

Victorian Market Stakeholders Group Meeting
Virtual Meeting by Microsoft Teams

Tuesday 29th June 2021 at 6pm

Present:; Cllr Isabelle MacKenzie (IM), Cllr Bet McAllister (BM); Cllr Janet Campbell;(JC); Cllr Ron MacWilliam (RM)David Haas (DH) Inverness City Area Manager – Highland Council; Jo Murray (JM), Victorian Market Manager; Willie Morrison (WM), William Morrison Jewellers, Market Arcade, Victorian Market; Hilary Tolmie (HT), Business Support – Highland Council

Apologies: John Ewart, The Milk Bar, Victorian Market; Pat Bloczynski – Aeternum; Mike Smith (MS), Inverness BID

Cllr Isabelle MacKenzie in the Chair

No.	Item	ACTIONS	Action
	Welcome		
1.	Actions from Previous Minutes	The minutes from the previous meeting were agreed.	
2.	Footfall and Current Trading	JM gave an update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Footfall down 35% • Steady increase since April but a lot slower than after lockdown last year • However, there is an upward trend • Figures will be circulated along with the minutes for information • Market footfall is In line with that of the Eastgate Centre • A lot of visitors to the North Coast 500 but they are not coming to Inverness or Badenoch and Strathspey • Self-Catering units are full, but hotels and B&Bs have vacancies • Possible easing of Covid restrictions planned for August have been announced by the Scottish Government • Shops should be encouraged to carry out regular lateral flow testing creating a safe environment and giving confidence to consumers. • A united voice saying Inverness City Centre is healthy and safe is needed. • WM commented that the Market is really empty. People don't know market is there. The entrances are not visible enough and signs are unclear. • Cleaners doing a great job • Could the proposal to improve the entrances within the project be expediated? 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DH confirmed that at the moment there is no budget so no proposal to improve the entrances at the same time as the Market Hall/Fish Hall development. This would need to be a new project. • JM advised that she is waiting quotes for permanent floral displays at the entrances. These will stay in place all year and can be adapted for Christmas. The plan is to install them as soon as possible. • This would be a short-term solution, but long-term solutions will be investigated along with any Scottish Government funding streams that maybe available. • JM will look into the signage. • DH advised that there is City Wayfinding Project plans waiting to be activated but has, not so far, been pursued. • Could the City (Business Improvement District) Wardens help by handing out leaflets? • JM confirmed there is links with the BID Task Team so could ask them. • Shopping trends have completely changed since Covid. • Should the Market be looking at the times it open and try to capture a later footfall? • WM wondered if opening on a Sunday was feasible when there are a maximum 2 shops open and felt Sunday opening doesn't work. • JM advised that the shops opening are doing well as they regularly advertise and do promotions on social media etc. • To be discussed at the next Trader Meeting. 	
3.	Market Hall Development Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project is proceeding to plan, and all the strip out /preparation works have been undertaken • There are challenges around services that the team have been working through. • JM acting as a link between the contractors and the businesses. • Dealing with all aspects of the development on a daily ongoing basis and JM is updating the traders regularly. • Need to set a date for the next traders meeting • Toilets in Union Street caused concern but is now resolved. • Temporary toilets are not an ideal situation but the best solution available • Keeping on top of cleanliness which is extremely important as there is a lot of dust. • Contractors good at working out of hours if anything disruptive is to be undertaken • Rectifying old service problems • Some traders have been directly affected by water problems, but this is now rectified • • The Council has been managing all the other Union Street developments and making sure that there is space for deliveries • The temporary traffic management in Union st and Queensgate has been put in place in agreement with Stagecoach 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been some concern by the taxi trade as they have lost two rank spaces, but the Council is hoping this will be for as minimum a period as possible. • Central Ward Councillors have had no significant negative feedback from constituents regarding the City Centre Developments • RM asked if the additional works mean there will a slippage in timescale and any budget and if it is within the contingencies. • DH confirmed that the project remains on budget • DH advised the impact of the work is challenging due to the age of the Market and there have been some delays but hoping to recover time as the project progresses. • Reporting to CIAC in August. 	
4.	Markey Hall New Tenants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of the new units now under offer and they are all new tenants. This is very encouraging. • All asked about trading hours and want to stay open until at least 9pm. • The Anchor Unit/Tenant will be the key as a lot will depend on their opening hours • Technical work is being undertaken at the moment to match the correct tenant to the correct unit. • The next closing date for offers on the units will be October • Opening hours needs to be discussed at the next Trader Meeting. • All established local independent businesses no national companies. • EM thought this was very encouraging and was delighted they want to open in the evening as this will appeal to younger people • At the moment all new tenants will want to remain anonymous until the legalities are completed. • Leases still to be written up one is currently being progressed • Once the legalities are completed public statements can be made • JM keeps tenants updated 	
5.	Future of the Victorian Market Stakeholder Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Stakeholder Group set up with the consent of the CIAC in 2017 • Its remit was to deliver the Action Plan • With the commencement of the Market Hall/Fish Hall refurbishment many of the Members felt it was now time to step down. • These individuals have enjoyed being part of the progress but now feel the Stakeholder Group has delivered what it set out to do. • Moving forward to a new era where most of the current issues involve the tenants it was felt now is the time to hand over to the Trader Group • A nominated City Councillor could be part of the Trader Group, but this would be at the discretion of the group. • Other Councillors could still be kept up to date with regular updates being given at the ICGF Sub-Committee and an Annual Report to the CIAC. • Proposals for the Stakeholder Group will form part of the report to the CIAC in August. 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some of the current Stakeholders have never been to any of the meetings. • Matters relating to the operation of the market can be scrutinised by the trader group as the traders best placed to make operational decisions. • Some felt that although the Stakeholder Group was only meant to be a short-term Group until the projects come to fruition it should continue until the project is complete. • The Stakeholders could still be involved in the decision making as workshops would be held to discuss proposed new projects. • There are pros and cons to both disbanding and continuing with the Stakeholder Group. Both options will be presented to the members at the CIAC. • If the feeling is to continue in its current form it will do. • The Trader Group would meet at least once a month, but WM felt it would also be good if JM had more regular personal contact with the businesses and made more regular visits to them. JM noted these comments. • DH agreed to draft CIAC Report and present it to the Stakeholders at a short meeting in early August. <p><u>Actions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further progression of the Victorian Market Action Plan • Report to CIAC August 2021 • Creation of a Trader based Group 	JM
6.	AOCB	<p><u>Help for Small Businesses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RM asked that as a Staycation boom was coming would now be the time to revisit support for small businesses. • It was noted that this matter had been considered by CIAC and so it was suggested that this would be more appropriate to be discussed at the Recovery Group Meeting set for later in the week. • When considering this it is not just the Victorian Market to be considered. • Need to keep focusing on the help available for small businesses through funds available by the Scottish Government. • DH will speak to Allan Maguire <p><u>Date of next meeting</u> Date of Next Meeting – tbc early August Jason/Kenny to attend</p>	DH
		The meeting ended at around 7.45pm	

