

**Victorian Market Stakeholders Group Meeting**

Unit 15, Victorian Market

Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2019 at 5.30pm

**Present:** Cllr Isabelle MacKenzie (**IM**); Cllr Graham Ross (**GR**); Jo Murray (**JM**), Victorian Market Manager; David Haas (**DH**) Inverness City Area Manager – Highland Council; John Ewart (**JE**) The Milk Bar, Victorian Market; Willie Morrison (**WM**) William Morrison Jewellers, Market Arcade, Victorian Market; Malcolm Fraser (**MF**), Duncan Fraser Butchers, Queensgate Arcade, Victorian Market; Pat Bloczynski (**PB**), Aeternum – Market Hall, Victorian Market, David Richardson (**DR**), Federation of Small Businesses; Jane Cuthbert (**JC**), MCM Investments, Queensgate; Mike Smith (**MS**), Inverness BID; Clare Armstrong (**CA**), Inverness Chamber; Stewart Nicol (**SN**), Inverness Chamber; Colin Craig (**CC**), Oil and Vinegar, Union Street; Hilary Tolmie (**HT**), Business Support – Highland Council

**Apologies:** Cllr Bet McAllister (**BM**); Cllr Janet Campbell (**CJC**); Jackie Cuddy (**JCE**), Eastgate Centre

**Cllr Isabelle MacKenzie in the Chair**

No.	Item	ACTIONS	Action
		After introductions <b>JM</b> welcomed everyone then informed the Stakeholders of the sad news that Linda Chisholm from Maclean’s Jewellers had passed away. Linda had been in the Market for at least two decades and will be missed by all those who knew and worked with her. Funeral details will be circulated in due course.	
1.	<b>Actions from Previous Minutes</b>	No Actions from previous minutes. <b>JM</b> asked everyone to note that there was a small misunderstanding that offended one of the retailers in the previous minutes. It was agreed that any future comments made on behalf of a retailer not present will be made with their knowledge and agreement.	
1.	<b>CIAC Decision</b>	Stakeholder Group has been up and running for several years and predates the Action Plan and without the Stakeholder Group there would be no Action Plan. <b>DH</b> went on to reassure the Stakeholders that the work of the Group is very much valued and there will opportunities in the future to be more involved.  The CIAC decision was not a negative decision they underlined their support for the Market which will play its part in the asset portfolio of the Inverness Common Good Fund. However it needs to produce a return for the Fund. The message from the meeting was that Members would be prepared to invest based on a solid business plan being	

		<p>presented. They did not feel that the outline business plan gave enough information to allow them to allocate funds to the project. They have asked for a strong business plan which will show a return on their investment and for the City. It was felt that the press reporting was slightly misleading – it was not a negative decision.</p> <p><b>GR</b> commented that there was a strong intention to support but Members wanted to scrutinise the project and the current position of the ICGF further before committing the funds.</p> <p><b>DH</b> confirmed that there is £25k in the budget to develop the project and build the Business Case. <b>WM</b> asked what will happen if the Members reject the proposal? <b>DH</b> reiterated the comments made by <b>GR</b> that there was a very strong indication by Members that if the Business Case is strong then the CIAC would receive it very positively. The committee meeting is on the 21<sup>st</sup> November and the Business Plan will need to be in place by the 9<sup>th</sup> November. <b>MS</b> advised that collectively we need to be positive and supportive.</p> <p><b>JE</b> asked if other Members could be invited to join the Group and engage with the Stakeholders. <b>DH</b> confirmed that Members will be briefed prior to the CIAC in November. There will be a very clear process going forward.</p>	
2.	<b>Actions going Forward</b>	<p>There has been a lot of discussion since the August CIAC and the Stakeholder Group are crucial to the preparation of the Business Plan. A Timeline has been prepared with the 9<sup>th</sup> November as the deadline. The following have been scheduled in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tonight’s Stakeholders Meeting</li> <li>• Market Hall Businesses Meeting on Thursday 12 September – where the Market Hall Businesses will be updated on the CIAC decision but there is no further information to update them on at this point. They will be given the opportunity to voice any concerns and worries and ask any questions.</li> <li>• <b>IM/DH/JM</b> meeting weekly.</li> <li>• <b>JM</b> to meet next week with Tristram who is developing the new brand for the Market and hopefully at the next Stakeholder meeting the new designs for the new Market identity will be presented. This will be included in the Business Plan and presented to Members at the CIAC in November.</li> <li>• Two workshops are being arranged: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 2<sup>nd</sup> October – specific group with a technical background</li> </ol> </li> </ul>	

2. 3<sup>rd</sup> October – Stakeholders Workshop to be held in the evening

- A briefing for the Provost
- A Members Briefing to take place before the report is issued.
- Report to be finalised by 9 November
- City of Inverness Area Committee 21 November

**CC** questioned if representation from the Stakeholder Group could be present at these Briefings. **GR** said Members would welcome this. **DR** stated that the towns that succeed are towns that have people from the business community who can lead.

A specialist, Charlie Lawrence from Graham & Sibbald, who has a background in retail, has been appointed to help write the Business Plan. Graham & Sibbald produced a very detailed Business Plan in 2016 but the Members decided to look at a different option for the Market.

**SN** agreed to write a piece in his Business Community column in the Inverness Courier supporting the development. He also suggested that if other members of the Business Community could also support the development it would be helpful.

**JM** will circulate the timeline with the Stakeholders

**JM** has prepared a Scoping Document which contains the following sections. These are for discussion and can be added to.

- Introduction (**DH**)
  - Common Good Fund Asset.
- Vision (**Kevin Murray**)
  - Background
  - Positioning of the Victorian Market within the UK
  - The Victorian Market's place within the City of Inverness
  - Comparable Markets.
- Proposals
  - Concept design and outline costs

- **Business Case (Charlie Lawrence)**
  - Background (Work with Stakeholders and Traders)
  - New Corporate Identity and marketing Plan
  - Commercial Opportunity
  - Strategic Influence
  - Wellbeing of citizens
  - Links to Castle/Town House/Academy Street/Station developments
  - Tie in with City Strategy
  - ICGF strategy
  - Third Party Funding
  - What will it mean for current businesses
  - UHI Support
  - Business opinion
  - Customer & Visitor experience
  - Future potential
  - Benefits
  - Outcome
- **Corporate Identity**
  - New branding
- **Economic Impact Report (Charlie Lawrence)**
  - Current Status
  - 5/10/15 year forecasting and footfall data.
  - Position of retail
  - Review of leases
  - Rent increases
  - Vacancy rates
  - Footfall data
- **Conclusion (Charlie Lawrence)**

**DH** explained that Members are looking at a five year plan for the Inverness Common Good Fund and included in that plan is the Victorian Market development. **JM** also advised that an application has been submitted to the Town Centre Fund and HIE have

		<p>been approached for possible funding for some elements of the project. Although the HIE do not normally support retail there are parts of the project they maybe able to help as the Victorian Market is an historic Building.</p> <p>A commitment has been given by the UHI to support new food and beverage tenants and can also help with apprentice packages.</p> <p>There has been a clear message from the Members that they want to see a return on the investment in Market and want to see vibrant businesses who have a future in Market. There should be a standard that we want to achieve and if a business wants to stay they need to adhere to this. This message will be made very clear to the businesses on Thursday. We cannot afford to carry those businesses who are not on board with the proposals.</p> <p><b>PB</b> commented that many of the businesses are scared, nervous and very worried about the future and the uncertainty of what will happen. <b>JM</b> is trying to encourage them to speak about their concerns but there are some who have totally disengaged themselves. Increased communication with the businesses has been put in place.</p> <p><b>JE</b> feels the uncertainty should be removed as soon as practically possible and the businesses should know if they are part of the plan going forward or not.</p> <p><b>JC</b> suggested that new leases with modern terms should be included in the Business Plan. <b>JM</b> confirmed that this was part of the plan.</p> <p><b>PB</b> advised that many of the Businesses will be asking who will make the decision on which business has a future within the Market and those that do not. It was confirmed that parameters will be set and these will help to make the decision. The following Addendum was added to the Minutes <i>Addendum – for the avoidance of doubt, the Business Plan will determine the recommended approach to Tenancy Mix. Once approved by the City of Inverness Area Committee, this approach will become Policy which will be automatically applied with the existing Tenancy Framework being adapted accordingly'</i></p> <p><b>JM</b> will circulate the scoping document she has prepared and asked Stakeholders for their comments and if there was anything they wished to add to the document.</p>	
3.	Role of the	<b>DH</b> thanked those Stakeholders who are Market representatives. The role they play on	

	<p><b>Trader Reps - Communication</b></p>	<p>the Stakeholder Group is valued. It is recognised that it is not an easy job and may get harder with all the challenges ahead.</p> <p><b>JM</b> feels a lot of the problems recently have been due to poor, over or misread communication. We have to be mindful of how sensitive the Businesses are feeling and be there to support them especially those who may relocate out of the Market.</p> <p><b>JE</b> is advising Market Businesses to attend Trader Meetings and to engage with <b>JM</b> she does and will listen. Her door is always open.</p> <p><b>PB</b> asked if at the meeting on Thursday it can be emphasised to the Market Businesses how essential the need for the Redesign is. <b>JM</b> confirmed that this had been made clear but there is a lot of denial within the market but it will be explained clearly again. <b>PB</b> also asked if it could be noted that the majority of the Retailers at the last meeting wanted the development to happen in one go rather than be phased.</p> <p><b>MF</b> asked about if there was further information on where the businesses will be relocated. <b>JM</b> confirmed that this was being worked on and several properties had been identified within the City Centre.</p> <p>The work will not now start just after Christmas and the Businesses will be told this on Thursday.</p> <p>Stakeholders need to divorce themselves from what is good for individual businesses and look at what is best for the Market as a whole. Everyone needs to pull together.</p>	
<p>4.</p>	<p><b>AOCB</b></p>	<p>Cllr Richard Laird resigned from the Council on 5<sup>th</sup> September and a By-Election will take place on the 14<sup>th</sup> November.</p> <p><b>JC</b> asked about the Stakeholders who do not attend the meeting. This will be looked at.</p> <p><b>Workshop Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> October at 5.30pm</b></p> <p><b>Date of next Meeting Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> October at 5.30pm</b></p>	
		<p>The meeting ended at around 7.20pm</p>	