

PRESENT:

North Ward
Councillor D Bushby

East Ward

Councillor Mrs J Gubb
Councillor Mrs L Hellyer
Councillor J McKenzie (Chairman)

South Ward

Councillor S Inch

West Ward

Councillor C Hawkins

Market Tenants: Ms E Hilton

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr R Coombes (Deputy Town Clerk)

9 x Tenants

2 x Member of the Public

91. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

N/A.

92. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND ANY REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no declarations of interest.

93. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION OF 15 MINUTES DURATION

A Member of the Public believed the Market was very good for the Council. He felt passionate about it and believed past failures, challenges (in line with the High Street) required a radical, diverse approach. Changes are needed, a repeat of the old formula will not work.

The Public Member encouraged the Committee to, "think outside the box," suggesting the potential for cinema screenings and food opportunities.

A Butcher's Row tenant read a proposal (trader cooperative – an earlier draft had previously been circulated to the Committee members) which is attached and forms part of these minutes.

Another tenant, with thirty one years' trading experience, alluded to "ups and downs," noting that the Market Hall had never recovered from the changes wrought at the end of 2019 and subsequent Lockdown periods. She believed that the removal of the Studio Units (introduced 1 April 2016) would be a retrograde step.

She welcomed the trader cooperative proposal and spoke on the continued success of the Café facility; she would hate to see the closure of the Market Hall.

A further tenant expressed support for the proposal alluding to wider holistic opportunities including yoga sessions; she welcomed the potential for traders to have more say in the Market destiny.

Another tenant, with one year's trading experience, spoke on the building of a steady trade (base) would support more local traders providing a variety of offer, but also sourcing diverse opportunities from outside the area.

A Studio Unit tenant noted that the Studio Units were full and questioned why more Units were not created for small businesses that would still allow for Events to be held.

Another tenant sought to bolster his Butcher's Row application for an additional unit explaining that his area was expanding rapidly but with limited space he was having to turn away wholesale opportunities.

Councillor Hawkins noted that the aforementioned tenant had recently been included in the Top 20 of local businesses in the UK.

94. MINUTES

Proposed by Councillor McKenzie and seconded by Councillor Bushby, that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 12 January 2023 were approved and signed as a correct record.

(Vote – For: 5, Against: 0, Abstention: 1)

95. ACCOUNTS

It was proposed by Councillor Bushby seconded, and

RESOLVED: That the lists of payments for 23 February 2023 be approved.

(Vote – For: 6, Against: 0)

96. CHAIRMAN'S / MARKET ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

N/A.

97. MARKET HALL

Councillor Bushby led discussion on the decline of the Market Hall to its present unsustainable nadir despite investments, incentives and the engagement of Development Officers.

Points included:

- Need for radical change.
- Town Centres failing (also).
- Coach Friendly Status. Visitor feedback disappointment.
- o The Market Hall offer is too small.
- Market Hall to be used / set up differently.
- o No "Community" space west of the water.
- o The space can be put to better use, evolve to become a purpose built events' facility.
- o Will require complete clear out (removal of Studio Units – that take up a third of the Hall space).
- (It was noted that Tenants have invested in their businesses. Reduced Market Hall offering would impact upon Café trade.)
- Big, brave and imaginative ideas would need to be developed; decisions made.
- o Diversity – twilight, youth markets, not just Arts and Crafts.
- Retain opportunity to provide bigger, better, more (specialised) vibrant market trading.
- Better use of facility in the evenings.
- As a business model the investment / outlay has seen an abysmal return.
- Maximising floor space can provide return to traditional trestle table layout.
- Tenant / trader networking contacts have not borne fruit in the past. The spectre of a cooperative not more attractive.
- The Market Hall Studio Unit Tenants will be given three months' Notice to Quit effective 1 March 2023.
- The Market Management Committee will undertake to accommodate the outgoing Market Hall Studio Unit Tenants, where possible, in offering Butcher's Row Unit opportunity as they become available.
- Arrangements to be made to dispose of Studio Unit sheds.
- Update Notices to reflect change in Market Hall Market trading.
- Contract / Agreement of Understanding with SEMS to deliver regular specialist Markets. (Improvement on advertising, wider, not simply social media / online.)
- Seek to develop and promote the Hall as an Events / Community Hall available for hire / use.
- Organise ad hoc Events.

Councillor Inch supported the need for change and expressed hope in accommodating Market Hall Tenants where possible.

Councillor Mrs Hellyer suggested that where Market Complex Tenants were not committing to the Core Hours, Notice should be served.

Councillor Mrs Gubb agreed reflecting on a desultory visit to Butcher's Row where a number of Units not open displayed notices advertising opening times, contrary to the core hours. She felt those that were not committing to their tenancy needed to be "weeded out." She wondered why one would visit the Complex when shops were simply not opening.

Councillor Bushby in agreeing felt that those tenants who adhered to their agreements must be somewhat annoyed and undermined by their fellow non-attending tenants. The failing to be open for trading would have a cumulative knock on effect culminating in everyone suffering. Leniency in applying the process in the face of poor attendance had allowed for a lack of commitment and Butcher's Row to suffer.

Members were unequivocal in their desire for Tenants to adhere to the Core Hours and the engagement of administrative action concluding with Notices to Quit, where necessary.

It was proposed by Councillor Bushby and seconded by Councillor Inch, and

RESOLVED: That:

- The Market Hall Studio Unit Tenants will be given three months' Notice to Quit effective 1 March 2023.
- The Market Management Committee will undertake to accommodate the outgoing Market Hall Studio Unit Tenants, where possible, in offering Butcher's Row Unit opportunity as they become available.
- Arrangements to be made to dispose of Studio Unit sheds.
- Update Notices to reflect change in Market Hall Market trading.
- Contract / Agreement of Understanding with SEMS to deliver regular specialist Markets / Events.
- Seek to develop and promote the Hall as an Events / Community Hall available for hire / use.
- Organise ad hoc Events.

(Vote - For: 4, Against: 1, Abstention: 1)

98. BIDEFORD REGENERATION BOARD QUICK WIN FUNDING OFFER

At the Meeting of the Bideford Regeneration board held on 18 January 2023 an offer was made to bid for funding to enhance the Market Hall opportunity.

On further enquiry an opportunity to match fund £2,000 was provided in relation to an enhanced Audio System.

It was proposed by Councillor Bushby and seconded by Councillor Mrs Hellyer, and

RESOLVED: That a figure in the region of £2,500 (allowing for change to quotation prices) is made available to match fund the Regeneration Board sourced £2,000 to provide for an Audio System in the Market Hall.

(Vote - For: 6, Against: 0)

99. FIRE MARSHAL TRAINING

The Clerk advised that the Market Officer and one Member of the Maintenance Team are Fire Marshal training current.

Given that Fire Marshals are an integral part of the Fire Risk Assessment Fire Evacuation Procedure he should like two further personnel trained, ideally tenant volunteers.

Training will be held in Barnstaple for half a day with dates available in May and July 2023.

It was proposed by Councillor Mrs Hellyer and seconded by Councillor McKenzie, and

RESOLVED: That two personnel are trained. Costs / subsistence to be paid.

(Vote - For: 6, Against: 0)

100. ENERGY SAVING INITIATIVE

Members noted the recommendation by the Decarbonisation and Environment Committee to replace and install LED lights throughout the Complex from the Environment Budget. Any surplus monies to fund further residual energy saving opportunities.

Councillor Inch felt that consideration should be given to include mood / effects lighting.

101. TENANT / TRADER REPORT

Ms Hilton indicated that detail had been covered during the Market Hall discussion.

The Chairman thanked Ms Hilton and the Tenants for their attendance / contribution.

It was proposed by Councillor McKenzie and seconded by Councillor Inch, and

RESOLVED: That in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be discussed, the meeting will be held in Part II (Closed Session).

(Vote – For: 6, Against: 0)

103. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Members reflected upon the resolution to remove the Market Hall Studio Units and the change in Market Hall activity noting that consideration will need to be given to the resource required to maintain the Market Complex.

104. TENANT / TRADER

a. Members gave consideration to applications received for Butcher's Row Unit 5, 8/9 and 18.

It was proposed by Councillor Hawkins and seconded by Councillor Bushby, and

RESOLVED: That:

1. Glen Littlejohns is offered Butcher's Row Unit 5. He must provide written detail on how he intends to link Unit 6 prior to any works being agreed, noting on vacation any changes made may be subject to restoration at personal cost.
2. Wesley Heard is offered Butcher's Row Unit(s) 8/9.
3. Barry Dudley is offered Butcher's Row Unit 18.

(Vote – For: 6, Against: 0)

b. The Clerk indicated that there were no rental concerns.

105. RETURN TO STANDING ORDERS

Proposed by Councillor McKenzie, seconded and

RESOLVED: That the meeting returns to Standing Orders.

(Vote For: 6, Against: 0)

The business of the meeting having been completed, the Chairman thanked the members for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 8.20 pm.

| BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL - Panier Market Accounts as at 23 February 2023 | | | | VAT | NET | TOTAL |
|---|-------|---|--|--------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| PV NO | | ALLOCATION | | | | |
| BACS Payments | | | | | | |
| 1 | PV 5 | R Coombes | Petty Cash | | 27.50 | 27.50 |
| 2 | 31/01 | Tazza Design Ltd | Clothes Exchange Banner - Remove and Replace Dates | 5.00 | 25.00 | 30.00 |
| 3 | 10/02 | Nicholsons | Hygiene items | 34.71 | 173.55 | 208.26 |
| 4 | 14/02 | DCS Pest Control (Cornwall) Ltd | Service Contract for Rats and Mice for period 24 Jan - 24 Apr 23 | | 120.00 | 120.00 |
| 5 | 17/02 | SWW | Water sewerage charges (18 Nov 22 - 3 Feb 23) | | 156.64 | 156.64 |
| 6 | 21/02 | R.Paterson | Cut / fit - ventilation 21 Butcher's Row | | 60.00 | 60.00 |
| 7 | 28/02 | Jewson | Maintenance Items | 3.75 | 18.77 | 22.52 |
| 8 | 28/02 | Tamar Trading | Maintenance Items | 50.87 | 254.32 | 305.19 |
| 9 | 28/02 | RGB | Maintenance Items | 109.18 | 545.85 | 655.03 |
| 10 | 28/02 | Ashton Electrical Ltd | Supply and install vent axia window mounted extractor fan - 21 B Row | 62.80 | 314.00 | 376.80 |
| 11 | CC24 | British Institute of Inkkeeping Awarding Body | Personal Licence Holder | 28.00 | 140.00 | 168.00 |
| 12 | CC25 | GOV.UK | Basic Criminal Record Check | | 18.00 | 18.00 |
| 13 | DD | Vodafone | Line Rental (Jan 23) | 4.63 | 23.17 | 27.80 |
| 14 | DD | Triangle | Line / Fibre Rental (Jan 23) | 9.99 | 49.94 | 59.93 |
| | | | | 308.93 | 1,926.74 | 2,235.67 |
| Bank Balances at 23 Feb 23 | | | | - Current Account | 9,187.93 | |
| Bank Balances at 23 Feb 23 | | | | - Deposit Account | 45,645.15 | |

Minute Number.93.

Firstly, I would like to thank the committee and others involved for the efforts they have made over the last 8 months to improve footfall in the market complex.

To date, however, this has not been as successful as was hoped and I would like to ask the committee if they would now entertain an alternative, trader based, proposal.

As there are so many highly skilled and creative entrepreneurs based in the market complex we would like to propose that a trader cooperative is formed to oversee the day to day running of the market complex and special weekly markets.

In order to ease everyone in, specialist markets could be confined to Saturdays only for the first month.

If the committee is open to explore this proposal, a detailed plan can be drawn up and circulated within a short space of time as we already have a broad outline for Saturday markets.

The National Market Traders Federation is completely behind us and will come down and help us set it up and negotiate.

We would like this proposal put on the agenda for the next meeting and voted on.

We are a community, a family and the market is important to us – we would love to see it a success once more.

Thank you.

K Riley

3 / 4 Butcher's Row Tenant