

## **MARKET MANAGEMENT GROUP**

**Tuesday 28 November 2006 at 10.30 am**

### **PRESENT:**

#### **Carlisle City Council**

Members - Councillor Mrs Bowman (Chairman), Councillor Ray Bloxham, Councillor Donald Jefferson.

Officers - Mr R Simmons, Property Services Manager, Ms A Taylor, Accountancy Services Manager, Ms M Bellis, Principal Accountant, Mrs C Liddle, Principal Solicitor, Mrs E McKay, Senior Committee Clerk

### **ALSO IN ATTENDANCE**

Mr P Macfarlane, Modus Carlisle Limited, Mr D Thompson, Ryden Property Consultants, Mr S Byrne, La Salle, Mrs H Wylie, Centre Manager

### **MMG.01/06 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **MMG.02/06 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Market Management Group held on 17 November 2005 were agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

### **MMG.03/06 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

Members noted that it had been a year since the last meeting of the Market Management Group and stated that meetings should be held on at least a 6 monthly basis.

Mr Macfarlane commented that in addition to the Member meetings of the Market Management Group he had met with Council officers approximately 4 or 5 times since the last meeting of the Group.

RESOLVED – That the Market Management Group should meet every 6 months.

### **MMG.04/06 MANAGING AGENT'S REPORT**

A copy of the Managing Agents report had been circulated prior to the meeting. The following aspects of the report were highlighted and discussed:

## **Service Charges**

Mr Thompson referred to the actual spend against budgeted spend and explained why this had resulted in a service charge to tenants, which was higher than the charge budgeted. A meeting had been held with tenants' representatives to go explain the increase in the charge. The main reason that the charge had to be higher than that budgeted was because of the higher level of spending on repair and maintenance, much of which was to the roof, to ensure compliance with health & safety. It was anticipated that once the roof repairs were completed the budget would be back on target for next year. There had also been tariff increases in relation to energy, although energy costs are market tested each year to ensure value for money.

If the final outcome was under budget for this financial year then there would be credits back to the stallholders.

## **Trading Performance and Business Trends**

Mrs Wylie referred to the business trends which gave a picture of trading performance of the market traders. She advised that the benchmarking exercise is undertaken once a month and is based on a word of mouth exercise with stallholders rating trading performance for the month. She acknowledged the limitations of this exercise.

Mr Macfarlane reported that discussions were taking place on new Rules and Regulations for market traders, which could cover things like opening and closing times to encourage uniformity amongst market traders and ensure that stalls are open as much as possible. There was a need for stallholders to recognise at collective responsibility and that they depend on each other's footfall to draw in customers. There had been more discussions with market traders on Sunday opening, but there did not appear to be any clear will to open on Sundays throughout the year.

Mrs Wylie had been trying to advise market traders on ways to improve trading performance e.g. keeping stalls open for longer, Sunday trading, using promotions and incentives, seasonal offers and introducing different stock at Christmas.

It was understood that the next "Made in Cumbria" event would have stalls further down Scotch Street. Although market traders had complained about similar events in the past, it was hoped that the Market would benefit from people coming down Scotch Street and then visiting the market.

There was further discussion on leases and the accompanying Rules and Regulations. Mr Macfarlane suggested that rather than just looking at Rules and Regulations on their own, they should be considered along with a package of areas of concern for market traders including length of leases.

It was suggested that Officers and Managing Agents should continue to discuss potential Rules and Regulations and these should be considered by this Group in three months time.

## **Kiosks**

The kiosks are in need of cleaning, repair and decoration but this would not be carried out this year, due to the other ongoing maintenance requirements. It was hoped that this could be addressed next year. Mrs Wylie added that she had not permitted market traders to re-decorate their own kiosks as this should be done collectively and to the same standard.

## **Security and Vandalism**

Mr Thompson advised the installation of CCTV had been deferred to next year because of the high service charge. It was hoped that installation may be commenced in January 2007. Mrs Wylie advised that discussions had been held with the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership regarding the location of a temporary CCTV camera outside the Market Hall for a period of time. Councillor Bloxham added he had discussed the matter with the Community Safety development Officer and had asked him to advise the Police that a camera should be located at the Market Hall with a view of the bus stops and also up the street into the loading bay area. Mrs Wylie advised access controls were being put on loading bay doors.

Members expressed concern that people had been accessing the roof of the Market Hall. Mrs Wylie advised that she was currently getting costs for placing a metalwork railing on the roof to prevent access to the roof. Mr Macfarlane agreed that this should be done as a matter of urgency to address the problem which had been identified. Mr Simmons further suggested that a letter should be sent to the landlord of the adjoining blocks, pointing out the problems tenants were causing and asking that the problem be addressed.

The difficulties of removing graffiti from the sandstone exterior of the building were discussed. Various different solutions to the graffiti problem were considered, including graffiti boards in the bus stop, and communicating with schools to ensure that pupils are aware of the seriousness of graffiti and vandalism and the consequences of undertaking this type of behaviour.

Councillor Bloxham commented that Middlesbrough were currently using a system where CCTV cameras also had speakers and if a CCTV operator observed any type of vandalism he would use the speakers to tell the person to stop.

It was suggested that Councillor Bowman, as Portfolio Holder, should arrange a meeting with a number of interested bodies and agencies including the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, the Police and Stagecoach, to discuss the problems of potential solutions to the vandalism at the Market Hall.

## **General**

Mrs Wylie outlined the changes in market traders due to retirements or ill health and explained that she was trying to fill empty stalls.

There had been an increase in the running costs for the toilets while the toilets in the Lanes were being refurbished. Consideration was being given to how running costs could best be recovered for the toilets. There was some concern that the Centre Manager had not been made aware in advance of the work at The Lanes toilets.

RESOLVED – (1) That the report be noted.

(2) That a meeting of the Market Management Group be held in February 2007 to consider the issues outlined above.

## **MMG.05/06 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

On behalf of the Group, the Chairman thanked Mrs Wylie for her work as the Market Centre Manager.

## **MMG.06/06 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed that Officers would liaise with Modus and the Chairman over a date for the next meeting of the Group to be held during February 2007.

The meeting ended at 11.35 am