

CORSHAM TOWN COUNCIL

REVIEW OF THE PROVISION OF MARKETS IN CORSHAM, WILTSHIRE

ADDITIONAL SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1 MAY 2019

REPORT BY

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ADDITIONAL REQUESTED SUPPORT INFORMATION

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. During late 2018 the Local Council Consultancy (LCC) was approached by the Chief Executive (CEX), David Martin at Corsham Town Council (CTC) to undertake a review of the current market provision held within the Town each week
- 1.2. LCC subsequently undertook the project and submitted its formal report to CTC on 26 February 2019.
- 1.3. The reports were then presented to Councillors at the Community Services committee on 13 March.
- 1.4. As an outcome of that meeting, some additional information was requested and that is detailed below accordingly.

2. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION – FROME INDEPENDENT MARKET

- 2.1. The Frome Independent claims to be one of the most popular destination markets in the country, bringing together independent food and drink producers, contemporary designers, vintage fashion, collectibles and furniture.
- 2.2. It operates on the first Sunday of the month from March to December.
- 2.3. The market is a not for profit venture run essentially by local people for local people. Civic pride, local knowledge and local volunteers are key ingredients for success.
- 2.4. The market is a speciality once a month market. This ensures that shopper interest and popularity is retained, and traders have a timescale to prepare and present goods and produce for sale. The monthly schedule gives a freshness and excitement against a regular weekly event.
- 2.5. Originally set up as an Artisan Market the event has been rebranded as its popularity has increased.
- 2.6. This is much more than a “normal” market. It is entertainment, arts, music and a showcase for local organisations, charities and project awareness. The market has themes and special events incorporated into each month. It addresses healthy living and social areas of interest around wellbeing, inclusivity, poverty and isolation through activities, performances, demonstrations and collections.
- 2.7. Schools support the market in different ways, and it has business start-up opportunities.
- 2.8. It has a town centre presence that in turn gains support from retailers, has clear objectives around footfall and preserves the town’s historic market tradition.
- 2.9. Promotion is vital for the success of any market and website and social media promotion for this market are excellent.

3. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION – THE IMPACT OF SUNDAY MARKETS

- 3.1. Initially Sunday Markets were viewed with concern by traditional market operators and were often legally challenged. Over recent years their popularity has increased recognising the footfall and tourist value they can offer.

- 3.2. Many Sunday Markets operate as car boot sales. Once these markets were organised by local organisations, charities and fundraisers and were mainly loft and garage clearance and unwanted family items. Many now are run professionally with market and specialist traders alongside families looking to dispose of unwanted items.
- 3.3. Other Sunday markets have developed around themes, normally food or vintage and antiques and have become popular additions to market portfolios and town centre life.
- 3.4. It is important that any Sunday Market operates under a legal and consent framework. If it is a private venture it should be licenced by the market authority for the area in which it is located. Licencing such a market can be a good income source and ensures that the market is properly run and managed with all consents and permissions in place.
- 3.5. Each Sunday Market should be considered against planning consent, site owner consent and market franchise holder consent. Its licensing should also be in accordance with the Market Policy of the market operator and their scale of fees and charges.

4. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION – FARMERS MARKETS

- 4.1. The Farmers' Market movement started in the UK in the 1990s as a result of poor farm prices, leading to many family farms needing a viable local route to market their produce.
- 4.2. Today there are markets across the UK providing thousands of farmers with a real lifeline.
- 4.3. The Farm Retail Association (formerly FARMA) is a not-for-profit association of the best real farm shops and real farmers with markets from across the UK. The FRA champions the people and businesses who grow and sell Great British produce.
- 4.4. It is recognised that there are 10 core principles for certification of a Farmers' Market with the licence to state that the markets they operate in are "Real Farmers' Markets".
- 4.5. To achieve this status, the market organiser or organisations must satisfy FRA that they aim to fulfil the ten core principles of a Farmers' Market. These principles include an independent audit annually, suitable insurance cover, assurances as to sources of produce, knowledgeable staff, locally sourced produce, that produce is only produced by the seller and so on.
- 4.6. In considering the branding for a market then some organisers have moved away from the title of Farmers' Market as it can be restrictive in the type of trader and goods that may apply to trade and also in terms of potential legal challenge around definition.
- 4.7. If the intention is to brand a market activity as a Farmers' event, then the shopper and visitor experience should expect to find real life farmers trading at the market, that if the product is not a farm product then at the stall you should meet with the producer – this could be the baker, cook, curer or jam maker and they should source their ingredients as close to the market as possible.
- 4.8. The farmers and producers should come from the immediate area – they should be part of the local community where possible. Sometimes they may come from farther afield but only if they can't get the products from a local producer.

- 4.9. If the Council is serious about arranging a Farmers' Market then it must be clear about its rules, trade permitted, origin of product and satisfy the customer that it is locally produced.

5. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION – CONTINENTAL MARKETS

- 5.1. Continental markets are appearing on a regular basis as part of the attraction programme for town and city centres of all sizes throughout the year.
- 5.2. There are specialist companies that will provide these events and will pay fees for hire of space and local services. These companies will offer a shopping experience using the unique produce and products from their extensive trader portfolio. They also commit that traders will deliver a high-quality selection of stalls from Europe, around the world and of course locally sourced suppliers.
- 5.3. At the local level care must be taken with the contract detail for such an event in terms of what the operator and supplier are respectively responsible to provide. Issues such as parking and traffic orders, planning, health and safety, risk management, fees, security, licences, promotion and litter all need careful consideration.
- 5.4. It is also important to consult with any local Chamber of Trade and Business Improvement District as sometimes their membership can see such a market as unfair competition.
- 5.5. When holding such a market it is good to involve local schools as often visits to the market, and the chance to meet stall holders, can be arranged and that gives a valuable experience in hearing and seeing different languages, cultures and products.

6. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION – ROYAL WOOTTON BASSET TOWN COUNCIL

- 6.1. Having spoken at length to the Clerk at RWBTC it is clear that the market is now an established part of the Town's offer. This has, however, only been achieved after a considerable amount of work by the Town Council.
- 6.2. Up to twenty stallholders attend each Wednesday though the average is somewhat less than this figure.
- 6.3. Crucially, the stall holders are not charged a rent to attend, and equally important is that a specific officer within the Town Council is delegated the role of recruiting, managing, marketing and organising the market.
- 6.4. The Council took a view that wherever possible the market should not compete directly with other shops in the Town, thereby keeping the support of those shop keepers.
- 6.5. Recruitment is, by and large, via word of mouth and advertising both locally and in the market press.
- 6.6. Overall, the market is viewed as a success in RWB, but it is not an income generating service and indeed as a service it is a cost to the Town Council. This is a strategic view and decision that Councillors have taken.
- 6.7. There is no involvement by Wiltshire Council at all in the market.

7. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION – WILTSHIRE COUNCIL MARKETS OFFICER

- 7.1. The Wiltshire Council Markets Officer, Mr Tom Ince has confirmed that he holds a list of potential market stall holders who could attend a market in Corsham. This list approaches three figures in number but it must be remembered that a considerable number of these provide similar or the same product or produce.
- 7.2. The Markets Officer is not able, due to data protection legislation, to release the names and contact details of those on his list to the Town Council but will approach a potential trader on behalf of them.
- 7.3. He did confirm that this list covers all markets in Wiltshire, not just Corsham and that market traders are becoming more and more choosy on where they go, driven often by incentives and / or an already established location.
- 7.4. He also stated that the difficult part about getting new traders to attend any market is not necessarily getting them to attend initially, it is in getting them to commit to attending each week.