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FOREWORD BY THE CHAIR

I was genuinely excited at being given the opportunity to chair this review, given the complexity of the task that lay ahead. As a lifetime resident of Redditch, the town centre market and carnival fairs have both been important parts of my life.

The composition of the review group and supporting officers brought together considerable relevant experience. Our starting point involved examining contents and conclusions of numerous reports into local markets from around the Midlands and elsewhere. However, a copy and paste review was never an option! Members felt that only the 2011 report on the Redditch Market produced by retail and tourism expert Ros Sidaway could be considered relevant in highlighting strengths, weaknesses and challenges facing market traders in today's tough retail climate, therefore this became the group's baseline report.

We knew the only way to progress this review was to get out and about amongst both the local market traders and customers, and to visit other markets to see how they were adapting to the rapid pace of change in shopping habits.

With the help of the Council's Communications Team and the Redditch Standard, we investigated local people's views about the market. This involved asking them why they visited the market, or why they did not. We went further by asking local businesses for their views.

This report highlights our findings and impresses on the urgency to actually act upon them before we risk losing our market altogether, an integral part of the identity of our town centre.

On behalf of the group, I would like to thank officers Lyndsey Berry and Ros Sidaway for their time and invaluable experience. Also, from North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration, our 'man on the ground' Roger Munn, Senior Market Operative, and Steve Singleton, Economic Development Manager.

Thanks to all our special guests who have provided evidence throughout the review, and to everyone who participated in the public consultation. Special thanks must go to Michael Craggs for his research and steer and equal endurance of some very cold market visits!

I would of course also like to thank my fellow group members, Councillors Alan Mason, Joe Baker, Brenda Quinney and Derek Taylor, who together brought such a wealth of experience, ideas, and input to the table.

All we need now is someone to press the "Go" button to help us realise the huge potential that the Redditch market has to offer which is our vision.

Councillor Andrew Brazier
Chair, Redditch Market Task Group

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter 1 – Strategy and Vision

Recommendation 1

A new strategy for the market be developed which clearly sets out how the market can be revitalised over the next five year period

Recommendation 2

A small core working group consisting of local stakeholders should be created to help develop and implement the new strategy

Recommendation 3

The number of general retail market operating days should be reduced to no more than three days a week. The working group to consult with existing regular traders about which particular days should be retained

Recommendation 4

Consideration is given to holding more speciality markets to take place on non general retail market operating days on a regular basis to help create a niche for the Redditch market. The working group to consider how such markets would be managed within the available resources

Chapter 2 – Operational Issues

Recommendation 5

The market working group considers the feasibility of introducing an on-site Redditch Market information point

Recommendation 6

The market working group considers the feasibility of market customers being provided with an opportunity to pay the traders for goods through their mobile phone and debit and credit card payment facilities

Recommendation 7

Each trader is required to possess a returns policy which should be clearly advertised

Chapter 3 – Engaging with the Local Community

Recommendation 8

The working group facilitates further opportunities for local people, especially students and the unemployed, to obtain business experience through operating stalls in the market place at no charge on a short-term basis, to include the introduction of a new mentoring scheme to offer help and assistance to new traders

Recommendation 9

The working group facilitates further opportunities for local businesses to showcase their goods and services on market stalls

Recommendation 10

The working group facilitates the allocation of free stalls on a rotating basis to local people to promote forthcoming community events and the work of local charities, subject to stall availability

Chapter 4 – Areas for further investigation

Recommendation 11

The market working group explores the possibility of realigning and extending the layout of the market past its current location

Recommendation 12

The market working group explores the feasibility of introducing a covered food court area

Recommendation 13

The market working group explores the suitability of the design of the current market stalls and to consider whether the introduction of alternative stalls would improve the overall visual appearance of the stalls

Recommendation 14

The market working group ensures that any review of signage in the town centre includes adequate reference to the market

Recommendation 15

The market working group works with local bus operators to help further promote the market

Chapter 5 - Other

Recommendation 16

The Council should engage with the Public Fundraising Regulatory Association with a view to reaching an agreement to regulate the working days and areas of charity street fundraisers in Redditch Town Centre

Recommendation 17

Redditch Borough Council should join the National Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA) and participate in the *Love Your Local Market 2013* event to publicise the changes and new opportunities that would have been introduced at the market

INTRODUCTION

This report presents the findings and recommendations of the Redditch Market Task Review which was commissioned in November 2011 by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The review was precipitated by concern that the market was not performing to its full potential. This in turn was having a negative impact to the town centre economy and its general image. Together with Redditch being renowned as a traditional market town, this led the Committee to sanction the review's undertaking. It was agreed that an in-depth investigation should be led by a group of Borough Councillors to help identify the main factors that had been undermining the market's performance and which needed to be rectified. The review group would have the opportunity to visit other markets to learn from best practice and to provide them with fresh ideas about what could be successfully introduced in Redditch.

Following a period of initial evidence gathering, the review was eventually launched in June 2012 under the chairmanship of Councillor Andrew Brazier. The wide remit of the review would allow a thorough assessment of the market to be undertaken to help establish what could be done to revitalise its performance. Some of the review's main objectives included:

- Reviewing ways to promote Redditch Market to potential market stall holders
- Assessing the operational arrangements in place at successful markets located throughout other towns and lessons that could be learnt in Redditch
- Investigating the appropriate geographical location for the market in Redditch

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The 'open air' market currently operates as a general retail market on every day of the week apart from Wednesdays and Sundays. Trading hours are between 9.00am and 4.00pm. A 'peoples market', allowing local people to sell their own goods, operates on the last Wednesday of every month from April until September.

The 'open air' market moved to its current location on Market Place and Alcester Street in 2006 for a two year trial period following a Borough Council operational review in consultation with the existing market traders. This followed concern that the previous location behind the Debenhams store in the Kingfisher Shopping Centre was proving unpopular with the local public. The relocation was made permanent after a successful trial period.

Full responsibility for managing and operating the 'open air' market passed from Redditch Borough Council to North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration (NWEDR) in April 2012.

Regulations for the market are refreshed on an annual basis. All traders, their employees, representatives or guests must comply with these regulations. Vehicles are only permitted to enter the market area via Peakman Street and Silver Street. Exit is via the Market Walk/Silver Street service road. Traffic order prohibits the movement vehicles in the market area.

Chapter 1 – Strategy and Vision

Recommendation 1	A new strategy for the market be developed which clearly sets out how the market can be revitalised over the next five year period
Financial Implications	Any implications are expected to be met within existing budgets
Resource Implications	Any implications are expected to be met by existing staff resource
Legal Implications	There are no legal implications

Redditch Market does not currently possess a clear strategy or business case to explain how the market should function in the coming years. The Group firmly believes that the development of a strategy would help tremendously in determining how the market should operate during the next five years, what it should become, and how this can be achieved.

The Group propose that a recruitment and retention policy should be integral to any new strategy to help ensure that talented traders could be attracted to the town and, crucially, that they would want to stay. The Group feels it is imperative that barriers to entry for prospective traders setting up in Redditch should be removed wherever possible if the market is to thrive once again. Given the strong competition from local markets, traders must be given a real incentive to come to Redditch. Members of the review were made aware during their investigations that markets elsewhere have successfully increased their number of regular traders by offering free trial periods to new traders.

A new strategy should also possess a formal communications and marketing plan to publicise the market and any associated and relevant upcoming town centre events, including street entertainment events and competitions. As part of this, the Group feels that there is considerable potential for the Council to utilise free social media, including *Facebook* and *Twitter*, at little or not cost to promote the market. The Council already enjoys excellent working relations with the local media, as evidenced in a successful public consultation exercise which captured local people's views about the market. The Group therefore feels that there is a real opportunity for both to work together again to promote the market for the good of the town. Finally, the Council's own communications resources should be utilised effectively. As part of this, Members propose that the market should have its own designation section within each edition of the new online *Redditch Matters*.

As briefly mentioned, the Group strongly feels that more town centre entertainment events are needed to help increase footfall in the town centre. This sentiment was echoed by many who participated in the public consultation. Members saw for themselves through their site visits to other markets how street entertainment events can have a very positive effect in terms of adding vibrancy

to a town centre. This can provide a real incentive for people to visit the market and town centre and give a real boost to the local economy. For example, Nuneaton market successfully attracts many families to the town centre through facilitating family friendly entertainment. The Group believes that this can and should be replicated in Redditch. Any strategy should include a calendar of events for each coming year, which would enable sufficient resources to be allocated.

Music could also help to draw people into the market, as suggested by a participant in the public consultation:

“At Christmas having music on draws you in whereas at the moment people just walk past it.”

The Group suggests that the development of a formal communications and marketing plan could be crucial in attracting new customers to the market, especially those from areas outside Redditch. This may involve seeking specialist advice on how best to promote the market.

It is also thought that the development of a new strategy could help to improve quality standards for the market. Due to changes in consumerism and the rise of customer expectations, there is an ever increasing need for markets to look professional. In particular, the development of strategic plans has helped charities to become increasingly professional in recent years, setting out what quality standards should be maintained. The Group therefore feels that any new code of quality for traders would be given more credibility if this was part of an overarching new strategy.

Recommendation 2	A small core working group consisting of local stakeholders should be created to help develop and implement the new strategy
Financial Implications	There are no financial implications.
Resource Implications	There are potential resource implications, subject to a renegotiation of the existing service level agreement between Redditch Borough Council and North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration to operate the market, to establish exactly where responsibility lies for taking this forward
Legal Implications	There are no legal implications

The Group also feels that for any strategy to be effective, input into its development is needed from the many local stakeholders that are affected by the market, and assert that real leadership is needed to drive the market forward. It is proposed that a core working group, to contain representatives from the Borough Council, Kingfisher Shopping Centre, the Borough's Town Centre Partnership, market traders, and from North Worcestershire Economic Development and

Regeneration, should be established as the mechanism for ensuring that leadership for the market is provided. It is also proposed that the Chair of this review is involved, at least during the initial stage, to ensure that the recommendations of this report are sufficiently acted upon. This would facilitate regular dialogue between the key stakeholders of the market. Indeed, a leading trader that was consulted by the Group suggested that there needed to be far greater dialogue between key stakeholders than was currently the case.

In addition to developing a new strategy for the market, the Group feels it is essential that the proposed new working group continues to meet on an ongoing basis to ensure that the strategy is adequately implemented and that other important market matters are addressed. In particular, it is suggested that the working group could also monitor the enforcement of quality standards in the market as it was felt that this was another area that needed to be improved.

Furthermore, the Group proposes that a new permanent market working group would be best positioned to take forward the majority of the Group's recommendations that require further investigation.

Recommendation 3	The number of general retail market operating days should be reduced to no more than three days a week. The working group to consult with existing regular traders about which particular days should be retained
Financial Implications	The financial implications will not become clear until the specific days that would continue to hold a general retail market have been identified.
Resource Implications	Subject further to the work and findings of the market working group
Legal Implications	There are no legal implications

The Group believes that it is no longer sustainable for the Redditch Market to continue operating five days a week as a general retail market. During their review, the Group was informed by a number of different sources that markets across the country have suffered in recent years as shopping habits have changed dramatically, as can be seen through the ever-increasing popularity of online shopping. Low price convenience stores have also provided strong competition for the market.

As part of their review, Members visited Nuneaton Market to see for themselves how a market that had been struggling less than a decade ago had had been successfully transformed. Winner of the National Association of British Market Authorities Best Street Market 2008, the market is only open on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Members heard that this helped to concentrate the quality of the market and ensure that business was not diluted over a longer period. Furthermore, by operating for only two days a week, this helped to introduce a

sense of vibrancy to the market as high footfall levels could be sustained. This encouraged customers to return in future. In particular, Members were made aware that Nuneaton Market has been very successful in attracting visitors from outside of the town.

A number of Redditch traders who were consulted did not feel that there was sufficient footfall to sustain the market in its current form for five days a week. The Group believes that concentrating market trade into a shorter week would help to increase the level of footfall around the market on its operating days, which turn could encourage stall holders at other markets to trial Redditch Market if they feel that there is enough potential trade.

Further work will be required to identify the specific days that could be removed from the weekly schedule. This should involve the market working group carrying out thorough consultation with regular traders to ensure that their views are heard and taken into account before a final decision is reached. Once specific days have been identified, traders should be provided with sufficient notice before these changes are implemented to help mitigate any inconvenience to their working patterns.

Recommendation 4	Consideration is given to holding more speciality markets to take place on non general retail market operating days on a regular basis to help create a niche for the Redditch market. The working group to consider how such markets would be managed within the available resources
Financial Implications	Subject further to the work and findings of the market working group
Resource Implications	There are potential resource implications, subject to a renegotiation of the existing service level agreement between Redditch Borough Council and North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration to operate the market, to establish who exactly would be responsible for coordinating the speciality markets
Legal Implications	There are no legal implications

It is felt that there is considerable opportunity to use speciality markets to develop a niche for Redditch Market. This would help to distinguish it from other markets and attract more customers who do not live in the town. In particular, the Group suggests that allotment markets could become very popular in the town for both local producers and customers alike, given its close proximity to agricultural land. The Members are also aware that arts and craft markets held in Redditch have proved very popular.

The Group does not propose that Redditch attempts to compete with large and well established speciality markets, such as the German Market in Birmingham, such would be the practical difficulties of holding a similar event for a lengthy period in a confined space. However, the responses to the public consultation clearly indicated that the market needs to offer a wider variety of choice to encourage more customers back. In particular, it was suggested that the facilitation of farmers markets in the town centre would help to attract new customers to the market.

Having visited a farmers market in Kidderminster, the Group is aware that these operate at various locations across the county, typically twice a month at each location. However, concern was raised by a representative from the relevant farmers' market group that it would be difficult for them to work alongside a general retail market. The Group suggests that, should the number of general retail market days be reduced, this would make it easier for speciality markets to operate successfully in Redditch on a regular basis.

The Group is also aware successful speciality markets have helped to improve trade for nearby shops through increased footfall when these have been held elsewhere, offering a real boost to the relevant town centre and local economy. Members of the review believe that these markets would therefore prove very popular for shops in Redditch town centre.

It is proposed that the working group should be tasked with considering how such markets would be managed within the available resources. The resource implications will also be subject to renegotiation of existing Service Level Agreement between Redditch Borough Council and North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration.



Local produce on sale at Kidderminster Farmers Market, Friday 11th January 2013

Chapter 2 – Operational Issues

Recommendation 5	The market working group considers the feasibility of introducing an on-site Redditch Market information point
Financial Implications	Subject further to the work and findings of the market working group
Resource Implications	Subject further to the work and findings of the market working group
Legal Implications	There are no legal implications

The Group suggests that introducing an on-site information point at the market would help to improve the overall level of customer service. It is proposed that this should act as the main base of the Senior Market Operative, increasing their visibility and presence, thus enabling all customer enquiries to be immediately addressed and resolved efficiently. The Group does not feel that it is sufficiently clear to whom general customer enquiries on the market should be addressed at present. It is thought that this can be particularly problematic for new or occasional customers who are unfamiliar with market staff. The members of the review are aware that this facility previously existed.

Given the potential financial implications involved, it is suggested that the market working group is tasked with exploring the matter further to establish whether this can be realistically introduced in the market.

Recommendation 6	The market working group considers the feasibility of market customers being provided with an opportunity to pay the traders for goods through their mobile phone and debit and credit card payment facilities
Financial Implications	Subject further to the work and findings of the market working group
Resource Implications	Subject further to the work and findings of the market working group
Legal Implications	There are no legal implications

As the review was being undertaken, a new scheme was unveiled that would enable shoppers in Redditch town centre to redeem coupons and vouchers through a free mobile phone application at the point of sale. The customer would simply be required to tap their phone on a contactless device with simply plug and play installation to redeem their coupon. There would be no need for expensive software upgrades or purchases.

Members believe that Redditch Market can take advantage of the increasing popularity of mobile payments for consumers by looking to utilise this facility. It is thought that this could be effective in attracting more young people to the market, especially when many students from nearby schools and colleges already pass through and around the market on a daily basis, as it is felt that they are arguably more likely to take advantage of this facility.

Members also propose that the market should possess a portable credit and debit card payment facility which would offer customers more options for purchasing their goods from the individual traders. This was picked up by the Group following conversations with market customers. Given the potential financial implications involved, it is recommended that the market working group look at this issue in greater depth.

Recommendation 7	Each trader is required to display a returns policy which should be clearly advertised
Financial Implications	Any implications are expected to be met within existing budgets
Resource Implications	Any implications are expected to be met by existing staff resource
Legal Implications	There are no legal implications

During a visit to Redditch Market as part of their review, Members noticed that many if indeed any of the stalls did not appear to display notice of a returns policy for their goods. Concern was raised that this could be deterring customers from purchasing items on the market if they were not entirely confident that they would be able to return an item if it proved to be faulty or unsuitable.

The Group therefore proposes that each trader should be required to clearly display a returns policy on their stall to ensure that market customers have confidence that they have they have the same rights as in any high street shop and reassure them that they can shop with greater confidence at the market.

Chapter 3 – Engaging with the Local Community

Recommendation 8	The working group facilitates further opportunities for local people, especially students and the unemployed, to obtain business experience through operating stalls in the market place at no charge on a short-term basis, to include the introduction of a new mentoring scheme to offer help and assistance to new traders
Financial Implications	Subject further to the work and findings of the market working group
Resource Implications	Subject further to the work and findings of the market working group
Legal Implications	There are no legal implications

Members feel that the market should be a place where community entrepreneurship is strongly encouraged. During the review, they were referred to examples in other towns in which the local market has made a considerable contribution to the wider regeneration of an area.

For example, the Acton Town Centre Market Regeneration Project in West London gave local people the unique opportunity to start up new businesses as market traders by providing fifty stalls in the town centre. The project also offered free market trading courses to help those new to market trading gain experience and confidence in successfully running a stall. The project has been very effective in providing self-employment opportunities for unemployed individuals and in attracting more visitors to a reinvigorated town centre.

The Group was also referred to similar examples that had been introduced locally, most notably at Nuneaton Market, whereby the local council worked with *Job Centre Plus* and *Princes Trust* to give young people the opportunity to gain experience in the market place and improve their business skills. This in turn helped to develop their self-confidence and employability. The Council did not charge any of the young people or relevant organisations for rent.

The Group recommends that introducing a similar initiative in Redditch would provide a real helping hand to local students and the unemployed who are in urgent need of credible work experience. In turn this could provide a boost the town centre through increased footfall due to the extra stalls. The short term cost to the Council through offering heavily discounted or zero rent on a short term basis would be significantly outweighed by the potential to skill up the local workforce and through increased footfall and custom to the market and town centre in general.

The Group asserts that this could be a very effective way in which to bring through the next generation of traders into Redditch Market. It is imperative that more young people are encouraged to become traders to help ensure that the market can remain viable for the future.

Recommendation 9	The working group facilitates further opportunities for local businesses to showcase their goods and services on market stalls
Financial Implications	Subject further to the work and findings of the market working group
Resource Implications	Subject further to the work and findings of the market working group
Legal Implications	There are no legal implications

Related to the previous recommendation, Members were impressed that a number of stalls at other markets were being used effectively as shop windows for local businesses. For a low cost, the stalls were used by local companies to showcase their goods. The traders reported that renting a market stall, even for a short period, was a very effective technique in terms of promoting their business to local shoppers, and in turn generating extra business through increased awareness.

Although there were a few examples of this type of selling at the Redditch Market, the Group feels that there is considerable potential to roll this out at a much wider level through increased promotion and publicity, to the benefit of the town centre and local businesses.

Recommendation 10	The working group facilitates the allocation of free stalls on a rotating basis to local people to promote forthcoming community events and the work of local charities, subject to stall availability
Financial Implications	Subject further to the work and findings of the market working group
Resource Implications	Subject further to the work and findings of the market working group
Legal Implications	There are no legal implications

The Group also recommends that, as a fundamental part of the local community, the market should be used as a platform to promote community events and the work of local charitable organisations by helping to generate greater awareness about their particular cause.

For example, representatives from a local wildlife sanctuary are regularly invited to appear at Nuneaton Market. This has had a very positive impact in terms of

raising local awareness and support for the sanctuary and in reinforcing the sense that the market is very family friendly through the popular appearance of a few of the animals.

Members therefore propose that similar opportunities should also be provided on a regular basis in Redditch to help raise awareness and support for local charities. This can help to further develop a real sense of community spirit within the town, and reinforce the idea that Redditch is a generous town that supports those that help others. The operation of this at other markets across the country would enable Redditch to learn from best practice.



Animals from Nuneaton & Warwickshire Wildlife Sanctuary at Nuneaton Market, Wednesday 5th September 2012

Chapter 4 – Areas for further investigation

Recommendation 11	The market working group explores the possibility of realigning and extending the layout of the market past its current location
Financial Implications	Subject further to the work and findings of the market working group
Resource Implications	Subject further to the work and findings of the market working group
Legal Implications	There are no legal implications

During the review, the Group received contrasting feedback from traders and members of the public in terms what constituted most appropriate layout for the market. This is reflected in the responses received to the market survey. Whilst some suggested that the layout of the market should remain compacted to help concentrate footfall in a smaller area, others felt that market should be extended as more stalls were needed. The Group did not therefore receive a clear steer on this issue. Given the time constraints involved with the review, the Group was unable to explore this matter sufficiently to reach a clear conclusion.

It is therefore felt that further work should be undertaken by the market working group into this important issue to establish the suitability of realigning and extended the layout of the market past its current location past Evesham Walk to Church Green West, or further down Alcester Street in a southern direction.

Recommendation 12	The market working group explores the feasibility of introducing a covered food court area
Financial Implications	Subject further to the work and findings of the market working group
Resource Implications	Subject further to the work and findings of the market working group
Legal Implications	There are no legal implications

Members feel that the introduction of a covered food court area could be a very useful addition to the market both in terms of providing shelter for its customers and in becoming a community space in the centre of the market which would provide further encouragement for people to visit.

During their investigations, Members noted that covered food court areas had been used successfully at other markets as a public space whereby shoppers could relax. The Group feels that, should food markets become a regular feature of the market as proposed within this report, customers will expect sufficient provision of public seating where they can enjoy their food. It is therefore

recommended that the market working group further explores the possibility of introducing this amenity to Redditch and to consider the financial implications involved.

Recommendation 13	The market working group explores the suitability of the design of the current market stalls and to consider whether the introduction of alternative stalls would improve the overall visual appearance of the stalls
Financial Implications	Subject further to the work and findings of the market working group
Resource Implications	Subject further to the work and findings of the market working group
Legal Implications	There are no legal implications

During their site visits to other markets, Members were impressed with the visual appearance of the stalls that were utilised. In particular, it was felt that colour schemes helped to make the markets more aesthetically appealing compared to the existing green and white colour scheme in Redditch. The market could therefore be made more colourful to help make it more attractive to potential customers.

Members were especially impressed with the pop-up stalls that were used in other markets. Indeed, many of the traders spoken to were very supportive of these stalls due to the ease in which they could be erected and dismantled. Importantly, the pop-up stalls can be removed when the market is not open which increases public space in the town centre. The pop-up stalls also appeared to provide greater cover for customers in inclement weather.

It is felt that the use of pop-up stalls could provide the Senior Market Operative with far greater flexibility in shaping the layout of the market for any given day, depending on the number of stall holders that would have registered.

In contrast, the Group feels that a significant disadvantage of Redditch Market's continued use of permanent stalls is the negative image it can create for the market during periods of poor weather and when trade is significantly down. It is felt that the appearance of empty permanent stalls in any market area is unsightly and provides a poor reflection of the town centre.

The Group therefore proposes that this is another area that can be looked at in greater detail by the market working group. Existing market traders should be consulted for their views before any changes are introduced. The working group could also have a close look at the cost implications of sourcing pop-up stands.

Recommendation 14	The market working group ensures that any review of signage in the town centre includes adequate reference to the market
Financial Implications	Subject further to the work and findings of the market working group
Resource Implications	Subject further to the work and findings of the market working group
Legal Implications	There are no legal implications

The Group is aware that work is already being undertaken to address signage in the town centre. Financed through the Local Sustainable Transport Fund, the *Choose How You Move* initiative in Redditch has funded a project into way-finding in the town centre. The work will involve systematically surveying the Borough's town centre and photographically recording all that is currently available to help pedestrians form a way-finding point of view. As part of this, the project is expected to incorporate a recommendation on establishing a network of information points in the town centre.

The Group believes that signage for the market should be addressed as part of this project, and suggests that the market working group should take a lead in providing the market's perspective. Forty per cent of respondents to the public consultation did not consider that the market is currently well signposted.

Recommendation 15	The market working group works with local bus operators to help further promote the market
Financial Implications	Subject further to the work and findings of the market working group
Resource Implications	Subject further to the work and findings of the market working group
Legal Implications	There are no legal implications

The Group believes that there is real potential to work with local bus operators to promote and publicise the market at minimal cost. Given the close proximity of certain bus stops in the town centre to the market, this helps to draw in potential customers into its near vicinity. With this in mind, the Group suggests that the market working group should liaise with local bus operators to explore the possibility of making clear references to the market, including rebranding some services as 'market buses'. It could also involve making marketing material available on these buses to inform passengers about events that were taking place and offers that were available. The Group feels that this represents another opportunity to increase footfall levels in and around the market.

Chapter 5 – Other

Recommendation 16	The Council should engage with the Public Fundraising Regulatory Association with a view to reaching an agreement to regulate the working days and areas of charity street fundraisers in Redditch Town Centre
Financial Implications	Any implications are expected to be met within existing budgets
Resource Implications	Any implications are expected to be met by existing staff resource
Legal Implications	It is proposed that that an agreement is reached between Redditch Borough Council and the Public Fundraising Regulatory Association that would establish guidelines for the voluntary regulation of charitable street fundraisers.

One of the major concerns raised by market traders who had been consulted by the Group regarded the operation of charity street fundraisers, often termed 'chuggers', in the very near vicinity of the market. Members heard that the presence of the fundraisers in Alcester Street and Market Place was often having a detrimental impact on trade as this was clearly deterring potential shoppers from entering the market area in the knowledge that they would likely be approached by street fundraisers. Furthermore, the traders reported that, on a number of occasions, the fundraisers had encroached upon the market trading area that was supposedly off-limits. Altogether, this was having a damaging impact on trade, especially as the adjacent Kingfisher Shopping Centre has already imposed a ban on charity fundraisers, offering another incentive for would be shoppers to head elsewhere from the market.

More than fifty local authorities across the country have already developed agreements with the Public Fundraising Regulatory Association which restricts the operation of street fundraisers to specific days and/or areas. Members acknowledge that street fundraising is a crucial method for many charities in raising money for very worthwhile causes. The Group does not therefore propose that a bylaw, which would require the approval of the Secretary of State, is developed that would ban street fundraisers from operating in the town centre altogether. However, they feel that a fairer balance can and should be reached that would preserve the various charities ability to raise donations in Redditch town centre yet not at the expense of market trade.

Given that one of the Group's main recommendations is to reduce the number of general retail market operating days to no more than three days a week, the Members feel that this provides sufficient scope for the street fundraisers to operate in the town centre yet outside of the market's trading days. Members therefore propose that the Council replicates the action of many local authorities

elsewhere in establishing an agreement with the Public Fundraising Regulatory Association that would restrict street fundraisers from operating in the town centre during market days. This would reassure members of the public that they can freely enter the market area without fear that they might be stopped and asked for their bank details, likely increasing footfall and potential trade for the market as a consequence.

Recommendation 17	Redditch Borough Council should join the National Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA) and participate in the <i>Love Your Local Market 2013</i> event to publicise the changes and new opportunities that would have been introduced at the market
Financial Implications	Annual subscription for district councils to the National Association of British Market Authorities is £636+VAT.
Resource Implications	Any implications are expected to be met by existing staff resource
Legal Implications	There are no legal implications

During the course of their investigations, Members were referred to the potential benefits of Redditch Market joining the National Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA). During a site visit to another market, the Group was informed that the particular market had obtained excellent value for money for its membership. A few of the benefits involved: a free half day consultation and safety check with a leading market expert; excellent networking opportunities; and the opportunity to learn from best practice from other markets across the country.

The Group subsequently contacted a number of other district councils who were already NABMA members, who provided the following separate responses regarding the benefits of their membership:

- "Outstanding value for what opportunity/advice they are able to provide."
- "Being a NABMA member enables you to explore new initiatives, seek advice, and even tap into Government thinking."
- "NABMA membership has been an excellent source of advice and support....if I was not a member of NABMA I would have faced the problem of managing a market isolation from common industry practice."
- "Yes we find NABMA membership important as the organization is very active in promoting market interests at all levels including Government which is vital to the future of market in the UK."

It is therefore felt that Redditch Market could also obtain sufficient value for money through an annual subscription of £636+VAT per annum given the many benefits it could obtain. Members were informed that North Worcestershire

Economic Development and Regeneration possesses sufficient finance within its budgets to fund this membership.

The Group also consulted other markets about the effectiveness of *Love Your Local Market 2012*, an event facilitated by the NABMA and other market associations to celebrate markets of all types across the country during the summer. The inaugural event was one of retail expert Mary Portas' many recommendations endorsed by Government to revitalise the high street. While the majority of the participating Councils contacted by the Group reported that the impact of the campaign was limited, almost all attributed this to a lack of resources to take full advantage of the event. However, the Group feels that the 2013 event will provide an ideal opportunity for the market to utilise the publicity around markets that is generated at the national level, and to launch many of their proposed new initiatives at the height of the market season during the summer. It would also represent an ideal opportunity to work with the local media to refer potential shoppers to the fresh changes, encouraging them to shop at the market once again and also to promote the opportunities involved with stall trading to local people.

CONCLUSION

Despite very challenging economic circumstances and changes in consumerism, examples across the country confirm that markets can still be very successful and can continue to play a vital contribution in creating lively and vibrant town centres and provide a real boost to local economies. Furthermore, markets can be a place to upskill the local workforce, improve employability, and provide much needed support to many worthwhile causes.

The Group firmly believes that Redditch Market can enjoy a prosperous future if the recommendations of this report are approved, and suggest that the implementation of these proposals will not only help the market to respond effectively to current challenges, but will also put the market on a sure footing in the long term to the benefit of the local community. In particular, the Group is confident that the creation of a new strategy for the market can provide a clear framework for its future success, and that, in establishing a core working group, this framework can be effectively implemented. The working group will also ensure that real leadership is provided by bringing key stakeholders together to address common concerns on a regular basis.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Group would like to express its gratitude to all those who took the time to provide information and advice during the course of the review, and to everyone who participated in the public consultation. The Group would especially like to thank those listed below for taking the time to attend meetings of the review:

- Councillor John Haynes, Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council
- Allan Ottey, Town Centres Manager, Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council
- Anne Startin, Town Centres Support Officer, Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council
- Henry Wormington, Coordinator, Worcestershire Farmers Market Group
- Ken Williams, General Manager, Kingfisher Shopping Centre
- Martin Macwhinnie, Regional Operations Manager, Regional and General
- Rosemary Sidaway, Director, Redditch Town Centre Partnership
- Lyndsey Berry, Town Centre Coordinator, Redditch Town Centre Partnership
- Steve Singleton, Economic Development Manager, North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration
- Roger Munn, Senior Market Operative, North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration
- Anne Marie Darroch, Communications Manager, Redditch Borough Council

Scrutiny Proposal Form

(This form should be completed by sponsoring Member(s), Officers and / or members of the public when proposing an item for Scrutiny).

Note: The matters detailed below have not yet received any detailed consideration. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee reserves the right to reject suggestions for scrutiny that fall outside the Borough Council's remit.

Proposer's name and designation	Councillor Brenda Quinney	Date of referral	18/10/11
Proposed topic title	Redditch Market Task Group		
Link to national, regional and local priorities and targets	Redditch Borough Council objectives – Enterprising Communities and Well Managed Organisation.		
Background to the issue	<p>The market in Redditch is a subject of particular interest to many councillors. The market is a prominent feature in the town centre and has the potential to make an important contribution to the local economy. However, I am concerned that like other markets across the country footfall within the market has fallen in recent years. I feel that improvements could be made to the operation of the market in order to attract more custom and ensure that it is a market suitable for the twenty-first century.</p> <p>I understand that the Council and partner organisations have recognised that there is a need to address problems with the market. In particular, the North Worcestershire Economic Development Unit is investigating this issue. Any review of the Redditch Market would need to take into account the Unit's proposals for the future of the market. However, I believe that a scrutiny exercise could help the Unit through a detailed review of Redditch Market.</p> <p>At the beginning of the year I was involved in the Promoting Redditch Task and Finish Review. As part of this review Members undertook a partial assessment</p>		

	<p>of Redditch Market. One of the group's final recommendations, which was approved by the Executive Committee, was that Redditch market should be developed and should provide opportunities for young entrepreneurs.</p> <p>The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has not yet monitored action taken in response to this recommendation. I would, therefore, suggest that a useful starting point for this review would be to assess what action, if any has been taken to date in response to the Task and Finish Group's proposals.</p>
<p>Key Objectives Please keep to SMART objectives (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To assess the current operational and management arrangements for Redditch market: This should involve: interviewing relevant Council Officers involved in managing the market. 2) To investigate the North Worcestershire Economic Development Unit's proposals for Redditch Market. This could involve: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) interviewing a representative from the North Worcestershire Economic Development Unit; and b) analysing relevant sections of the Redditch Town Centre Strategy. 3) To scrutinise the Council's strategy for Redditch Market. 4) To identify any existing problems with Redditch Market. 5) To investigate the appropriate geographical location for the market in Redditch. 6) To assess operational arrangements in place at successful markets located throughout other towns and lessons that could be learned in Redditch. This could involve: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) reviewing the content of scrutiny reports produced by other local authorities about their markets; and

	<p>b) interviewing representatives from other local authorities.</p> <p>7) To review ways to promote Redditch Market to potential market stall holders.</p> <p>8) To identify the financial implications of any actions proposed by the Task Group.</p> <p>(Throughout the review the Task Group would be expected to consult with market traders).</p>
<p>How long do you think is needed to complete this exercise? (Where possible please estimate the number of weeks, months and meetings required)</p>	<p>I am aware that there is currently a Council consultation regarding a proposed new Street Trading Policy for Redditch. The terms and conditions of this policy may have implications for the future operation of Redditch Market. Therefore, I do not believe that this review should be launched until after the consultation has finished on 30th November.</p> <p>I believe that this review could be completed fairly quickly. However, I am aware that I am proposing a number of objectives. In addition, the timing of the review would coincide with busy periods during the year when access to Members and Officers could prove difficult, particularly during Christmas and the local Council elections. Therefore I am suggesting that the review should take eight months and aim to be completed by July 2012.</p>

Please return this form to: Jess Bayley, Overview and Scrutiny Support Officer, Redditch Borough Council, Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, B98 8AH
Email: jess.bayley@redditchbc.gov.uk

KEY BACKGROUND PAPERS

- City Living Commission Report: The Value of City Markets, Stoke City Council (2005)
- Full collated list of responses to the market survey
- Lockmeadow Market Review, Maidstone Borough Council (2008)
- London's Street Markets – Update Report, London Assembly (2009)
- Redditch 'Open Air' Market – Market Regulations (2012/13), Redditch Borough Council
- Review of Market Provision in Hackney, Hackney Council (2006)
- Scrutiny Review of the Future of the Markets, Pendle Borough Council (2010)
- The Traveller Stalls, Barry Evans (2010)
- Widnes Market – An example of a market that has turned its fortunes around, from www.localmarkets.org.uk
- Working Paper 1 – Redditch Open-Air Market Mapping and Gapping Study, Rockford Consulting (2011)

WEBSITES

www.nabma.com

www.loveyourlocalmarket.org.uk

Redditch Market
Councillors Review

A group of Councillors from Redditch Borough Council are undertaking an investigation of the Redditch Market and are asking for feedback from local residents about what can be done to improve it. The Councillors would therefore be very interested to receive your own views which to inform the review which is due to be completed in February 2013.

1) Do you currently visit the market? (If yes, why? If no, why not?)

2) What is your overall impression of the market?

3) What do you think of the selection of stalls at the market?

4) Do you consider the market to be well sign posted? (Please circle one answer only)

Yes No

5) Do you have any ideas for how the market could be improved?

6) What would encourage you to shop more at the market?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

The Councillors involved in this review do not have any decision making powers. However, based on the evidence they gather during this review they can make recommendations to local decision makers.

Return Address: Please return completed copies of this questionnaire by Wednesday 9th January 2013 to:

Michael Craggs, Democratic Services Officer,
Redditch Borough Council, Redditch Town Hall,
Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, B98 8AH.
Email: michael.craggs@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
Fax: (01527) 65216



Responses to the survey

1. Do you visit the market? (if yes/no then why/why not?)

'Yes' – 37 responses 'No' – 18 responses

Selected 'Yes' responses include:

- I use the fruit and veg stall and the meat man that's about it. I think with the phone, pound shops and Primark in town people shop there rather than going outside which is a shame I am not sure that the market traders and compete with these shops on cost and quality.
- So things are cheaper than the shops I can only get certain things on the market
- But not very often - easier to buy foodstuffs in supermarket than on market. Would probably visit more often if there were more 'niche' type goods for sale such as specialist delicatessen / fishmongers etc

Selected 'No' responses include:

- There is nothing in the market that ever appeals to me. Everything on the market stalls can be purchased in the Kingfisher Shopping Centre.
- The items sold on the market are available in the shops within the town centre at the same prices, and there is nothing different on the market to the shops.

2. What is your overall impression of the market?

Selected responses include:

- The stalls I bought from were fine. I wouldn't buy clothes or have a need for anything else. I buy from people and if the people aren't friendly I wouldn't return. Also I am so use to paying by debit card, it can be difficult sometimes to make sure I keep within the small amount of money I carry with me.
- Empty, unloved, with generally no useful, niche or quirky stalls. Fridays are a little better with the fish stall, generally quite poor.
- I don't buy much from the market, and I don't visit weekly/often. I feel that there isn't the kind of selection of stalls to suit me. Generally I'm disappointed with the Redditch market, and possibly the town centre more generally. I find it easy to not have a reason to visit Redditch market / Redditch town centre, unless it's to go to the Library. The Kingfisher Centre isn't very inspiring. I don't believe in over-consumption. I find the Market easy to find because I have grown up in Redditch. It has a fairly central location and needs to use that to its advantage. Generally people are friendly.

3. What do you think of the selection of stalls at the market?

Selected responses include:

- Could do with more variety.
- Fridays has a better selection of stalls but some days very poor.

- Ok, but as above (too many stalls selling the same kind of goods needs more interest and variety of goods for sale) / different kind of stalls
- I do not think there is much of a selection.
- Varies from day to day but could generally be better

4. Do you consider the market to be well signposted?

Yes - 32 No – 22

5. Do you have any ideas for how the market could be improved?

Selected responses include:

- Better variety of stalls, there is often a special market selling some different merchandise but I'm sure there must be people willing to do a regular visit to the normal market selling something different. Some entertainment or some music
- Stalls that sold farmers' market style produce would be more appealing than the current offer at the market.
- Better directions and wider variety of stalls
- Need more specialist days such as Farmer's Markets; themed days etc.
- Increase stalls. Monitor quality of stalls. Local produce
- I think the market should be more compact, undercover and have more variety.
- Loyalty schemes. Local currency. Monthly Farmers' Markets. More fresh food vendors.
- Pop-up stalls to help young entrepreneurs have some space. Encourage a food co-operative to set-up with a stall. Allow community groups & charities to have reduced stall rents. Generally make some noise about it, create more of a culture and buzz for Redditch market. Give people a reason to go there. Democratise some of the public consultations onto a stall - Comment on the Local plan at the Market! Engage people. Make it fun. I used to remember the market being excellent - out the back of Woolies! See what other market towns centres do.

6. What would encourage you to shop at the market more often?

Selected responses include:

- Sorry to say very little. I can get all I need in one shop and pay more conveniently with a card at a supermarket. Times have moved on and goods aren't any cheaper on a market and certainly not enough to make a special trip for a couple of items. Maybe if I knew I was supporting someone that lived locally to make a living from a sustainability point of view, but this would only be relevant if I continued to work in the Town Centre. But for me with a young family it has to be convenience.
- Stalls that sold farmers' market style produce would be more appealing than the current offer at the market. I do question, however, whether a market is really needed, at least in the town centre, any longer. The Kingfisher Shopping Centre provides everything that shoppers need in town apart from restaurants. A market might attract more customers in one of the district centres, where the competition is more limited. However, as the footfall in the district centres is also falling that seems unlikely.
- Fix all the finger posts in and around the Town Centre - many have arms pointing in wrong directions.