

STRONG AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	Agenda Item No. 7
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Report of the Cabinet Member for City Centre Management, Culture and Tourism		
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PETERBOROUGH CITY MARKET UPDATE REPORT

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 This report is intended to update members on the progress of Peterborough City Market during the last 12 months.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The committee is recommended to note and comment on the performance of the city market and agree future development.

3. LINKS TO THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

- 3.1 Peterborough's Sustainable Community Strategy is the plan for the future of our city and the surrounding villages. It sets the direction for the overall strategic development of Peterborough. Market operations' remit directly links to the council's strategic priorities;

- Creating Opportunities – Tackling Inequality.
- Creating Strong and Supportive Communities.
- Delivering Substantial and Truly Sustainable Growth.
- Creating the UK's Environment Capital.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Peterborough City Market was granted charter status by royal decree in 972 AD and has had a presence in the city ever since. Its location has shifted over the years, from its original site within the grounds of the Cathedral, adjacent to the west front; out to the square surmounted by the Butter Cross or Guildhall. More recently it moved to the area now occupied by Bayard Place as a combined goods and livestock market before relocating to its present location in 1963.

It is unusual in its construction, being an outdoor market but roofed; one of only 99 in the entire country. The structure covers the stalls within, which are all equipped with roller shutters to secure them at the close of trading. A second area, known as Laxton Square, after the nearby area of the same name, is located under a lower roof.

It should be noted that the City Market operation is self-supporting and generates a surplus, however it does not currently achieve its income target. There are 139 stalls of which 71% are occupied, an increase of 8% from last year. A decision to appoint a Markets Development Manager was taken in 2013 to support and grow the market estate.

5. KEY ISSUES

5.1 The financial slowdown of 2007 to 2009 had a significant impact on retail. Indoor Markets have been hardest hit with a reduction in trade of some 25 percent since 2013 (National Association of British Market Authorities – Retail Market Study 2013).

Key challenges faced by Peterborough City Market are in line with the national trend, as:

- Generalised decline
- Changing face of retail
- Austerity pressures

Peterborough City Market aims to be a friendly, clean and vibrant destination. There is now a high quality, low cost food offer supported by a pleasant seating area for shoppers to linger before perusing the rest of the market offers, which include quality foodstuffs and interesting products not readily available elsewhere.

Targeted business for 2016:

- On site cafés
- Takeaways / hot food
- Handmade goods
- Mobile telephones and associated accessories
- Fruit and vegetables
- Baked goods
- Chilled / deli foods.

Anticipated decline of business during 2016:

- Fashion wear
- Footwear
- Lingerie
- Books and magazines
- Stationary
- Leather goods
- Toys and games

5.2 Actions identified (and progress made from previous report)

1. **Develop marketing strategy** for Peterborough market operations. This action is ongoing with support from the PCC marketing team.
2. **Form marketing group** to explore options for development. Group is operational and supported by traders.
3. **Introduce key elements of marketing plan:-** programme has commenced and progressing:
 - **Media awareness and publicity plan adaptation** – includes printing and distributing advertising materials. As below, awareness requires a degree of enhancement. Monitoring of media platforms such as Facebook places a significant load on market staff although some assistance has been provided by the media team. The number of 'hits' has increased from some 40 per day to over 200 per day in the build up to Christmas. This area of business is key to promoting the market, and a trader's website is being developed to complement the existing PCC site. Requires additional funding.
 - **Signage** – improved awareness of market location. Use of illuminated signs suggested. The market has been described as 'Peterborough's best kept secret', and local research reveals many people who have been resident for some time are unaware of the market's location. Additional

signage may address this matter but needs to blend with the street scene. Use of street advertising on both media boards and lamppost banners across the city has been implemented with the support of the media team but wider use brings a cost implication. Requires additional funding.

- **Development of food court** – To encourage and implement additional ‘street food provision’ which is seen as a high growth area. Not all prospective traders have resilient business models and some have failed, but a core group have prospered and developed effective businesses. They are currently represented by:
 - a. **Portuguese take away** – offering traditional BBQ and other foods. Operates a delivery service. Would like to extend opening times.
 - b. **Street Eats** – Traditional English foods, breakfast and lunch offers and cakes. Has established trade customers and has facility to operate outside catering.
 - c. **Goan Cuisine** – Range of take away Asian foods. Would like to extend opening times.
 - d. **The Curry man** – Extensive range of take away curries and similar food. Growing reputation across the city and is in process of extending premises. Would like to extend opening times.
 - e. **Market café** – Turkish and Lithuanian food, breakfast and lunch. Good range of coffees.
 - f. **Italian Deli** – Good range of Italian and European food stuffs. Would like to extend opening times.

There are a number of other traders preparing to open in the near future – The Market Grill, operated by an established city caterer, will provide BBQ and grilled speciality sausages and ‘posh’ burgers. A vendor of West African street food will be opening in February and a further application for pre prepared Caribbean food from a local restaurateur is being progressed. A trading base of 10 street food vendors is achievable and would contribute some £80k of income. Success of the food court area will increase pressure for extending opening hours of the market which may not be supported by all traders. The suggested fencing alterations would assist this.

- **Wi-Fi installation** - to provide service to visitors (media access) and traders (online card payments). Projected cost via PCC will be in region of £5k + £800 p.a. maintenance and will be funded from existing budget. A new specialist trader has applied to provide a low cost Wi-Fi network and this is being evaluated.
- **IT upgrades** - increase functionality of office processes (scanning etc.) the market operation has recently been upgraded to thin client application which has improved functionality along with VOIP telephony. An enhanced printer/copier facility (pending) will improve productivity and allow documents related to licence applications to be scanned on site.
- **Monitor and encourage trader applications** – seek applications to enhance market mix (breads, cheeses, cycle resale & repairs, mobile phone services). The use of electronic media will assist this and reduce advertising costs. Incoming trader interest is steady and expected to increase as the year progresses. An average of four monthly trader applications has already improved the market offer with two handmade goods stalls, and mobile phone repair service.
- **Refurbishment fencing** - The perimeter fence has recently been repainted to enhance the appearance of the market.
- **Installation of no fee cash point** provision to service market customers/traders. A supplier has been identified and will proceed at no cost.
- **Improvement of seating area** – to support food court operation. Bistro style chairs and tables have been purchased and have improved the usage of the food court area. A focussed entrance canopy similar to that fronting the Westgate Arcade would increase ‘visibility’ on the Laxton Square approach.
- **Introduce ‘market events’** (including Love Your Local Market event and Food Festival) to improve footfall particularly during school holidays. Plan in on quarterly basis. These events have commenced, with limited success to date. The Easter event, while reasonably well supported by

shoppers, wasn't the success hoped for and that was primarily due to insufficient advertising and competing events. Budget limitations impacted badly, and forced the cancellation of the proposed event planned during Boost week.

- **Participation in city based events** (Green festival, Portuguese festival etc.) obtained a signed marquee and smaller gazebo's to use at such events. Market traders have made themselves available to hand out promotional material – a key element of service improvement is to enhance links to the larger city centre retail operation.
- **Develop alternative markets** – A potential extension of the current market operation could improve commercial visibility of the city market scene, support local communities and provide an income stream. Likely development sites are Millfield/Lincoln Rd areas for a community market, Long Causeway/Cathedral square for craft / farmers markets. The latter operates in a very low key manner at present and badly needs advertising support.

6. IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 In order to ensure a vibrant and prosperous future for Peterborough City Market, focus needs to be maintained on sourcing and attracting new traders and businesses and the implementation of a strong marketing plan.
- 6.2 The developments referred to in paragraph 6 are all to be contained within existing budget provision. Income from the market is anticipated to increase to budgeted levels as a result of these initiatives.

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 55 Traders, one traders association and four other partners and stakeholders have been consulted directly.

8. NEXT STEPS

- 8.1 Discussion of document by scrutiny committee and referral to cabinet if appropriate.

9. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985:

- 9.1 Markets of today – The National Picture-2013. National Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA)

10. APPENDICES

- 10.1 None