Present:- Councillor Smith (in the Chair).

Also in attendance:  Councillor Dodson (Vice-Chair, Planning Board) and Councillor Swift (Vice-Chair, Regeneration Scrutiny Panel)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Pickering and Walker.

197. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TOURISM FORUM - JOINT MEETING WITH BARNSLEY - HELD ON 27TH JANUARY, 2009

Consideration was given to the minutes of a meeting of the Tourism Forum held jointly with Barnsley on 27th January, 2009.

Resolved:- That the minutes be received.

198. LICENSED CRAFT MARKETS

Consideration was given to a report, submitted by the Markets General Manager, which detailed applications for the operation of Farmers/Craft Markets within the Borough.

The report set out in detail existing or new applications received or expected for Farmers/Craft events in 2009.

Resolved:- That the operation of Farmers/Craft type markets as itemised in the report be approved.

199. FAIRS - CHARGES REVIEW

Consideration was given to a report submitted by the Markets General Manager, which provided details on the annual review of Fairs Charges in accordance with audit requirements for:-

- Wath Bonfire Ground
- Thurcroft Recreation Ground
- Spring Fair Herringthorpe Playing Fields
- Kimberworth St. Pauls Fields
- Thornhill Recreation Ground
- Clifton Park
- Rawmarsh Victoria Park
- Dinnington Lordens Hill
- Maltby Crags
- Rotherham Show

It was noted that two fairs (Spring Fair Herringthorpe Playing Fields and Clifton Park), previously approved, would not be subject to any increase and would be maintained at the 2008 level for 2009 only.

Resolved:- That 2.0% per annum increases with effect from 1st April,
Consideration was given to a report, submitted by the Events and Promotions Service Manager, which outlined the annual review of Culture and Leisure fees and charges for 2009/10.

The annual review of fees and charges for Culture and Leisure had recently taken place in line with the Service’s Pricing Policy adopted in 2005. As advised by Corporate Finance most charges had been increased by at least 2%. Where charges remained the same this was because either increasing a price would incur additional costs (e.g. for changing ticket/photocopying machines) or where managers felt that an increase would affect customer levels.

It should be noted that several core services still remained essentially free of charge, e.g. public library service, museum service, archives and local studies service and casual access to green spaces and children’s play areas. Where there was a charge there was often a concessionary rate and, particularly related to leisure activities, a junior Rothercard rate. Concessionary customers were not restricted to access at off-peak times as was the case in many other local authorities.

The charges for allotments were for the financial year 2010/11. This was because allotment holders had to receive twelve months’ statutory notice of any increase in line with Allotment Act Legislation. These charges were still well below comparable local authorities and it was the intention to increase them by 10% each year until they reached a comparable rate.

Members present noted that, as a result of the redevelopment of Clifton Park, there would be an opportunity for customers to hire high quality meeting and event space in a new Park building and charges for this have been introduced in line with the Clifton Park Business Plan.

Due to the success of a pilot reduction in room hire charges at Maltby Library in 2008/09, which saw a 400% increase in usage on the previous year, it was proposed to roll this out to other Libraries in 2009/10.

The prices for all Sport and Leisure Facilities, including Maltby Sports Centre, still managed by the Council, had been agreed in consultation with DC Leisure Management. As part of the PFI contract a number of 'core' prices were identified (e.g. casual swim and badminton), which could only be increased in line with inflation unless the Council agreed otherwise. All price increases had been aligned across both the Council and DC Leisure facilities and the majority, including non-core prices, have been increased broadly in line with inflation.

The proposed charges were with effect from 1st April, 2009 (25th March, 2009, for Country Parks and 1st September, 2009, for Civic Theatre).
Resolved:- That the fees and charges set out in the report submitted be approved.

201. WELLGATE NORTH RESIDENTS' PARKING SCHEME - PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Consideration was given to a report, presented by the Transportation Unit Manager, which informed the Cabinet Member of the outcome of the public consultation carried out in the Wellgate North area about the proposed introduction of a Residents’ Parking Scheme and the existing Wellgate Residents’ Parking Scheme.

The report set out more detailed information on the feedback questionnaire sent out to 491 households in the Wellgate North area, the 118 responses received and their views and reasons for and against the scheme, the objections via petitions from 20 households on Carlton Avenue and Old Clifton Lane and a 152 signature petition from residents within the Wellgate North Area.

The report also set out in detail the existing Wellgate Residents’ Parking Zone and the opinions put forward about the operation of this scheme. From the responses it appeared that the days and hours that the scheme operated were acceptable to the residents with no alterations/amendments suggested.

Whilst a Wellgate North Residents’ Parking Scheme was not favoured from the feedback received, it was considered that there would continue to be complaints about parking. It was noted that of necessity such reports would not be treated with priority although the matter would be kept under review.

Resolved:- (1) That the introduction of the Wellgate North Residents’ Parking Scheme be abandoned.

(2) That the Director of Planning and Regeneration use powers delegated to him to promote a Traffic Regulation Order to introduce “No Waiting At Any Time” restrictions in the Wellgate North Area and to introduce Pay and Display parking on Parkfield Road as shown on drawing number 126/18/TT485.

(3) That the scheme be funded from the Local Transport Plan Integrated Transport Capital Programme for 2009/10.

(4) That the operation of the existing Wellgate Residents’ Parking Scheme remain as currently.

202. TOWN CENTRE SPACES - APPLICATIONS FOR MOBILE CATERING UNITS

Consideration was given to a report, submitted by the Assistant Town Centre Manager, which identified the recommended traders to whom licences would be issued for the purpose of siting a mobile catering unit in the town centre for the period 1st April - 30th June, 2009.
The report set out in detail the applications received by the deadline of 12th February for either approval or the reasons for refusal.

In terms of future applications a suggested timetable for the next period (1st July – 31st August 2009) for pitches 1-3 (& 11 on Tuesdays) would allow notification to successful traders by no later than 1st June (meaning that applications would need to be submitted, considered and supported by Members during May). It was, therefore, recommended that no application for the siting of a mobile catering unit should be considered in the interim.

It was noted that public realm works were due to take place during the January - March trading period. These works had now been delayed and would take place on Thursday 23rd – Wednesday 29th April, 2009 inclusive and as previously reported to this group the three existing food pitches would be unavailable during this time.

At the time of the review of the Town Centre Spaces Policy, alternative locations for Mobile Catering Units were investigated, but no other suitable sites found. This was something that would now be revisited as it was possible that the use of other pitches not currently identified for food use could provide a temporary solution for those existing traders particularly pitch 13 and pitch 11 (which was currently available for the sale of food on Tuesdays only).

Discussion ensued on the condition of some of the mobile catering units, smells emanating from within and the possibility of temporary improvements to the fountain area on Market Square.

Resolved:- (1) That the contents of the report be noted.

(2) That licences be issued to the traders as identified in this report and on the terms and conditions as detailed.

(3) That the feasibility of using alternative pitches for mobile food trading be assessed for a one week period whilst public realm works were undertaken at Boots Fountain (affecting pitches 1-3).