

**D R A F T Minutes from Market Forum Meeting**  
**Friday 2 October, 2020**  
**9:15am**  
**Zoom**

Present:

Joe Baconnet – Stratforward BID (JB)  
Matthew Coombes – LSD Promotions (MC)  
Lisa Cowley – STC (LC)  
Cllr Jason Fojtik – SDC (JF)  
Cllr Ian Fradgley – STC (IF)  
Luke Hillyard – LSD Promotions (LH)  
Julie Lewis – SDC (JL)  
Pat Matjaszek – SDC (PM)  
Dermot McGillicuddy – LSD Promotions (DM)  
Cllr Ian Shenton – SDC (IS)  
Sarah Summers – STC (SS)  
Cllr Kevin Taylor – STC (KT)

**Part One, Open Session: -**

1. To receive Apologies;

Apologies were received from Cllr Bill Dowling.

Cllr Peter Richards was absent from the meeting.

2. To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 21 August, 2020;

The minutes were approved as correct record.

3. Matters Arising;

- Postponement of Victorian Christmas Market (VCM)

DM noted that whilst disappointing for all, he has not come across anyone that has objected to this decision.

IS agreed that this was the right decision to make, referencing that many local Christmas events had been postponed therefore if we had gone ahead with ours we would be in danger of attracting more visitors that may have originally gone to these other events, which would not be safe this year.

KT stated that he imagines there is much disappointment from all due to this postponement as it is a very positive attribute to the town. However, he agreed that we would not be able to social distance the large crowds expected and therefore it was the right decision to cancel.

PM gave an update that both the Stratford-upon-Avon and Warwick Mop Fairs have also been postponed.

- Christmas Lights Switch On

SS advised that the Town Council's Christmas Light Switch On event has been cancelled this year, and that the only event that STC is going ahead with this year is the Remembrance Sunday commemorations.

JL reported that PM is currently putting together a calendar of events for next year. This is a hopeful outlook of the events we would expect to see next year, restrictions allowing.

4. General Update from Stratforward BID and/or invited guests;

JB referenced a letter that has been drafted and sent to the BID board regarding the market. Once this draft is agreed, it will be sent to SDC's David Buckland and STC's Sarah Summers. It was agreed that when the official letter is sent it will be discussed in a closed section of a Market Forum meeting and distributed as appropriate.

JB reported that the BID will discuss 2021 events during their November board meeting. He noted that there are big question marks over whether the River Festival will go ahead due to cost implications. Many of the River Festival costs would need to be put up in January, and at this stage JB is unsure whether traders would be prepared to do this with the uncertainty events are facing.

JB noted that currently Stratforward are producing ongoing promotions around food in replacement of the Food Festival. It is planned to distribute a Christmas brochure in November.

PM asked if the Festival of Motoring will go ahead in May 2021. JB responded that restrictions allowing, yes. He noted that this would be the easiest BID event to social distance at. He also

noted that Stratforward BID are also currently unsure about next year's Food Festival.

KT and JB discussed the possibility of a Monster Safari Trail in the town centre during the Christmas period. Monster Safari is a children's story trail featuring 10 characters that pop up in shops across the town. Rewards can be won as well as the opportunity to complete a digital sticker board. It is hoped that this will entice children and their parents/carers to explore the town during December.

JB finally reported that in general, retail in Stratford-upon-Avon town centre is a struggle. With Laura Ashley, Edinburgh Woollen Mill and Hotter closing, Bridge Street in particular is looking very bare.

5. General Update from LSD Promotions;

- Layout for Thursday Christmas Markets
- Layout for Sunday Markets – Waterside and Bridge Street

DM requested that these items were discussed in the closed session of the meeting, to which the Chairman agreed.

6. General update from The Town & District Councils;

- Youth Market

PM reported that this was once again a very successful event and thanked KT and IS for being a part of the judging team.

DM reiterated this and also thanked KT, IS, the Mayor of STC and the Chairman of SDC for attending the event and for spending a lot of time talking to the young traders.

KT responded that this was an incredible competition and that it was an honour to be a part of the judging team. He noted that he spent much of the day talking to inspirational young people.

JB reported that he had received good feedback from businesses regarding the Youth Market. He also offered to invite the food winners of the Youth Market to the Food Festival in 2021. This would be free of charge and include accommodation. This offer was planned for this year, but unfortunately the Food Festival did not go ahead.

SS explained that STC are in the process of instigating a Youth Council and asked if we could include the members in in next year's Youth Market, in some capacity. She also suggested that DM could attend a meeting of the Youth Council to give a presentation. DM agreed that both suggestions were a great idea.

PM noted that she had also talked to Joe Harrison from NMTF who has explained how he had been working with young entrepreneurs on college courses and had suggested possibly doing a similar event with Stratford and Warwickshire Colleges.

DM informed members that the winner of this year's Youth Market, The Topsy Bakery, would be trading on the Rother Street Market on Saturday 3 October.

- NABMA

PM reported that this year's NABMA Virtual Seminars have been very informative and that they are doing a lot to try and help market operators and traders that have been affected badly by COVID-19.

She also noted that when NABMA is able to hold an in-person event again, they would like to come back to Stratford-upon-Avon.

JB mentioned a report he had read from NABMA regarding the viability of markets. Some things mentioned in this research are:

85% of markets are at risk. In May/June NABMA's evidence suggested that some 35% of market operators considered that their market activities were at risk as a result of COVID-19. This survey sample now suggests that the figure is now as high as 85%. Probably, with a more detailed survey the figure will certainly average over 50% across the UK.

Key Survey Findings (September 2020):

- Only 10% of operators received any support from the Reopening High Street Safely Fund;
- Some 92% of operators have received no funding from the Local Government Income Compensation Scheme;

- 85% of operators consider that their market activities may now be at risk;
- Only approximately 30% of traders from the surveyed markets originally benefitted from the initial business fund grants;
- Approximately 40% of traders received no payment from the Discretionary Grants Fund.

7. Date of the Next Meeting;

It was agreed that during this time of constant change it would be advisable to hold monthly meetings.

Therefore, the next meeting will be held at 9:15am 27 November, 2020 on Zoom.

*The open session of the meeting closed at 9:52am and JB departed at this point*