monday openings. It was noted that bookings for traders for the Mondays continued to be difficult, but that work was continuing to attract new traders for these additional trading days.
- It was explained that whilst the general trading environment had been difficult over the recent months, new trader applications were continuing to come in with a number of new exhibitors having started in recent weeks.
- Attendees were advised that high levels of trader sickness and annual leave were continuing to make it difficult to maintain table occupancy at targeted levels for the middle section of the market and it was intended through consultation, to review the rules and regs pertaining to the holiday and sickness policies.
- It was explained that there continues to be a strong base of regular traders on Bedford Square with the improved weather, including a recent booking of half of Bedford Square on a Saturday by a local craft group which was positive.
- A Cllr explained that there was a loose paving slab on Bedford Square which they had noticed and the GM advised that this would be reported to Devon County Council.

b) Town Hall and Butchers' Hall;

The Town Hall & Events Manager updated attendees on the following items;

- That it had been a struggle to fill some of the Butchers Hall in-house markets in the early part of 2024, but that events from July onwards were close to full occupancy.
- It was explained that new events for 2024 had been implemented including a Book Fair. New themes are being considered for 2025 to ensure that the offer in Butchers' Hall remains diverse and attractive.
- It was noted that there had been some issues with traders packing up early in Butchers Hall and that this was being monitored.
- It was explained that discussions were being undertaken with the Stannary Brewery with a view to stocking locally produced beer in the Town Hall Bar.
- New promotional flag banners and advertising materials have been purchased for Butchers Hall. It was outlined that a large featured advert has been placed in a number of the Links Magazines to promote the Town Hall and Butchers'

Hall as part of the current "Visit Tavistock" feature for the June/July and August/September issues.

c) Capital Update for works impacting on the Market complex

The GM advised that this was a standing item on the Agenda, and that there was nothing of note to discuss impacting the next quarter.

9. OPERATIONAL MATTERS

a) Partnership working with Tavistock BID

- The GM gave a brief update on the positive partnership working with Tavistock BID, explaining what benefits were received, along with explaining that further measures had been implemented to assist with partnership working, including the BID Manager utilising office space in the Guildhall every Wednesday.
- The MRDPS discussed an upcoming project to rebrand and relaunch the Friday Charter Market which is being organised in partnership with Tavistock BID.

b) Advertising

- The MRDPS gave an update on the various advertising mediums that have been booked for 2024 to promote the market complex, Town Hall, Guildhall and specific events.
- The MRDPS gave an update on the coach drivers initiative scheme and that new contacts needed to be secured for the Torbay area.
- The MRDPS confirmed that membership of the Tindle News Business Club was being renewed for 2024/25.
- A representative asked whether it would be possible to secure brown road signs in the local area to direct visitors to the market complex and it was explained that this had been considered previously but was challenging to administer after liaising with DCC.
- A representative asked whether it would be possible to gain control of the local Facebook group "Tavistock Parish, in order to take it in a more positive direction for the town". It was explained that this was unlikely to be possible for a number of reasons and that the Council were not in a position to consider such an intervention.
- The MRDPS gave an update on the increased use of social media in the Pannier Market for promotion, with two traders assisting. It was noted that consideration was being given to allocating a small budget to be used specifically for paying to boost key posts to improve engagement.

c) Security

The General Manager updated members on recent issues with anti-social behaviour which have been affecting the Market Complex, Town Hall, Guildhall and Guildhall toilets. He asked representatives to remain vigilant, and to report

any anti-social activity witnessed to the police as well as liaising with the markets and events team.

d) Communication

The General Manager discussed the following points with attendees;

- That bullet points summarising the Consultative Group Meetings would be circulated to traders the week following the meeting of the Town Hall & Markets Consultative Group.
- That a memo with key points from the meeting held on the 18th June would be circulated shortly.
- That improvements were to be made to mailing list use, with the inclusion of the perimeter shops for all relevant items.
- It was explained that the MRDPS would endeavour to collect rent twice weekly to allow for face to face engagement with traders. It was noted by the GM that this time should be used by traders to raise specific points, rather than general social aspects.
- It was explained that the communication improvements must be a two-way process, with traders approaching the Pannier Market office formally to discuss issues if required. It was also noted that any formal requests relating to trading must be made in writing by traders to ensure that all requests have a clear audit trail.
- It was explained that another trader consultation would be held in June 2025, with a date to be confirmed.

e) Outcomes arising from the Consultation held on 18th June 2024;

- The GM advised representatives that a review would be undertaken of the current operating hours of the market, with consideration also being given to whether there should be seasonal opening hours.
- The GM explained that the policy for holiday and sickness would be reviewed to ensure that there was a consistent approach which left no ambiguity around interpretation.
- It was noted by the GM that consideration would be given to increasing the use of the PM heating in the upcoming winter period, if demand necessitated re: conditions.
- The MRDPS added that there would be a review into the trader application process to ensure all potential leads were being followed up.

10. EVENTS

a) Review of Easter 2024 activities;

The MRDPS informed representatives that the Pannier Market had run a two-day free Easter Trail activity, alongside the traditional Trader Easter Bonnet competition. Participation in both the trail and the bonnet competition had been good, and feedback from customers and traders was positive.

b) Review of the 2024 Country Garden Show;

- The MRDPS reported that the feedback for the event on the whole had been positive, despite the challenging weather on the first day of the event.
- The MRDPS discussed the importance of attracting new nurseries and plant stalls for the 2025 event, as well reviewing the show garden aspect.
- The MRDPS gave thanks to Deputy Mayor for judging and for the considerable time he spent engaging with traders throughout the event.
- The representative of the Pannier Market Shops noted that the event seemed to end at the Butchers' Hall walkway area, and asked whether it would be possible to expand further down that side of the market to help the shops on that side feel more included in the event. The MRDPS confirmed that this area of the site was being given consideration for improvement for the 2025 event.
- A reference was made to the lack of stalls selling garden tools and equipment and it was agreed that this would be considered as a new addition for the next event.

c) Summer 2024 plans;

- The MRDPS provided a list of key event dates for the Market Complex for the Summer Period, many of which being also reported on Visit Tavistock.
- The MRDPS outlined the concept relating to the planned Summer Sports Trail event (W/C 5th August) and Pannier Market Sports Day (10th August).

d) Goose Fair 2024

The General Manager advised representatives that the timings for the Goose Fair event would be the same for the Pannier Market and Butchers' Hall as in 2023, with operating times of 9am – 6:30pm.

11. URGENT BUSINESS BROUGHT FORWARD BY THE CHAIRMAN

There were no matters arising.

12. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Town Hall & Markets Consultative Group is scheduled to take place on Tuesday 24th September 2024 at 5.00pm

The meeting closed at 6.25pm.