

Briefing Note of:	Head of Economic Prosperity
Contact Officer:	Rhiannon Holland
Telephone No:	Ext 4526

PROMOTING PROSPERITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
13 MARCH, 2019
BRIEFING NOTE OF WORKING GROUP TO REVIEW CANNOCK STREET MARKET

1 Purpose of Briefing note

- 1.1 The purpose of this briefing note is to provide Members with details of the work carried out by the Working Group

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 At the meeting of the Committee on 21 November 2018 Members agreed to review the street market in Cannock.
- 2.2 A separate smaller group of Members was established forming a Working Group to carry out the review.

3 Detail

- 3.1 The contract to operate a weekly street market in Cannock town centre was awarded in October 2015 to the current operator E G Skett & Co. (Sketts). A three year contract was awarded with an opportunity to extend for a period of up to two years. In April 2018 the Council extended Sketts' contract for one year meaning that the term of the contract will now expire on 31 October 2019. The Council has the option of extending Sketts contract for a further one year after 31 October 2019, alternatively the the Council may choose to retender the Cannock street market contract. Should the Council decide to retender the contract during 2019 it will be an opportunity to review the contract specification.
- 3.2 A Working Group of five Members was established to carry out the review and to then bring its findings back to a future meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.3 The Working Group met on three formal occasions. Agendas, papers and minutes are included as appendices to this Briefing Note.
- 3.4 Representatives from Sketts were invited to attend the meeting of the Working Group on 30 January 2019. The representatives discussed with the Working Group their perception that the street market was received well by both market traders and customers. The street market has regular and satisfied traders and a

regular customer base. The representatives also set out their ideas and proposals for improving the current market offer and for future specialist markets. Sketts also confirmed that they would be happy to continue operating a Friday street market in Cannock and, subject to positive research, would consider the option of operating a regular Tuesday street market to complement the Friday street market.

- 3.5 The Working Group also invited a representative from the newly formed Cannock Town Centre Partnership (CTCP) to attend the meeting of the Working Group on 30 January 2019. The CTCP representative was a Council officer based within the Economic Development Team. Her role is to facilitate and support the CTCP. She explained to the Working Group the make up of the CTCP Board and its obligation to represent the interests of stakeholders and businesses in Cannock town centre. She also set out the Board's ideas and proposals for events within the town centre and confirmed that the Board would liaise with Sketts regarding any events as markets are considered to be key in running a successful event.
- 3.6 The Working Group agreed that different events running alongside the street market attracted customers into the town centre. It was considered that the support of the CTCP would enable more specialist events to be held in conjunction with the street market. Such events will further improve the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre as well as bring variety to the town centre retail offer.
- 3.7 The Working Group agreed that that the Promoting Prosperity Scrutiny Committee should be asked to consider the following:
 - (A) Extension of the current street market contract with Sketts for a 12 month period from 31 October, 2019;
 - (B) that Sketts be asked to undertake a survey to establish whether there was any appetite for operating the street market for an additional day (Tuesday);
 - (C) that, should the outcome of the survey be positive, Sketts be asked to trial a Tuesday street market during the summer of 2019 with the possibility of including this additional day within the street market contract when it was renewed in November 2020;
 - (D) that the new contract specification should include a requirement for the street market operator to:
 - (i) develop links and work in partnership with the McArthur Glen designer outlet to create initiatives to attract customers to the town centre;
 - (ii) work alongside the Cannock Town Centre Partnership in developing a programme of events to promote the town centre with the aim of increasing visitors.
 - (E) That the positive work of the Cannock Town Centre Partnership in organising events to promote the town centre should be acknowledged, encouraged and

supported.

4 Implications (if applicable)

- 4.1 Extension of the current street market contract with Sketts for a further 12 month period from 31 October 2019 would allow them the opportunity of trialling a Tuesday street market. It would also allow for consideration of the effect the McArthurGlen designer outlet (opening 2020) was having on trade within the town centre and on the street market. Additionally it would enable Sketts the time to develop links with the CTCP.

5 Appendices

Appendix 1	Agenda – Scrutiny Working Group (Review of Cannock Street Market) 18.12.2018
Appendix 2	Minutes - Scrutiny Working Group (Review of Cannock Street Market) 18.12.2018
Appendix 3	Information requested at Scrutiny Working Group (Review of Cannock Street Market) 18.12.2018
Appendix 4	Agenda - Scrutiny Working Group (Review of Cannock Street Market) 30.01.2019
Appendix 5	Minutes - Scrutiny Working Group (Review of Cannock Street Market) 30.01.2019
Appendix 6	Agenda - Scrutiny Working Group (Review of Cannock Street Market) 14.02.2019
Appendix 7	Minutes- Scrutiny Working Group (Review of Cannock Street Market) 14.02.2019

Background Papers

None



Agenda - Scrutiny Working Group (Review of Cannock Street Market)

Time: 4:00pm

Date: Tuesday 18 December, 2018

Venue: Esperance Room

1. Appointment of Chairman

2. Apologies

3. Declarations of Interest from Members

To declare any personal, pecuniary or disclosable pecuniary interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct and any possible contraventions under Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

4. Review of Cannock Street Market

- Briefing Note from Head of Economic Prosperity (Item No. 4.1 – 4.4) plus appendices
- Scrutiny Review Template (Item No. 4.5)

To: Councillors:

Mrs. M. Davis

C.I. Lea

M.W.A. Hoare

P. Startin

Mrs. P.Z. Stretton

Officers:

D. Piper Head of Economic Prosperity

R. Holland Principal Property Services Officer

W. Rowe Senior Committee Officer

Date Despatched: 13 December, 2018

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
NOTES OF THE
SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP -
REVIEW OF CANNOCK STREET MARKET
TUESDAY 18 DECEMBER, 2018 AT 4.00 P.M.
HELD IN THE ESPERANCE ROOM, CIVIC CENTRE,
BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK

Present:

Councillor M. Davis (Chairman)
Councillor C.I. Lea
Councillor M.W.A. Hoare
Councillor P. Startin

Officers: R. Holland, Principal Property Services Officer
W. Rowe, Senior Committee Officer

1. Appointment of Chairman

The Group agreed that Councillor Mrs. M. Davis would be Chairman of the Working Group.

2. Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mrs. P.Z. Stretton.

3. Declarations of Interests from Members

Nothing declared.

4. Review of Cannock Street Market

The Principal Property Services Officer led the Group through the briefing note which provided Members with background details on the street market in Cannock along with an update on the current status of the market.

She advised that on 1 October 2014 the Council approved the continued operation of the weekly street market in Cannock town centre following a successful trial period. Bescot Promotions had operated the weekly street market in Cannock on a trial basis since the end of November 2013. Cabinet endorsed the trial as it was considered that the introduction of a well run street market would add vibrancy and value to the town centre, complement existing retail activities and increase footfall. The street market trial operated for a period of seven months prior to being evaluated and the results reported to Cabinet on

17 July 2014. The Minutes of the Cabinet meeting on 17 July were attached to the briefing note which outlined that Cabinet agreed, amongst other things, that the opportunity to run the street market should be opened up to competition.

She added that the contract to operate a weekly street market in Cannock was put out to tender in July 2015 and the contract was awarded in October 2015 to the current operator E.G. Skett & Co. (Sketts). The contract was awarded for three years with an opportunity to extend for a period of up to two years. In April 2018 the Council extended Sketts' contract for one year meaning that the term of the contract will now expire on 31 October 2019. The Council has the option of extending Sketts contract for a further one year period, or alternatively choose to retender the contract with the opportunity to review the contract specification.

Sketts contract to run the street market was awarded on the basis that a weekly street market runs every Friday. In April 2018 Sketts requested the opportunity to also operate a street market on the first Saturday of each month as they aspired to develop an alternative to the Friday market that would attract different traders and add value to the weekend retail offer. The Friday street market attracts around 34 traders whereas the Saturday street market has not attracted as many traders (averaging around 12 stalls).

The Officer then advised that on 8 November 2018 Cabinet approved the formation of a new Cannock Town Centre Partnership (CTCP) with the objective of representing the interests of stakeholders in the town centre and providing a co-ordinated mechanism for engaging and retaining the vibrancy and vitality of the town centre.

Following this the Members were offered the opportunity of commenting and asking questions.

The Chairman commented that it was a good time to review the street market as the contract was expiring in October 2019. It would be an opportunity to establish what was best for the town centre.

Councillor Lea thought that consideration should be given to holding the Saturday street market every Saturday and not just on the 1st Saturday in each month. He added that if this was established prior to the opening of the McArthurGlen designer outlet in 2020 this may increase footfall in the town centre.

Councillor Startin supported a weekly Saturday street market in the town centre and for this to be introduced before the designer outlet was open. However, he was unsure as to whether this would increase footfall in the town centre as when he had visited similar designer outlets (such as Bicester) he did not venture into the town centre. The Chairman commented that there may be a possibility for the shuttle bus service which would run into the town centre from the outlet to be advertised within the outlet.

Councillor Hoare sought clarification as to whether there was a street market prior to 2013. The Principal Property Services Officer confirmed that there was

only the indoor market and the occasional event. The indoor market had been very popular back in the 1970/80's but traders were now having difficulty as they had to compete with the discount stores, super stores and the internet who all offered discount goods. She added that the results of the survey undertaken revealed that the majority of people who shop in the street market do not go into the indoor market.

Members discussed the recent changes in relation to the indoor markets which saw the market opening for a 4th day. The Officer confirmed that the indoor market traders paid less per day than the street market traders. Members sought the rental figures for the indoor market and street market and the Principal Property Services Officer agreed to provide this information to them.

Councillor Startin asked whether there was a particular reason why the street market was open on a Friday. The Officer explained that this went back to when Bescot Promotions were operating the street market and it could have been due to them being available on the Friday or it being traditional for a street market to operate on a Friday. He asked that information on the parking numbers and footfall on Fridays and Saturdays in the town centre be provided. The Officer agreed to obtain this information for Members.

The Chairman made reference to Penkridge market which was very popular and open on a Saturday. She considered that this should be taken into account when deciding whether a Saturday street market should be held every Saturday in Cannock. She also raised concern that the public were unaware of the Saturday street market. The Principal Property Services Officer advised that Sketts were responsible for promotion of the Saturday street market and there had been an advert placed in the Hometalk magazine and a banner had been displayed in the town centre. Sketts were confident that the Saturday street market would attract more visitors come the Spring.

Councillor Lea suggested that a representative from Sketts should be invited to attend the next Working Group meeting so that they could advise Members of their ideas and thoughts for the future of the street market. The Group agreed with this suggestion.

Members made reference to craft and artisan markets and the Officer confirmed that there was not much interest in these types of goods in Cannock. However the stalls offering general retail goods did well. She clarified that general retail goods included items such as food (bread, cheese, fish), bedding, clothes (offering last season/seconds), garden products, pet products and a card stall. The public considered that these stalls in the street market offered better value than in the shops.

Councillor Startin asked the Officer to define what Sketts meant when they referred to trade being "brisk" (paragraph 3.10 of the Briefing Note). The Officer would clarify this for Members.

Members noted that the opening hours of the street market were 9am - 4pm. The Chairman commented that consideration could be given to opening for fewer

hours; however this may result in less rent. The Officer confirmed that this would not be the case as Sketts paid the Council a fixed sum of £10,000 per annum for the opportunity to run the street market. Sketts were responsible for attracting the traders and took the income/rent from the stalls. The Council does not receive any additional income from Sketts for them to run the Saturday street market.

Councillor Startin referred to the Scrutiny Review Template (Item 4.5 of the briefing note) and considered that the scope of the review should also include liaising with the local traders to ascertain their views on the street market.

In relation to this the Principal Property Services Officer advised that the Economic Development Team had recently been involved in establishing the new Cannock Town Centre Partnership (CTCP). The Chairman suggested that a representative from CTCP be invited to attend the next meeting to give their thoughts on the street market and to advise on their plans for the town centre. The Group asked that a representative from the CTCP be invited to the next meeting.

The Group also considered it would be useful to obtain information from the public on what appealed to them in relation to street markets. The views of the public could be sought on the different market days asking what had attracted them into the town on that particular day.

The Chairman asked when the review would need to be completed. The Senior Committee Officer advised that the outcome of the review would be reported to the Promoting Prosperity Scrutiny Committee on 13 March, 2019. It was agreed that the Working Group should therefore meet on two further occasions; once in January and once in February, 2019.

Councillor Startin asked why the contract had only been renewed for 1 year in April 2018 when there had been an opportunity to renew the contract for 2 years. The Principal Property Services Officer confirmed that this was due to the Team being without a Head of Service or a Manager during this time. They did not have the capacity to investigate retendering the contract at that time. It had therefore been decided to renew the contract for one year and there would then be an opportunity to renew it for a further year in October 2019. He questioned whether awarding the contact to a different company would mean that there would be a different selection of traders. The Officer commented that some of the traders on the current street market had a stall when Bescot Promotions ran it. When Sketts took over some traders were lost, new ones were gained and some were retained.

The Chairman then thanked all Members for their attendance and wished all those present a Happy Christmas.

AGREED:

- (A) That the Principal Property Services Officer provide the rental figures for the indoor market and street market to Members.

- (B) That the Principal Property Services Officer provide the parking numbers and footfall information on Fridays and Saturdays in Cannock town centre to Members.
- (C) That the Principal Property Services Officer define what Sketts meant when they referred to trade being “brisk” (paragraph 3.10 of the briefing note).
- (D) That a further meeting of the Working Group be arranged in January 2019.
- (E) That representatives from Sketts and the Cannock Town Centre Partnership (CTCP) be invited to attend the next Working Group meeting.

The meeting finished at 4.55 pm.

Promoting Prosperity Scrutiny Committee

Cannock Street Market Review Working Group

Information requested at last meeting on 18/12/2018

- (A) That the Principal Property Services Officer provides the rental figures for the indoor and street market to Members.

Indoor Market

Rents at Cannock Indoor Market vary depending on the position of the stall within the market hall. The rent paid also includes a service charge which includes a proportion of business rates; water rates; supply of electricity; refuse collection; general market maintenance including the sprinkler system etc.

The current highest rent paid by an indoor trader breaks down to £35.60 per each of the four trading days.

The current lowest rent paid by an indoor trader breaks down to £23.29 per each of the four trading days.

NOTE – the above figures also include storage on the three non trading days as traders are not required to vacate their stalls at the end of each trading day.

Street Market

Rents on the street market are set by the market operator and are currently:

£30.00 per day for a single stall

£54.00 per day for a double stall

The street market operator also offers free stalls to charities.

- (B) That the Principal Property Services Officer provides the parking numbers and footfall information on Fridays and Saturdays in Cannock town centre to Members.

Footfall

Cannock Shopping Centre operates footfall counters positioned at Cannock Bus Station, the Shopping Centre and the Market Hall. For the first three quarters of 2018 the footfall within the town centre was highest on Fridays when it was 27% higher than the next highest footfall which was on Saturdays. The third highest day for footfall was Tuesdays but footfall on Tuesdays was 15% lower than Saturdays and 38% lower than Fridays.

Parking

Beecroft Road car park is the most used shoppers' car park in the town centre and is therefore a valid means of measuring the number of drivers visiting the town centre. 69% of the time more tickets were sold for Beecroft Road car park on a Friday in 2018 than on other days of the week. However, the additional numbers of tickets sold on a Friday when compared to the other days was not particularly significant, being less than 10% higher than the next highest day on more than half of the occasions when it was the highest.

The introduction in May 2018 of a street market in Cannock town centre on the first Saturday of the month has had no effect on car park tickets sold for Beecroft Road car park. Friday still registered higher car park ticket sales than the Saturday on weeks when the street market was in town on the Saturday.

- (C) That the Principal Property Services Officer defines what Sketts meant when they refer to trade being "brisk" (paragraph 3.10 of the briefing note).

Sketts have confirmed by using the term "brisk" they mean that trade is good and the traders are selling well.



Agenda - Scrutiny Working Group (Review of Cannock Street Market)

Time: 4:00pm

Date: Wednesday 30 January, 2019

Venue: Esperance Room

1. Apologies

2. Declarations of Interests from Members

To declare any personal, pecuniary or disclosable pecuniary interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct and any possible contraventions under Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

3. Notes of previous meeting

To approve the notes of the previous meeting held on 18 December, 2018.

4. Review of Cannock Street Market

- Note from Principal Property Services Officer clarifying issues raised at the previous meeting (Item No. 4.1-4.2)
- Representatives from Sketts invited to attend
- Representative from Cannock Town Centre Partnership invited to attend
- To determine the next stage of the review

To: Councillors:

Mrs. M. Davis

C.I. Lea

M.W.A. Hoare

P. Startin

Mrs. P.Z. Stretton

Officers:

D. Piper Head of Economic Prosperity

R. Holland Principal Property Services Officer

W. Rowe Senior Committee Officer

Date Despatched: 22 January, 2019

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
NOTES OF THE
SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP –
REVIEW OF CANNOCK STREET MARKET
WEDNESDAY 30 JANUARY, 2019 AT 4.00 P.M.
HELD IN THE ESPERANCE ROOM, CIVIC CENTRE,
BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK

Present:

Councillor M. Davis (Chairman)
Councillor C.I. Lea
Councillor M.W.A. Hoare
Councillor P. Startin

Officers: D. Piper, Head of Economic Prosperity
R. Holland, Principal Property Services Officer
W. Rowe, Senior Committee Officer

1. Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mrs. P.Z. Stretton.

2. Declarations of Interests from Members

Nothing declared.

3. Notes of previous meeting

The notes of the previous meeting held on 18 December, 2018 were approved.

Councillor Startin made reference to an email he had sent to Officers following receipt of the minutes. He had raised a number of points to try to establish who the customer for the street market was. He considered that if the right customer was targeted the market would thrive.

4. Review of Cannock Street Market

Note from Principal Property Services Officer clarifying issues raised at the previous meeting (Item No. 4.1 – 4.2)

The Group noted the information prepared by the Principal Property Services Officer (attached to the agenda) which clarified a number of issues that had been raised at the previous meeting.

Arising from this the Group discussed the effect the McArthur Glen designer outlet would have on the street market/town centre trade. The Head of Economic Prosperity commented that the designer outlet at Mill Green was a different proposition to the street market. It would be a regional attraction selling high-end designer brands and would attract a different customer base. The clientele for the street market was generally people who lived locally. Members would have the opportunity to ask Sketts, the market operator, what ideas they had to attract a new catchment of customers to the street market and how they would capture the benefit of the development of the designer outlet to complement the street market offer.

The Chairman agreed that the customer base was different as the street market attracted the older age range whereas the designer outlet would attract the younger or middle age range. The Group considered that good transport links from the designer outlet to the town centre was essential. The establishment of a shuttle bus service either free or on a reduced rate would offer visitors to the designer outlet the opportunity to also visit the town centre. The Head of Economic Prosperity added that connectivity of the two sites was the key to the continued success of the street market. Sketts would need to consider new opportunities to capitalise on the development of the designer outlet and arrange events to attract customers.

In response to a question the Principal Property Services Officer clarified that if the Group recommended that the street market continue and this was agreed by Cabinet, there was an opportunity for the current tender with Sketts to be renewed until October 2020. The Council would then go out to tender in the summer of 2020 for a new contract to commence October, 2020. She confirmed that the £10,000 Sketts paid the Council for the opportunity to run the street market was a fixed sum that covered the costs of providing a quality street market.

The Head of Economic Prosperity commented that the current contract was designed with getting a quality market rather than achieving the highest income. The contract specification could be reviewed and tenders could be invited at a different level. However, there was a risk that bids under the current £10,000 level would be received. The Working Group would need to consider these issues and Members would have the opportunity to provide input for the new contract specification and determine whether providing a quality street market outweighed any potential for increased income.

Representatives from Sketts

The Chairman welcomed the representatives from Sketts - Russell Dean, Operations Manager and Ian Sandford, Cannock Street Market Manager to the meeting.

The representatives advised Members that they were reasonably happy with the Friday street market. When compared to other retail markets they operated the number of visitors to the Cannock street market was fairly good. There were

regular and satisfied traders and a regular customer base. They confirmed that there were not many issues or complaints about the running of the street market and customers and traders seemed happy with the way things were being done.

They were planning on doing special events/entertainment for certain times of the year, such as Easter, Valentines day and Fathers day which would require promotion. A Saturday specialist market had been trialled to complement the Friday street market but this had not been as successful. Traders had many other options for trading in alternative towns on other days and specialist traders liked to go to different towns and not stay in the same place on a regular basis.

They advised that specialist markets required more than just the market; other things needed to be going on in the town to run alongside the market. They suggested a partnership approach to plan events in the town centre. Reference was made to the "Love Your Local Market" event which was a national event for a two week period in May each year. This was an incentive for new traders to take up stalls. For this event to be successful the support and involvement from other groups/organisations would be helpful.

The Chairman asked what the relationship was like between the street market traders and the indoor market traders. The representatives from Sketts advised that they liaised with the indoor traders and offered them the opportunity of having a stall on the Friday street market. The Principal Property Services Officer confirmed that the traders did not take up this offer as they would have to pay someone to run their existing indoor stall and they preferred to be indoors.

Councillor Hoare asked whether the specialist markets would improve if they were run on a more regular basis. The representatives explained that they had trialled this on the first Saturday of each month. However, it hadn't been that successful as traders seemed to take a stall on one occasion and then go elsewhere. They reiterated the need for other events, such as a food festival with entertainment, music and activities to be happening in the town centre when specialist markets were operated. This would encourage traders to take up a stall who would then hopefully feedback to other traders to get involved.

Councillor Startin asked the representatives to confirm if there were areas where specialist markets were successful. They advised that regular successful food markets were operated in West Midlands/Warwickshire and specialist food/craft markets were popular in Solihull and Sutton Coldfield. Specialist markets operated in Bicester in spring/summer and at Christmas time. This was popular with the locals who lived under the shadow of the McArthur Glen designer outlet. The locals rarely visited the designer outlet and embraced the specialist markets when they were operated. The Group noted this point as the same operator would be opening the designer outlet at Mill Green in 2020.

Councillor Lea asked the representatives how they could improve the current market offer. They advised that the Friday street market was successful and quite unique as shoppers came in to town on a Friday to do their shopping and buy goods from the street market traders. The Councillor asked the representatives if they considered a street market would work more than once a week. They

commented that it would be ideal if the Saturday street market was successful. However, with traders having so many options in the surrounding areas they liked to move from place to place where there were events/food festivals going on. Councillor Lea asked whether Sketts would have any interest in operating a Tuesday street market to complement the Friday street market. The representatives thought this was an option to consider. The mid week clientele was different to the weekend clientele. However, Tuesday was generally a quiet day for market operators and considered research would be needed before offering the market on another day.

Councillor Hoare asked whether the operators talked to the traders and customers to find out what they wanted. The representatives advised that the “old school” traders did not like change. They were keen on getting free parking in town centres to encourage trade. With regards to shoppers simple surveys could be undertaken to ascertain their views.

Councillor Startin commented that the street market currently attracted 30 traders and asked where the operators thought the market would be in 2 years. They advised that hopefully the market would be in no worse a position. As discount goods were now available to buy online there would be a need to try and attract more specialist traders to the market. To continue to be successful the market would need food and craft based specialist traders to take up stalls and to encourage the younger generation to visit.

The Principal Property Services Officer made reference to an event called “Trader of the Year” where traders were presented with an award for a number of reasons, one being their interaction with customers. This event was an incentive for traders to run successful businesses.

Councillor Startin asked what the Council could do to help the operator. The representatives commented that they had a good relationship with the Council already. However, any assistance to promote specialist markets would be useful. In addition, providing support in getting other organisations, such as the local college or charities involved in any events that were organised on a market day.

Members agreed that events running alongside the street market attracted customers in to the town centre. Reference was made to successful past events like the Carole concert or where schools had been involved playing the steel pans. In addition there had been a dance group in town at Christmas and this had proved popular with the town centre being full. The Chairman commented that the Cannock Town Centre Partnership would be able to offer support with this type of event in the future.

Councillor Hoare asked how the operators advertised the Friday street market and whether they had considered advertising on Cannock Radio station. The operators explained that they promoted the market using banners in the town and also used the Council’s website to promote that the regular street market was held every Friday. They would consider Cannock Radio station to advertise in the future.

Councillor Startin asked whether they had surveyed customers to understand the demographic. The representatives advised that they had put an information stall up to find out where the customers were coming from.

Members made reference to the markets held in Hednesford and Rugeley and noted that an Artisan market was held once a month in Hednesford. This was something that could be considered for Cannock. With regards to Rugeley the Principal Property Services Officer confirmed that a licence had been granted to one of the Rugeley Traders, who pays a fee to the Council, to run a small market with about 6 stalls.

The representatives from Sketts confirmed that they were quite happy to continue operating the street market in Cannock. The Chairman thanked them for their attendance and advised that the Group would be reporting their views and recommendations in relation to the street market to Cabinet in due course.

Representative from Cannock Town Centre Partnership

The Chairman welcomed Angela Haynes, Town Centre Partnership Officer, representing the Cannock Town Centre Partnership (CTCP) to the meeting.

She advised the Group that the Cannock Town Centre Partnership had recently been established. The Partnership Board consisted of 40 members who would represent the interests of stakeholders and businesses in Cannock Town Centre. The Board members ranged from tenants to property owners. No indoor traders had asked to be on the Board at this stage but they were supportive of its aims. The street market traders had not been asked as they were not a permanent feature in the town centre. The CTCP will work to help increase footfall in the town centre making it an attractive place to visit.

She commented the CTCP had not been involved in any Christmas promotions in the town centre in 2018. A local business owner had taken on the challenge to raise money in order to provide an event and Christmas tree/lights in the town centre. However, this year the CTCP would be involved in organising an event during the Christmas period. It was being proposed to move this to a Saturday (30 November) so as to attract families with children to the event.

Members asked about membership on the Partnership Board and whether any traders had joined. The Town Centre Partnership Officer confirmed no traders had wanted to join at this stage. There were independent business owners involved, along with representatives from Arriva, McDonalds and independent shop owners. The traders were supportive of the CTCP and had made suggestions to improve litter and put forward ideas regarding flowers but they wanted to see what was involved before they nominated a representative to sit on the Board. The Board membership would be reviewed after 6 months so as to give others an opportunity of joining.

The Chairman asked whether the CTCP had liaised with Sketts. The Officer confirmed that they would liaise with the representatives from Sketts over any events that were planned for the town centre as markets were they key to running

a successful event.

Councillor Startin asked whether the Friday street market was viewed positively by the traders. The Officer advised that she had not received any negative feedback about the Friday street market. She commented that the food aspect of the market was always busy and very popular.

Councillor Hoare commented that increasing footfall in the town centre was difficult and asked whether there were any fun, innovative events planned in order to attract people to the town. The Town Centre Partnership Officer confirmed that the Partnership was looking at providing similar events to those held in Lichfield; for example food festivals and fayres. There were lots of ideas, such as dog shows and falconry days. The involvement of other organisations, such as the Church, was also being explored.

The Officer supported the suggestion of operating a street market on another day in the town centre and agreed that Tuesday was the most appropriate day.

The Head of Economic Prosperity commented that Saturdays should be kept for one off events and not be tied in contractually to a regular market. He made reference to Redditch, where there was a market 5 days a week. However, because there was no variety or diversity the stalls just became like any other shop in the town.

The Town Centre Partnership Officer added that there was an event planned on 6 April involving the local schools and the library. It was called the “Emerge Festival” where there would be performers from local schools along with a market aimed at children. The theme this year would be War of the Roses.

The CTCP would be promoting this and future events on Cannock Radio station. A representative from the radio would also be in the town on the Bandstand making announcements throughout the day. She would be contacting Sketts to advise of this event.

She added that the “Emerge Festival” was a national event and the library had managed to get Cannock involved this year. It was hoped that it would become a regular event each year from now on. Work was also ongoing regarding Cannock Charter. The CTCP would also be working with the Church, tagging on to their events and involving the whole of the Community.

Councillor Startin asked how the Council could provide support. The Town Centre Partnership Officer advised that support with promoting and advertising events on the website would be helpful. The CTCP already had support from the Principal Property Services Officer, the Licensing team, the local press, Arriva (who were displaying posters on their buses), the College and the local McDonalds restaurants.

The Head of Economic Prosperity commented that the Town Centre Partnership Officer’s post was located within the Economic Development team; her role would be to facilitate and support the CTCP. The Licensing team would provide support

about legislation in the running of any events. It was early days but there was a good collection of people involved in the CTCP who were passionate about making the town centre more attractive. He clarified that Lichfield was a very different town to Cannock; it was a Cathedral town with infrastructure and resources. Over time it was hoped that the CTCP would develop a good reputation for organising successful events to promote the town centre.

Councillor Hoare asked if the CTCP would like to use newsletters/village news magazines which were distributed every 2 months in Norton Canes to promote events. The Officer commented that she was keen to promote the CTCP and the Communications Team were promoting events via the Hometalk magazines. She would contact Councillor Hoare about the Norton Canes newsletters. She added that it was planned to produce their own newsletter in the future in order to promote the events further a field. It was hoped that advertising on the Arriva buses would attract people to events from towns such as Stafford and Lichfield.

The Chairman thanked the Officer for attending the meeting.

To determine the next stage of the review

The Group discussed the next steps of the review now that they had heard from the representatives from Sketts and the CTCP. Councillor Startin asked whether any information was available on footfall in the town centre prior to the Friday street market being introduced. He considered that evidence was needed to support the continuation of the Friday street market and to possibly suggest a Tuesday street market be introduced. The Principal Property Services Officer advised that the team were reliant on footfall information provided by Cannock Shopping Centre. However, there may be some historical information on footfall prior to the street market and, if so, she would bring this to the next meeting.

Councillor Startin added that it was clear that Sketts wanted to continue operating the street market. The Council were in a good position to negotiate a better deal with them. The Principal Property Services Officer confirmed that the contract would be put out to tender in order to obtain an operator for the market. Consideration could be given to looking at obtaining more income rather than providing the quality market. She advised that it was possible to charge more for her time but she was of the opinion that the costs for any input from Licensing regarding legislation could only cover their costs and not generate an income. The Chairman commented that by changing the way we tendered for the contract there was a risk that the Council get an operator who was not as good as Sketts.

In response to a question from a Member the Principal Property Services Officer clarified the meaning of “quality” in the tender specification. This meant looking at the level of investment the operator would input into the town centre. For example, would the stalls be new or existing, would they provide electricity for the stalls, would they provide traders with support to run a quality stall and would they monitor whether counterfeit goods were being sold.

The Head of Economic Prosperity suggested that for the next meeting in February a short paper be prepared summarising the key issues for the Group to consider.

This would include the following:-

- Options for re-tendering of the contract (taking into account the cost/quality issue);
- information on the possibility of operating the street market for an additional day;
- ideas for support in running special events in the town centre;

The paper would outline options and choices for Members to consider. The Group would then formulate their views and develop some recommendations for the Promoting Prosperity Scrutiny Committee to consider at their next meeting on 13 March, 2019. These would then be considered by Cabinet in due course.

AGREED:

- (A) That, if available, information on footfall in the town centre prior to the Friday street market being introduced be provided to the next meeting.
- (B) That a briefing paper be prepared, based on the issues outlined above, and submitted to the next meeting.
- (C) That, in consultation with the Chairman, a further meeting of the Working Group be arranged in February.

The meeting finished at 5.35pm.



Agenda - Scrutiny Working Group (Review of Cannock Street Market)

Time: 3:00pm

Date: Thursday 14 February, 2019

Venue: Esperance Room

1. Apologies

2. Declarations of Interests from Members

To declare any personal, pecuniary or disclosable pecuniary interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct and any possible contraventions under Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

3. Notes of previous meeting

To approve the notes of the previous meeting held on 30 January, 2019.

4. Review of Cannock Street Market

Briefing Note of the Head of Economic Prosperity (Item 4.1 – 4.5)

To: Councillors:

Mrs. M. Davis

C.I. Lea

M.W.A. Hoare

P. Startin

Mrs. P.Z. Stretton

Officers:

D. Piper Head of Economic Prosperity

R. Holland Principal Property Services Officer

W. Rowe Senior Committee Officer

Date Despatched: 7 February, 2019

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
NOTES OF THE
SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP –
REVIEW OF CANNOCK STREET MARKET
THURSDAY 14 FEBRUARY, 2019 AT 3.00 P.M.
HELD IN THE ESPERANCE ROOM, CIVIC CENTRE,
BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK

Present:

Councillor M. Davis (Chairman)
Councillor C.I. Lea
Councillor M.W.A. Hoare
Councillor P. Startin
Councillor P.Z. Stretton

Officers: D. Piper, Head of Economic Prosperity
R. Holland, Principal Property Services Officer
W. Rowe, Senior Committee Officer

1. Apologies

None received

2. Declarations of Interests from Members

Nothing declared.

3. Notes of previous meeting

The notes of the previous meeting held on 30 January 2019 were approved.

4. Review of Cannock Street Market

Briefing Note of Head of Economic Prosperity (Item 4.1 – 4.5)

The Principal Property Services Officer led Members through the report highlighting the main points for consideration.

The Chairman asked Members for their comments in relation to the review. Members were of the opinion that they had undertaken an in depth review of the street market and had found the meeting with representatives from Sketts and the Cannock Town Centre Partnership very useful. It was clear that the Friday Street market was working well and was very popular with traders and customers.

Members considered that there was an opportunity to extend the street market and to operate for an additional day, possibly on a Tuesday.

The Chairman suggested that a survey should be undertaken to assess whether there was any appetite for the street market to operate on an additional day.

The Principal Property Services Officer advised that Sketts had previously undertaken surveys using a board placed on a market stall asking 4 or 5 questions. Stickers would be available for the public to indicate their preference. Sketts could be asked to undertake a survey and, depending on the outcome of the survey and whether Sketts had the capacity, there could be a trial of a Tuesday street market during the summer months. There would then be a possibility to include the additional street market day in the contract when it was renewed.

The Group then discussed what the implications would be on the indoor market if the street market was operated for an additional day. The Principal Property Services Officer commented that a survey undertaken in 2015 indicated that there was no evidence to suggest that those who came to visit the street market were also visiting the indoor market. Members also noted that the indoor market was actively promoted and discounts were offered to traders taking up stalls. However, there were a lot of empty stalls and many of the current traders were the older “hobby” traders who were not making a living out of running their stall.

Members also discussed the rates charged for a stall in the indoor market, the number of days it was open and how trade could be improved. Following this the Head of Economic Prosperity commented that markets were a challenging area and many were struggling throughout the country. However, he reminded Members that the focus of the review was on the street market and not the indoor market.

He then asked the Group to consider what they wished to recommend to the Scrutiny Committee. In particular, they could consider offering a view on:-

- the re-tendering of the contract and the specification requirements;
- the idea of specialist markets;
- the cost/quality issue – was the 80/20 split still appropriate;
- whether the street market should be operated for an additional day;
- ideas to link the McArthurGlen Designer Outlet Village to the town centre and street market once it opened in 2020

He outlined that there were two options with regard to the re-tendering of the contract:-

- (i) Extend the existing contract with Sketts for a further year to 31 October 2020 and then re-tender with a new contract commencing 1 November 2020;
- (ii) Terminate the existing contract with Sketts on 31 October 2019 and re-tendering with the new contract to commence on 1 November 2019.

He added that, if Members considered that the existing contract with Sketts should be extended for a further year until 31 October 2019, this would allow them the opportunity of trialling a Tuesday street market. As the McArthurGlenn Designer Outlet Village was planned to be open in 2020 it would also allow for consideration of the effect the Designer Outlet Village was having on trade within the town centre and on the street market. Additionally it would enable Sketts the time to develop links with the newly established Cannock Town Centre Partnership.

The Principal Property Services Officer added that she considered Sketts would be willing to undertake the survey and operate a trial of a Tuesday street market as they were keen to continue operating the Friday street market and win the contract when it was renewed.

It was AGREED:

That the Promoting Prosperity Scrutiny Committee be requested to consider the following:-

- (A) That the current contract with Sketts be extended for a 12 month period from 31 October, 2019.
- (B) That Sketts be asked to undertake a survey to establish whether there was any appetite for operating the street market for an additional day (Tuesday).
- (C) That should the outcome of the survey be positive Sketts be asked to trial the Tuesday street market during the summer of 2019 with the possibility of including this additional day within the contract when it was renewed in November, 2020.
- (D) That the new contract specification should include a requirement for the street market operator to
 - (i) develop links and work in partnership with the McArthurGlen Designer Outlet Village to create initiatives to attract customers to the town centre.
 - (ii) work alongside the Cannock Town Centre Partnership in developing a programme of events to promote the town centre with the aim of increasing visitors.
- (E) That the positive work of the Cannock Town Centre Partnership in organising events to promote the town centre should be acknowledged, encouraged and supported.

The meeting finished at 3.40pm.