



REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 30TH OCTOBER 2012

SUBJECT: BARGOED STREET MARKET

REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To report on a proposal to establish a street market in Bargoed for a trial period of six months.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 In February 2012, the Council were approached by a group of retailers in Bargoed who wanted to explore the possibility of introducing a weekly street market into the town centre. *M&B Markets* a market operator from West Wales has expressed an interest in operating a weekly market in the town. A location in St Gwladys car park, High Street, Bargoed is recommended for a six-month trial period.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 Bargoed is identified in the adopted Local Development Plan as a Principal Town and as a location for major retail development.
- 3.2 Regenerating the county borough's town centres, including Bargoed, is one of the main priorities in the Council's economic development framework.

4. THE REPORT

Background

- 4.1 Within the communities of the South Wales Valleys a weekly market is seen as an important part of the shopping offer, particularly by many longstanding retailers. A market used to operate in Bargoed on Thursdays in the Hanbury Road car park. It was run by a private operator under an agreement with the Council and was managed by the Property Services Section. The presence of the market on a Thursday was viewed as having a positive affect on the number of visitors to Bargoed town centre. The market traded with mixed fortunes, before finally closing in June 2006 following a sharp fall in the number of stallholders attending.

The proposal

- 4.2 In February 2012, the Council were approached by a group of retailers trading in Bargoed town centre. With the support of the Bargoed Chamber of Trade they wanted to explore the

possibility of re-introducing a weekly street market into the town centre.

- 4.3 The retailers contacted a market operator, *M&B Markets* from West Wales and requested they look at Bargoed for a new market venture. After consideration they agreed to do so. *M&B Markets* run a number of successful street markets in other Welsh towns including Merthyr Tydfil, Barry, Tonypany, Ebbw Vale and Abertillery.
- 4.4 *M&B Markets* propose to: '*attract professional traders, selling quality products at affordable prices and is mindful to accommodate neighbouring shop keepers requests.*
- 4.5 The proposal was presented and discussed at the Bargoed Town Centre Management Group on 8th March 2012 and the idea of a market received unanimous support.
- 4.6 Initially officers considered on-street locations in Bargoed for the proposed market but these proved to be impractical. After much consultation and discussion, officers have concluded that the St Gwladys car park on Lower High Street is the most suitable site. It is a self contained site with a walled perimeter that creates a safe environment for a market to trade in.



- 4.7 This location would allow market traders to park their vehicles alongside the market stalls. The market operators M & B Markets have visited the site together with officers and estimate that the available trading area could accommodate 12 - 15 market stalls. They are keen to operate a market here and their preferred day of the week to stage it is a Thursday. This is based on the tradition of a Thursday Market in Bargoed town centre over the years and M & B Markets experience regarding the availability of market traders.
- 4.8 The logistics of the site operation would be that access to the car park would be required by stall holders from 6am for setting up their stalls. The market would open to the public between 9am to 3pm and the site would then be cleared by 5pm
- 4.9 M & B Markets would organise and manage the market operation. To facilitate this they would have a market manager on site throughout the trading day. Their role would be to supervise the set up and take down of market stalls and to deal with any issues that may arise throughout the day. In addition, the market manager would ensure that the site was left clean

and ready for use as a public car park again.

- 4.10 Staff from the Council's Urban Renewal and Property Services section would have a monitoring role and would respond to any queries/complaints to the Council accordingly.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Operator would expect to pay rent for the space. For the initial trial period it is recommended that this rent be negotiated between the Operator and the Council's Property Services Section and that the Council seek no more income than is necessary to cover any loss of revenue from car parking spaces, the cost of the Traffic Order and an allowance for publicity.
- 5.2 The operator has indicated that they would expect the Council to publicise and promote the street market. The cost of this would be minimal but is something that the Council would be expected to budget for so that any campaign to promote the market was sustained at least in the market's trial period of six months. This budget would need to be allowed for in the rental income from the market operators.
- 5.3 If the trial period is deemed to be successful then the market could be put out to tender. By that time the public realm works to Hanbury Square should have been completed and the market could be held there. There is a prospect of a new income stream for the Council from the rental on this, and possibly other sites that the Council owns in other town centres.

6. RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 Members are asked to note that a six-month licence will be offered to M & B Markets to operate a market at St Gwladys Gardens car park, Bargoed, at a rental sufficient to cover the Council's costs. Following the trial period the market will be reviewed and will either be terminated or put out to tender.

7. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 This report is for information purposes, so the Council's EqIA process does not need to be applied.

8. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 None.

9. CONSULTATIONS

- 9.1 The report has been amended to accommodate all comments made during consultations.

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Consultees: Chief Executive
Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Sustainable Development
Head of Legal Services
Head of Community and Leisure Services
Head of Procurement
Transport Engineering Manager

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Proposed market location at St Gwladys car park, Bargoed