



HERTFORD TOWN COUNCIL

Ref: D&L//Hertford Markets Working Party

19 September 2017

TO: ALL MEMBERS OF HERTFORD MARKETS WORKING PARTY

Dear Councillor

A Meeting of the Hertford Markets Working Party will be held on:

**MONDAY, 25 SEPTEMBER 2017
IN THE ROBING ROOM, THE CASTLE, HERTFORD
AT 7.00 PM**

The Agenda is attached.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Joseph Whelan'.

Mr J Whelan
Town Clerk

Councillors: P Boyle, S Cousins, B Deering, Mrs S Dunkley and Miss J Sartin

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AGENDA - MEETING OF THE HERTFORD MARKETS WORKING PARTY TO BE HELD ON MONDAY 25 SEPTEMBER 2017 AT 7.00 PM IN THE ROBIN ROOM, THE CASTLE, HERTFORD

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive Members' declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (as defined by the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012) where these Disclosable Pecuniary Interests:

- a) Have not already been entered into the register and
- b) Relate to a matter to be considered

To note that such interests so declared must be formally notified to Town Clerk and the Monitoring Officer at East Hertfordshire District Council of the interest within 28 days.

To receive Members' declarations of Declarable Interests in accordance with Hertford Town Council's Code of Conduct (adopted 8th April 2013).

3. THE MINUTES

To confirm as correct the minutes of the meeting held on 24 July 2017 and to authorise the Chairman to sign the same.

4. QUESTIONS AND/OR STATEMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Members of the public may speak about specific items on this agenda which contain a recommendation, provided they have advised the Town Clerk of their wish to speak no later than midday on the Friday before the meeting (or midday of the last working day of the week before the meeting). A list giving details of the name(s) and relevant agenda item(s) will be circulated to Councillors before the meeting commences.

5. HERTFORD MARKETS

To receive a report on markets in the context of a changing town centre economy. **(PAPER A)**

6. THE HERTFORD FARMERS' MARKET

To receive a verbal report from Cllr Steve Cousins, following his visit to the Hertford Farmers' Market.

7. **THE HERTFORD SATURDAY MARKET**
To receive a verbal report from Cllr Peter Boyle, following his visit to the Hertford Saturday Market.
8. **THE SAFFRON WALDEN MARKET**
To receive a verbal report from Cllr Sue Dunkley, following her visit to the Saffron Walden Market.
9. **THE BISHOPS STORTFORD MARKET**
To receive a verbal report from Cllr Bob Deering and Cllr Jane Sartin, following a meeting with the Chairman of Bishop's Stortford Town Council's Finance & General Purposes Committee at the Bishops Stortford Market.
10. **VISITS TO OTHER MARKETS**
To receive a verbal report from Councillors on visits to any other markets.
11. **SURVEY ON THE HERTFORD MARKETS VISITORS**
To review the proposed survey for the study of the markets visitors and make any changes, if necessary. **(PAPER B)**

HERTFORD MARKETS

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To provide the Working Party with information on the changing retail environment in town centres in general. To present the proposed ideas for the improvement of the Hertford Markets, as recommended by the Hertford Town Centre Urban Design Strategy.

2. ECONOMIC VITALITY OF TOWN CENTRES IN GENERAL

The Hertford Markets Working Party agreed on 24 July 2017 that in order to make an informed decision the Members would benefit from more information about what makes markets successful. This report presents the role of markets in relation to the retail environment and the vitality of town centres. As an essential part of the Hertford Town Centre, the local markets have been considered in the Hertford Town Centre Urban Design Strategy, which was published in February 2016 and its recommendations are featured in this report.

Markets are one good indicator for the social and economic vitality of a place. Markets can cater for the various needs of the local population and attract local residents, as well as visitors to the town centre. In places like Hertford, markets are situated in the town centre and any consideration of the future of the Hertford Markets should have regard to the economy of the town centre as a whole.

The UK Vitality Index 2017 places the Hertford's Town Centre on position 127 out of 1000 commercial areas in town and cities throughout the country. While this ranking can give confidence for the future, questions are still to be asked. As the Members of the Hertford Markets Working Party observed, the local markets have been steadily declining in the recent years. In addition, nearby places fared better than Hertford in terms of town centre retail (Berkhamsted is in top 16 while Hoddesdon ranked in at 105).

According to a report from the Department for Communities and Local Government, in the recent years there has been a move from the perception of the town centres in general as primarily a retail space. It is argued that town centres can re-emerge at the centre of the community, cultural and civic life with retail as a key – though not always a dominant element (*Re-imagining urban spaces to help revitalise our high streets*, 2012, p. 7). Other sources of income can arise from leisure activities and creative industries.

3. IDEAS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF HERTFORD MARKETS

A Member of the Hertford Markets Working Party recently had discussions with the stallholders at Hertford Farmer's Market. It was reported that the traders

suggested the organisation of events on market days (for instance, a school band concert) to attract footfall and implicitly lead to increased sales for the market.

Consideration has been given in the recent years for the future of the Hertford Town Centre and the main ideas are synthesized in the Hertford Urban Design Strategy (HUDS) of February 2016. HUDS presents in detail how the improvement of Hertford Town Centre can be inclusive and beneficial for the markets. The report contains the following assessment:

“The weekday market and street stalls trading provision in the town centre are basic and it is unlikely that the existing markets are satisfying that role in Hertford. Whilst the existing stalls (typically 2-4 stalls) are reasonably well delivered, they are not attractive enough, visible enough, dynamic, memorable or big enough in quantum to be classified as a market.

The chartered Saturday market is stronger, as is the monthly visiting Farmers Market. Furthermore, signage to the market provision is non-existent and the markets are not helping to distribute footfall across the town.

Market towns often have large, open and permeable market squares. Hertford does not. Many strong market towns have clear centres of activity where footfall is often highest. As Hertford, in location terms, lacks a real ‘heart’ this is difficult to achieve” (p. 14).

“Salisbury Square is the only town centre space that currently provides opportunity for town centre events and markets. It is in the geographic heart of the town centre, but does not live up to the potential role of a town centre wide focal point. This is partly due to the existing uses and vehicular traffic” (p. 34)

The HUDS document contains the following recommendations:

“Hertford’s town centre will have a strong identity and a central focus. High quality public realm, a vibrant market and a mix of national and independent retailers will provide services to the local and wider population” (p. 8).

“There was very strong support for enhancing the experience of the farmers market, including a higher frequency and a higher diversity of the stalls” (p. 7).

“Reduce traffic through Bull Plain to create a better and more usable space in the centre of the town for events and larger markets” (p. 24).

“There are currently around 15 short-term parking spaces in Bull Plain. Except for the disabled parking bays, these should be removed to reduce the amount of cars in the town centre cruising for spaces (often in vain), enhance the pedestrian environment, and provide space for a potential market” (p. 24).

“Extend the weekend street market along the length of Bull Plain with the weekend street market to create a retail loop round to the river and Bircherley Green” (p. 36).

“Public realm works and the redevelopment of Bircherley Green could provide high quality public space that offers additional capacity for specialist and seasonal markets that would support a strong market culture” (p. 34).

“Make the following name changes – Market Quarter to become the Salisbury Quarter” (p. 106).

4. RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is RECOMMENDED that:

- a) The Working Party **notes** the report.
- b) The Working Party **considers** what opportunities are available for the Hertford Market, taking into account the suggestions in this report and the ideas drawn from visiting other markets.

Report by Maria Iancu – Project Officer

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SURVEY ON THE HERTFORD MARKETS VISITORS

Main questions:

Q1: What is usually your main reason for coming into Hertford Town Centre?

- Come to visit the market
- Come to visit the High Street
- Come to visit the shops
- Work in the town centre
- Meeting family/friends
- Live in the town centre
- Come to eat/drink
- Other

Q2: How often do you visit the market?

- Every week
- Two-three times per month
- Once a month
- Every few months
- Rarely/never

Q3: Which of the following stall types do you usually visit?

- Greengrocer
- Bargain Stalls, Household
- Hot food
- Plants and Flowers
- Meat/Fish
- Bread/Pastry
- Cakes and confectionary
- Milk/cheese/ Eggs
- Fashion wear, footwear and accessories
- Second hand/vintage/bric a brac
- Other (please state)

Q4: On a typical visit, how much do you spend?

- £0
- £1-5
- £6-10
- £11-20
- £21-40
- £41+ (please state how much)

Q5: Who did you come with today?

Alone

With one person

With two persons

With three or more persons

Q6: Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Yes/No answers)

Market lets local people earn a living

People save money by shopping in this market

Market is the heart of our community

Market is the main reason for coming to town

Market enables me to buy local produce

Demographics

Q7: What is your occupation?

Student

Not Employed

Self Employed

Part time Employed

Full Time employed

Homemaker

Retired

Q8: What is your age group?

14-17

18-24

25-34

35-44

45-54

55-64

65+

Q9: Where do you live?

In Hertford

Outside Hertford (please give name of the town or village)

Alternatively: What is your residential postcode?

To be completed by researcher: Gender

Male

Female

Other possible questions for the public:

Have you or do you intend to shop elsewhere in the town today?

In your shopping outside the market do you expect you will spend: more than in the market/less than in the market/about the same amount?

Do you know anyone whose livelihood depends on this market? How many people?

If this market did not exist, would you travel to a market in another town? How far away?

Additional comments

The survey is based on the format suggested by the National Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA). It is recommended that the minimum number of completed questionnaires is 300. While changes and additions to this draft are welcomed, the Members should consider that for practical reasons, this should not be a very long questionnaire.

To get a better picture of the viability of the Hertford markets, it would be useful to collect some additional information on footfall. Footfall can be measured using handheld clickers and will include all passers-by through the town centre at a given time interval.

After surveys are applied and footfall counted, a turnover estimate will help the Members discuss the viability of the markets. According to the NABMA guidance there are three possible ways to estimate market turnover. The triangulation of these methods would help reach a more accurate figure.

Method 1: requires footfall count; estimated conversation rate (visitors to sales); size of the spending party (e.g. 1.45 persons); average spend per group

Method 2: requires number of customers served reported by traders; estimated conversation rate (visitors to sales); average spend per group;

Method 3: Market Manager's Estimate

It is RECOMMENDED that:

- a) The Working Party **considers** the survey to decide if it is fit for purpose and if any amendments are needed.