

**SWAFFHAM TOWN COUNCIL**

Annual Market meeting held on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2006 at 7.30p.m. in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Swaffham.

Present: Cllr Greaves (in the Chair)

Councillors:- Cllr Buxton, Cllr Lister, Cllr Stockdale.

Market Representatives:- Mr Hackett

Clerk: Mr R. Bishop  
Deputy Clerk: Mrs M. Meyrick  
Market Superintendent: Mr I. Livesey

Public:- 1

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

- 1.1. Cllr Sherwood.
- 1.2. Mr T. Bell
- 1.3. Mr M. Whitehair

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

- 2.1. There were no declarations of interest.

**3. MINUTES OF THE 29<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2005 ANNUAL MARKET MEETING**

- 3.1. The above mentioned minutes had been circulated for information having been previously agreed at the January 2006 meeting.

**4. REPORT FROM THE DEPUTY TOWN CLERK**

a) French Market

At the Town Council's last meeting which was on the 14<sup>th</sup> June they gave their approval for Swaffham to hold a French Market later in the year. Markets in general are having problems all over the country not just here in Swaffham. This is seen as a way to highlight the Saturday Market and the town of Swaffham to more people and hopefully encourage new customers.

A date has provisionally been set for Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> September and Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> September. If this proves to be successful then another date would be forthcoming in November. It is proposed the French Market would be sited on the road adjacent to the main market along Lynn Street, that is, if we are able to get a road closure order agreed. The main aim of holding this market is to promote the Saturday Market and the Farmers Market. There followed a lengthy discussion following this report. It was felt that if a French Market would take place on a Saturday then the Saturday traders would be informed to see if they had any objections.

**It was agreed to hold a French Market in the town but if it took place on a Saturday then this would be discussed with the Saturday traders. It was also agreed not to go ahead with the road closure application as this would cause too much disruption on a Saturday.**

b) Farmers Market

Sadly the farmers market has not taken off as would have been liked. There are regulars who come along rain or shine but more need to be encouraged. Discussions have taken

place in the office of the possibility of bringing the Farmers Market to the Saturday Market. As a possibility the farmers market could be housed on the war memorial site if the Saturday traders wish to be in the Pedlar car park where they are at the moment. Following this report a discussion took place. It was thought that it may be a good idea for the Swaffham Farmers Market to be part of the National Farmers' Retail & Markets Association (FARMA).

**It was agreed that the FARMA scheme be researched and the information to be brought before the committee at a later date for discussion.**

## **5. REPORT FROM THE TOWN CLERK**

It has been another year of disruption for the Market and thankfully it is nearing the end of the Town Centre regeneration work. The War Memorial area is the very last part of the town centre to be affected. The Clerk thanked all the Market Traders for their patience and understanding during this difficult period and the Market Superintendent Ivor for the way in which he has dealt with the traders concerns. The current re-location of all the traders in the War Memorial site has given some ideas for expansion of the market as those that have traded in the Pedlars Car Park seem to like it there. This is something for the Market Committee and the Town Council to consider in the months ahead.

There was an unfortunate incident that had to be dealt with this past year; this resulted in a short suspension from the market of two traders. Each were also fined £100, with one individual being suspended from the Market for two years

On the administration side of things we there has been a couple of long standing bad debts that will need to be dealt with in the County Court. Thankfully the vast majority of the rents are paid by using the discount scheme. This reduces the time we need to spend on chasing after outstanding money. In future years the gap could get wider still between those who pay on time, or well in advance who should be rewarded; and those who are constantly in arrears, who should be penalised as they are in breach of their license.

The Clerk and Market Superintendent have met recently with Tyrone Roberts regarding his impending retirement from the Auction which the committee were informed would be on 31<sup>st</sup> July. The Town Council have already agreed to take the administration of the auction under the market to enable an auction to continue. Tyrone was in dispute with Norfolk County Council over the right to trade, but it had been suggested by the Police to bring this under the market and as such the Town Council. This would be to overcome the new traffic orders and obstruction of the highway, as the only exclusion is for the market charter. There has been some interest in running an auction and it is hoped to be resolved shortly.

The work this next year has to be on building the Market back up to its full capacity. It was reported earlier that the Town Council have agreed in principle to having a themed French Market, and looking to ways in which the Farmers Market can form part of the Saturday Market. Both these ideas can be used to raise the profile of the Market but to get more people to come to the market it may be more than advertising or signs. It may need something different and the Market Committee now need to give this their attention. It would be interesting to hear from any traders on both these issues.

## **6. MARKET SUPERINTENDENT REPORT**

It is hoped now that the regeneration work is almost complete the committee can look forward to getting the market back to somewhere near what it used to be. Although the

regeneration work has caused disruption to market, generally the traders have been very co-operative with not too many moans and groans. The Market Superintendent thanked the traders for understanding that some of the decisions that were taken allowed the market to operate as near normal as possible and for not giving him too much grief.

The market has 16 empty spaces at the moment and it is proving very difficult to fill the gaps. The inquiries have almost dried up but there has been couple of new stalls due to an incentive scheme that was introduced but otherwise very little. In order to the fill the market again the promotion of the Town needs to be concentrated on not just the Market. There is not the same volume of people on Saturdays that has been experienced over the past years; people seem to be by-passing Swaffham for one reason or another.

The Market still has a good mix of goods but there are certain stalls that would enhance the market. The traders have all been given a list to try and encourage new stalls, this goes hand in hand with the incentive scheme. There followed a discussion regarding advertising in magazines e.g. Market Trade News, showing what stalls the Saturday Market had spaces for.

**It was agreed that advertising was needed in market magazines showing what stalls the Saturday Market had spaces for.**

There is still an ongoing parking problem on Saturdays, the Police are always willing to help by contacting the owners by phone and have done so on many occasions, but some times the vehicles are impossible to move, this causes the traders to get very upset and annoyed.

#### **7. ELECTION OF TRADERS REPRESENTATIVES on MARKET COMMITTEE.**

7.1. A discussion took place regarding representatives from Market Traders onto the Market Committee. It was proposed by Cllr Lister and seconded by Cllr Stockdale that Mr D Hackett, Mr T Bell and Mr M Whitehair remain the Traders Representatives on the Market Committee.

**It was unanimously agreed for Mr Bell, Mr Hackett and Mr Whitehair remain the Traders Representatives on the Market Committee.**

#### **8. MARKET TRADERS OPEN FORUM.**

8.1. It was reported that traders felt there was not enough notice given for this meeting. There followed a discussion regarding this as well as the actual day of market meetings. It was felt that a Monday would be more convenient to traders as this was generally their day off.

**It was agreed that all future market meetings would be arranged on a Monday and more notice would be given to traders.**

8.2. The security of certain stalls was discussed particularly lone traders who had numerous small items on their stall.

The meeting closed at 8.40 p.m.

\_\_\_\_\_ Chairman