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## **City Development and Economic Development Scrutiny Committee**

**29<sup>th</sup> September 2009**

Report of the Director of City Strategy

### **Newgate Market – Focus Report**

#### **Summary**

1. This report updates the information given verbally to the Scrutiny Committee on 15 July and provides an overview of trading conditions at Newgate Market as a result of the current economic climate. The responses to the challenges currently being experienced are detailed below.

#### **Background**

2. National retailing trends and customer expectations have changed markedly in the last few years. This has had a marked effect on outdoor markets and has resulted in a downturn of trader takings, stall occupancy and ultimately rental income to local authorities.
3. Whilst Newgate Market has fared reasonably well compared with many open markets in the region, there is still concern with regard to any further decline in trade. Managers have introduced a range of innovative measures to mitigate the effects of these changing shopping patterns. These initiatives have been designed both to ease the trader's economic circumstances and to raise the market's profile.
4. Earlier this year a new fees & charges structure was introduced based on supply and demand and in several cases stall fees were actually reduced. The layout was revised and some stalls withdrawn to open up new, more inviting aisles. In addition new 'building out' guidelines were introduced .
5. New, generic backdrop vinyl 'nameboards' were made available (at a subsidised cost) to Newgate traders for the market to look more uniform and professional – each having their own business name printed to a standard design.
6. A new glossy brochure promoting the market was designed and printed and delivered to every household in York as well as V.I.C.'s, the library etc and given out during the specialist and event markets in Parliament Street. The brochure was produced at a nil cost to the department and funded by advertising within it.

7. A local commercial radio company (Minster FM) broadcast live 'roadshows' from Newgate in the spring to promote the market.
8. A "Love your Local Market" month was trialled in the spring with all stall fees reduced to encourage stall take-up, with the traders, in return, offering reduced goods in a month-long campaign to help both fill the stalls and win-back shoppers.
9. A "Markets on the Move" roadshow took a cross section of traders out to places like Monks Cross and Designer Outlet to promote market shopping to customers who may otherwise just patronise out of town retail parks. Traders, shoppers and respective outlet managers welcomed the travelling mini-market and have 'booked' them for further dates (an income is received for this initiative too).
10. Local schools have been visited by market officers and traders promoting/educating on running a small business like market trading.
11. A new, more informative *Trader Times* newsletter to keep traders informed of events and ideas relevant to the market.
12. Reduced parking fees in dedicated areas for traders' vehicles.
13. Following invite, Newgate Market representatives now attend the quarterly *Retailers Forum*.
14. The Market should play a fundamental part in the YCCAAP (*York City Centre Area Action Plan*) which is expected to determine both its future look and location and input is being made as the *Action Plan* evolves.

## **Consultation**

15. Newgate Market traders were consulted on many of the initiatives above and their views / suggestions incorporated.

## **Options**

- 16 York's open market is seen as a key component of city centre retailing – providing an alternative offer to city centre shopping, plus numerous employment opportunities. The CCAAP currently underway provides a platform to debate the market's future and how it might look and operate in the future, enabling it to meet revised expectations and new economic challenges. In the meantime new initiatives will be introduced to revitalise existing arrangements as appropriate. Already in the current financial year, as a result of the actions already taken, financial uplift is apparent in the rental tolls being taken. Certainly though Newgate will benefit in the near future through association with the Food & Drink Festival and later as the Christmas celebrations unfold.

## Implications

17. Financial, HR, equalities, legal and crime and disorder implications are covered through the council's budgeting and service planning processes. There are no direct IT implications.

## Risk Management

18. Risk management processes cover all aspects of the above and are set out in the Economic Development and Partnerships service plan.

## Recommendations

19. Scrutiny Committee's views on the above would be welcome.

## Contact Details

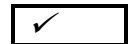
**Author:**

Paul Barrett  
City Centre Manager  
City Strategy (EDU&P)  
552272.

Bryn Jones  
Head of EDU  
City Strategy  
554418.

**Chief Officer Responsible for the report:**

Roger Ranson  
Assistant Director Economic Development &  
Partnerships

**Report Approved****Date** 11.09.2009**Specialist Implications Officer(s)** None**Wards Affected:****All**

For further information please contact the author of the report

**Background Papers:** None**Annexes:** None