

**SWAFFHAM TOWN COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Annual Market Traders Meeting Meeting held on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2005 at 7.00p.m. in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall.

Present: Cllr. B Emmerson (in the chair)

Cllr. A Greaves, Cllr. P Darby, Cllr. J Stockdale, Cllr. S Lister,  
Cllr. P Buxton, Mr D Hackett, Mr T Bell (7.25pm)

Town Clerk: Mr R Bishop  
Assistant Town Clerk: Mrs R Noble  
Market Superintendent: Mr I Livesey  
Police: P.C. Andy Partridge

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

1.1. Cllr. D Cannon.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

2.1. There were no Declarations of Interest.

**3. TO AGREE THE MINUTES.**

3.1. Correction – page 211 3.1. Should read – There has never been so much consultation.

3.2. Further to this correction the Minutes of the meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2004 were signed as a true record by the Chairman.

**4. POLICE REPORT**

4.1. P.C. Andy Partridge reported there are numerous problems on the Market which have to be addressed including disorderly behaviour, theft and anti-social behaviour. He went on to say that all incidents relating to the above must be reported to the police as an increase in manpower has to be justified. In the past six months only six calls have been made to the police relating to the market. He reiterated that traders need to report all problems.

4.2. P. C. Partridge reported that the new Inspector, Mr Carl Edwards was present at last week police meeting, although there were no problems reported from Market Traders there would be an extra four members of the Police on duty this Saturday.

4.3. P. C. Partridge reported Footbeat Police have been disposed with in other towns, but will be staying in Swaffham.

4.4. Discussions took place relating to parking areas and associated problems. P. C. Andy Partridge informed the meeting that there was no order to use blocks in place of lines for parking bays. He went on to say that parking regulations for Swaffham would be inclusive, and Saturday parking is not enforced.

Dispensation for parking bays in the town centre has been applied for, disabled badge holders will have dispensation but should not cause obstruction. Street furniture and flowers will stop illegal parking.

**5. TOWN CLERKS REPORT**

5.1. The Town Clerk reported it has been a difficult year for the Saturday Market as traders have had to face up to being moved from their regular pitch for anything from two to six weeks. This is to allow for the regeneration work to be carried out on the

Eastern side of the Market Place. The first stage is now nearing completion, having started in January it is due to finish some four weeks late by the end of July. We have further periods to manage when work commences on the new footway outside the

Assembly Rooms and taking us into the War Memorial area. I would like to thank our Market Traders for their patience and understanding during quite a disruptive period. I have to say that the workmen on the ground and the site manager Jason Glasspoole in particular have been extremely helpful and very accommodating to the needs of the Market. Things could have been much more difficult without that contact.

The Town Clerk went on to say that on behalf of the market traders meetings have been hosted twice weekly. We realise there haven't been many Market Committee meetings however time has been diverted to giving priority to these meetings this year, but things are still ticking over, despite everything.

He added the Council have tried to be fair to the traders affected and we have seen a Market appear in Pedlars Car Park in recent months. Traders have complained because their takings have been down, but the income of the Town Council has been down too, with the added problem of expenditure being up.

5.2. The Town Clerk stated that work on the Western side of Market place will start in September, starting with the new loading bay outside the Town Hall working back towards Plowright Place. This section will probably be the least disruptive to the Market. There are sections around the Buttercross and outside the Assembly Rooms, then into the War Memorial area that will affect the Market and we will manage these as and when they happen.

5.3. The Town Clerk reported last year that permission was obtained to take out six small bollards at the War Memorial site, and replace an area of fencing with a lockable gate. In addition some of the bent over bollards near the war memorial will be replaced and one further removable bollard will be installed. This work has been held up by the relevant authority as searches have to be carried out to see if services such as water, gas and electricity are in the area. The Council have no jurisdiction over the area on any day other than the Saturday.

5.4. The Town Clerk stated the discount scheme continues to be popular with traders. We have had a good take up of traders paying a year or six months in advance. We have had to put one trader under notice recently for persistently being in arrears, this debt may have to be recovered in the County Court. We still encourage traders to talk to us and we had such a decline in the number of enquiries or complaints we had on our monthly Saturday opening of the office, this service was discontinued. The vast majority of traders, despite the difficult year remain satisfied.

5.5. The Town Clerk went on to say he would like to thank all his staff for their hard work, not only with the Market but with the Farmers Market too.. A great deal of work goes into getting things to run smoothly administration wise via Michelle and Rosie at the Town Hall. But he would like to single out Ivor in particular this year, as he has had to put up with a lot of stick as Market Superintendent, he has stuck by his task though and finishes his therapy any day now. Seriously though the fact that we still have a Market is down to the work he puts in.

Now for the future, we all know we have some rebuilding to do and we will do whatever is necessary to build the Market up again when all the work is finished. The market remains central to everything we do here in Swaffham, it is our heritage, it gives us our identity as a Market town and rest assured we will continue to look after it.

**6. DEPUTY TOWN CLERKS REPORT**

6.1. The Deputy Town Clerks report stated the Farmers Market has now been up and running successfully by the Town Council for the last 14 months. It has a variety of stalls, which cater for a variety of tastes from organic fruit, locally produced meat, plants, homemade cakes and pies etc.

The Town Council is now looking to expand the Market to include locally crafted goods to bring a bit more variety. If there are some people out there who would like to be a part of the Swaffham Farmers Market please get in touch with the Town Hall.

The Farmers Market has been very unlucky with the weather, most have been either extremely cold or very wet even in June but the market perseveres just as the Saturday market does. Let's hope the weather will be with us from here on in to make Swaffham an enjoyable place to shop both for the Farmers Market and the Saturday Market.

6.2. Following a short conversation relating to problems on the Market, it was agreed that the Police telephone is put on the invoices to enable traders to take responsibility for themselves.

**7. MARKET SUPERINTENDENTS REPORT**

7.1. The Market Superintendent reported although there has been disruption to the market due to the regeneration which has been going on, in general most traders have accepted it.

Over the past year several stalls have been lost due to illness, retirement or just not being viable to trade on Swaffham Market. One trader left due to theft on his stall.

7.2. He went on to state that we are not getting as many enquiries for market stalls as in the past, but the enquiries we do receive due to the market rule regarding the number of stalls per product we cannot take them.

7.3. There is still the problem with cars being parked on market pitches on Saturday mornings, on occasions parking tickets are issued but generally the police are able to trace the owner and move them on. It is hoped when the new signs are erected the parking instructions will become clearer.

7.4. The Market Superintendent reported there is an advertising plan in hand to bring the market back to its full potential including the casual pitches. The advertising will start shortly and steadily increase up to Spring 2006 when the majority of the Regeneration is completed.

7.5. The Farmers Market has about 10 stalls at present, its difficult to keep traders interested as it is not being supported by town folk, it has been agreed to allow craft stalls to attend, some enquiries for this have been received.

7.6. Following the report from the Market Superintendent the committee and traders thanked Ivor for the work he does.

**8. ELECT/RE-ELECT TRADERS REPRESENTATIVES on MARKET COMMITTEE**

8.1. A discussion took place regarding representatives from Market Traders onto the Market Committee. It was proposed by all the committee and seconded by Councillor Anne Greaves that Mr D Hackett, Mr T Bell and Mr M Wells become Traders Representatives on the Market Committee.

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**9. MARKET TRADERS OPEN FORUM**

9.1. It was suggested to fill the main market before using the pedlar car park.

9.2. It was suggested that more advertising is done to promote the market. It was stated that a leaflet by the Town Council and the Icen Partnership would be distributed prior to Christmas. Next year the profile of Swaffham need to be raised to put the market in good light. It was also suggested an editorial to target other traders for the market and farmers market needs to done.

9.3. It was suggested that a change is needed as many of the items sold on the market are also sold in shops in Swaffham, we need to attract different items. It was stated that many markets throughout the Country are under threat with the exception of Fakenham as they have positive advertising.

9.4. A short discussion took place relating to the Auction site and that new items and antiques are being sold there although most is junk and rubbish.

9.5. Following a short conversation relating to the problem of the Bric-a-Brac being sold at the rear of the Town Hall, the Market Superintendent informed the traders that the Council are dealing with the this as the Market Charter states that permission has be given by the Town Council within 6 $\frac{2}{3}$  miles.

9.6. A discussion took place relating to the 1<sup>st</sup> stage of the Regeneration Scheme n the Town Centre and the problems caused, the traders were informed the next stage should not affect the market.

9.7. The Chairman thanked the Town Clerk, Market Superintendent, staff and all traders for their support over the past year.

**8. DATE FOR NEXT MEETING.**

9.2. The Date for the next meeting to be confirmed.

Meeting closed at 7.55 p.m.

Chairman.....