

MARKET MANAGEMENT GROUP

WEDNESDAY 20 APRIL 2011 AT 2.00 PM

PRESENT: Carlisle City Council

Members: Councillors Mrs Bowman (Chairman), Bloxham and J Mallinson

Officers:

Mrs J Meek – Assistant Director (Economic Development)

Mr S Brown – Assistant Solicitor

Mr P Gray – Neighbourhoods and Green Spaces Manager

Mr R Simmons – Property Services Manager

Mr R Majewicz – Conservation Officer

Mrs M Durham – Lead Committee Clerk

Mrs S Norton – Committee Clerk

ALSO

PRESENT: Mr D Thomson - Ryden Property Consultants
Mrs H Wylie – Market Hall Centre Manager

MMG.01/11 WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed all those present to the meeting.

MMG.02/11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Mr G Ingram (LaSalle Investment Management) and Mr P Messenger (Principal Conservation Officer).

MMG.03/11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest affecting the business to be transacted.

MMG.04/11 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Market Management Group held on 18 October 2010 were agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

MMG.05/11 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

The Chairman referred to a number of issues highlighted by Members at the previous meeting and sought progress reports in respect thereof.

The following aspects were highlighted and discussed:

Graffiti Removal – West Tower Street

Mr Majewicz referred to Minute MMG.13/10 - Resolution (1) under which Members had requested that the possibility of engaging a local company to undertake graffiti removal at the Market be explored, including estimates from alternative companies. He informed Members that, due to other commitments, it had not been possible to progress the matter.

Mr Majewicz had, however, spoken to a local contractor who was concerned that estimates may not be provided on a “like for like” basis. He suggested therefore that steps be taken to ensure that estimates were based upon the use of similar products. A list detailing three companies had been forwarded to Mrs Wylie.

Mr Majewicz added that availability of funding to undertake the work was also an issue.

Mr Gray reported that he had recently arranged for the removal of obscene graffiti in response to a complaint. Detergent had been used and proved to be effective.

Mr Majewicz cautioned that care needed to be taken when removing graffiti from the area which comprised very soft previously treated sandstone.

Whilst recognising the difficulties highlighted, Members stressed that the matter had been ongoing for some time and they were concerned to ensure that it was addressed at an early date.

In response, Mrs Meek advised that Mr Higgins would address the issue of graffiti removal as part of his new role as Heritage Officer, and report back to Members.

Members asked that, subject to the identification of available funding, Officers progress the matter as soon as possible rather than waiting until the next meeting of the Market Management Group.

Building / Maintenance Issues – Glass Doors

Pursuant to Minute MMG.13/10, Mrs Wylie updated Members on the current position commenting that the glass entrance doors had been serviced and repairs undertaken. She further outlined the implications of that work on the general maintenance budget.

Mrs Wylie added that, although the placing of metal strips on the glass entrance doors to prevent further damage was a possibility, that would be dependant upon the availability of funding. She would, however, seek quotations for that work.

In discussion, Members suggested that the issue could be addressed in conjunction with the procurement of new entrance doors if and when the need arose.

A Member sought clarification of the position regarding health and safety should no action be taken at the current time.

In response, Mrs Wylie advised that one solution was to chain the entrance doors open which should help mitigate against potential damage / health and safety concerns. She would welcome the installation of disability doors but cost was clearly a factor.

Blue Bell Lane

Referring to Minute MMG.13/10 – Resolution (3), Mr Gray reported that funding had been carried forward for the provision of bins and he would progress the matter as soon as possible.

The Chairman asked that Mr Gray inform Members via e-mail when the issue had been actioned.

Mrs Wylie reiterated previous concerns regarding the paving stones in Blue Bell Lane. She referred to photographs which clearly evidenced that the stones were a trip hazard.

In response, Mr Gray undertook to also progress that issue.

Lane adjacent to 22-28 Scotch Street

Further to Minute MMG.13/10, Mr Simmons reported that it had been necessary to re-negotiate access arrangements with the owner of the lane. As a result the gate had been re-designed and Officers were in the process of applying for planning permission / listed building consent to erect the gate.

Members welcomed the progress made in that regard.

Congestion – St Mary's Gate / Fisher Street

Referring to Minute MMG.14/10 – Resolution (ii), Councillor Mallinson outlined discussions at the previous meeting of the Highways and Transport Working Group, commenting that there had been no resolution to date on the issue of congestion in the St Mary's Gate / Fisher Street area. He added that the matter was likely to be discussed again at their meeting on 9 May 2011 and sought any views which members may wish to put forward on the issue.

Mrs Wylie reiterated problems associated to inappropriate parking in the area.

In response, Councillor Mallinson said that consideration may be given to the placing of road markings to prevent illegal parking in the area and he would feed that back to the Highways and Transport Working Group at their next meeting.

RESOLVED – (1) That the Heritage Officer be requested to progress the issue of graffiti removal as a matter of urgency, and report his findings to Group Members as soon as possible.

(2) That the Neighbourhoods and Green Spaces Manager be requested to progress the provision of bins and take action to address problems with the paving stones in Blue Bell Lane, and update Group Members via e-mail as soon as possible.

(3) That Councillor Mallinson be requested to raise the issue of inappropriate parking in the St Mary's Gate / Fisher Street area at the next meeting of the Highways and Transport Working Group and report back to the Market Management Group in due course.

MMG.06/11 MANAGING AGENT'S REPORT

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

Tenants' Meetings

Mrs Wylie drew attention to the detailed Minutes of the Centre Tenants' Committee meeting held on 28 January 2011, a copy of which was appended to the report. She

highlighted, in particular, discussions regarding opening times in the Christmas period.

Building / Maintenance Issues

Mrs Wylie outlined building / maintenance issues, details of which were set out in the report. She commented that the area around the bus stop in West Tower Street always appeared to be dirty.

Members were concerned to ensure that cleaning was undertaken on a regular basis. They referred to previous successful removal of chewing gum, pointing out that it appeared to be an issue again.

Discussion arose around the frequency and most appropriate methods of cleaning the City Centre area. Mr Gray informed the meeting that the Council was in the process of procuring replacement mechanical pavement sweeping machines and the issue of cleaning could be built into a Service Specification. A quotation for steam cleaning of the whole of the City Centre had also recently been obtained.

In response to a question, Mr Gray undertook to report back regarding the “gum buster” machine.

On the issue of litter prevention, Mr Brown suggested that an alternative approach would be to proceed to prosecution in a greater number of cases.

Members recognised that the issue of littering could be addressed via public education, the provision of bins and also successful prosecution of perpetrators.

Marketing and Promotions

Mrs Wylie explained the current position as detailed within the report.

Incidents

Details of incidents that had taken place in the Market Hall during the previous six month period were as set out in the report.

Members expressed concern at the problems associated with the public toilets in the Market and also related issues in Blue Bell Lane. It was suggested that consideration could be given to gating the lane with a view to preventing the problems outlined.

Mr Simmons suggested that Officers pursue the process followed in relation to the gating of the lane adjacent to 22-28 Scotch Street.

Service Charges / Planned Maintenance

Mr Thomson reported in some detail on the position with regard to expenditure on service charges, together with concerns resulting from budgetary restrictions. He was currently in the process of reconciling the service charge (year ending 31 March 2011) following which a draft Budget would be prepared for submission to Mr Simmons in due course.

Discussion then arose around the future sustainability of the Market.

The Chairman thanked the various parties for work undertaken in moving the above issues forward.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) The Managing Agent's report be noted.
- (ii) That the Neighbourhoods and Green Spaces Manager give consideration to the frequency and most appropriate methods of cleaning the City Centre area, and report back to the next meeting.
- (iii) That the Property Services Manager be requested to pursue the issue of gating access to Blue Bell Lane with a view to preventing inappropriate public access.

MMG.07/11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman reported the receipt of a Petition (on 18 April 2011) signed by tenants of Carlisle Indoor Victorian Market who were opposed to any proposed changes to the Market Letting Policy.

Mr Simmons advised that Officers would acknowledge receipt thereof.

Mrs Wylie reported that it was her understanding that certain tenants had subsequently removed their names from the Petition.

In response, Mr Brown requested that the updated Petition be provided.

RESOLVED – That Officers be requested to respond to the amended Petition following submission thereof.

MMG.08/11 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED – That arrangements be made for the next meeting of the Market Management Group to take place in October 2011.

[The meeting ended at 2.50 pm]