

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER 2023

Present: Councillor S Dannheimer, Chair

Councillors: E Williamson (Vice-Chair)
H L Crosby
K Harlow
H Land
W Mee (Vice-Chair)
D D Pringle (Substitute)
A W G A Stockwell
C M Tideswell
S Webb
E Winfield
K Woodhead

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S P Jeremiah and J M Owen.

8 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

9 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2023 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

10 **MARKETS SCRUTINY REVIEW**

Members welcomed the scrutiny of the Markets Review from the Working Group, to discover the effectiveness of the team and to review whether footfall in town centres had improved. Members agreed with the recommendations from the working group with the addition of exploring the options of using empty buildings in town centres to support traders to include pop up shops, restaurants and creative spaces opportunities.

RESOLVED that the following be RECOMMENDED to Cabinet for consideration.

- 1. To produce an annual market service business plan looking at the performance of the markets, event planning, and revenue forecasts to ensure the market is resourced and supported.**
- 2. Explore options of evening markets to increase footfall with the night time economy and to link in with events within the Borough.**

3. **Research the opportunity of holding quarterly stallholder/stakeholder group meetings for feedback, improvements and sharing ideas. To ensure communication between Stallholders and the Market Officer are improved.**
4. **To improve advertisements of markets across the Borough including using the Council website, social media and market trader websites. To promote days and times of the markets and list stall details.**
5. **Provide the opportunity of a stall for free to Charities, to be booked through the Markets Officer each week.**
6. **Explore opportunities of promoting Markets in the North of Borough as events rather than weekly markets. This could include themed markets such as vegan, locally produced food, and craft stalls.**
7. **Explore the opportunities presented through the redevelopment of Victoria Street Car Park, Stapleford Town Deal project, for mixed use opportunities. Ensuring links to, and opportunities for, market developments in the town centre and explore other opportunities of further creative spaces across the Borough.**
8. **Increase the market layout within Beeston Square to include other areas of land that Broxtowe own, to create visibility from Public transport and provide additional income to the Council where possible.**
9. **To consider whether the Council should increase the permit charge of hiring Beeston Square to the Beeston Farmers Market or to explore options of bringing the Saturday market in house and generate additional income into the Council.**
10. **To consider the possibility of using empty buildings within town centres into pop up shops/restaurants and creative spaces as an indoor market concept.**

11 UPDATE FROM THE DH LAWRENCE BIRTHPLACE MUSEUM WORKING GROUP

A verbal update was provided to the Committee from the Chair of the D H Lawrence Museum Working Group. The group had met at the museum on the 19 September 2023 and a report with recommendations would be provided at the next Overview and Scrutiny Meeting.

12 UPDATE ON SCRUTINISING THE BUDGET SETTING PROCESS TOPIC

A verbal update was provided at the meeting that the budget scrutiny process had changed from the previous budget scrutiny meetings with the start of the meetings from an afternoon to a 6pm start. This allowed Members who worked in the day to attend. To allow for greater scrutiny of the budgets, the fees and charges report would be presented at the 23 November 2023 Overview and Scrutiny meeting.

13 REVIEW OF THE SCRUTINY TOPIC TELEPHONE ANSWERING AND CUSTOMER SERVICES

Members welcomed a verbal update from the Head of Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services with the review of answering telephone calls and customer services. An explanation was provided with issues recruiting to vacant posts and how an open day was a success with over thirty people attending. The team was able to recruit to all vacant positions. This has resulted in significant improvements in the performance of the team and abandonment rate of telephone calls had gone down to 3.27% in September 2023. The Microsoft Teams telephone package had been implemented throughout the Council. This provides departments with performance data. The contact Centre and Housing Repairs Contact Centre would monitor performance against a number of key performance indicators. The answerphone greeting message standard had been incorporated within the Customer Services Strategy. Staff would be reminded to use the answerphone message when away from their desk. Further work would be conducted on the possibility of adapting the introduction message to the Council's interactive voice response and introduction of the new Contact Centre phone system.

14 CONSIDERATION OF CALL - IN

Members were informed that no call-ins had been received.

15 CABINET WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee noted the Cabinet Work Programme.

16 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

Members considered the work programme and voted to set up a working group for the suggested topic of Diversity and Inclusion at the Council. Councillor S Dannheimer was voted in as Chair and Councillor S Webb as Vice Chair. Councillors E Winfield, C Tideswell, E Williamson and W Mee would also form the group. A date to scope the topic was to be confirmed at a later date. The additional items to review the Housing Repairs Service at the February 2024 Committee and to review the resident engagement with Members process was added to the work programme.

RESOLVED that the work programme be approved with the additional items to review the Housing Repairs Service in February 2024, Resident Engagement after six months and Diversity and Inclusion at the Council.