

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:-	Cabinet Member and Advisers for Business Growth and Regeneration
2.	Date:-	Monday 14th July 2014
3.	Title:-	Licensed Bazaar Market – Licence extension
4.	Directorate:-	Environment and Development Services

5. Summary

Pursuant to Council minute G137 from the meeting held on 8th May 2013, to report on the annual review of the themed Bazaar type market held on the outdoor covered area of the Centenary Market Complex each Thursday.

6. Recommendations

The Licence granted to Shabir Hussain of Select 2 Ltd T/A “The Bazaar” is extended for a period of 24 months in accordance with clause 3 of the Licence Schedule.

7. Proposals and Details

The Asian product themed Bazaar was introduced on 27th June 2013. It operates under licence and is held every Thursday on the outdoor covered market. The Bazaar is managed by the private operator Select 2 Ltd.

The main objective for introducing the Bazaar to the weekly calendar of outdoor covered markets was to improve the town centre offer and raise the profile of the Centenary Market by reaching out to new and diverse customers. As a result this would increase footfall and potential spend which would benefit not only the Indoor Market Hall but the Town Centre as a whole.

Footfall counting systems and anecdotal evidence demonstrate that this objective has been achieved with most indoor traders reporting either an increase in Thursday takings or at very least a noticeable increase in visitor numbers particularly in late afternoon when traditionally the market was very quiet.

The Indoor Market Hall has a camera in each entrance which counts the total number of visitors each day. Prior to the 27th June 2013, when there was no outdoor covered market activity on Thursdays (other than traders setting up ready for Friday), average Thursday visitor numbers to the Indoor Market Hall were in the region of 9,800. In the 12 months since the inception of The Bazaar this number has risen by 22% to reach an average of 12,000, with numbers in excess of 17,000 being achieved on celebration days. There is no footfall counting system on the outdoor covered market which means that a considerable number of visitors to the covered market who visit the wider Town Centre without entering the Indoor Hall are not included in these numbers

The opening of the Bazaar did initially result in a small decline in visitor numbers to the Indoor Market Hall on other trading days. However, this decline was slight and was not sustained. With visitor numbers soon returning to normal this indicates that the additional footfall generated by the Bazaar on Thursdays was, as anticipated, made up from new and additional visits to the market, often from areas outside of the borough.

There was at first some opposition to the Bazaar from existing traders, in particular those who used Thursdays as their setting up day ready for Fridays trading. This opposition reduced after an alternative setting up time was offered by market management; the two sets of traders now seemingly work quite happily alongside each other.

The Licence signed by the operator was for a trial period of one year with the option to extend this for a further two years if successful, it is now proposed that this option be exercised.

8. Finance

The overriding objective of this new market was to generate additional footfall which would improve trade in the town centre on Thursday. This objective has been achieved and is cost neutral to the market account. The annually increasing Licence fee agreed for the three year period will ensure that the cost neutral operating basis

will be maintained through year two with a surplus of approximately £4,500 being generated in year three.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The potential risks and uncertainties identified prior to agreeing the operation of the Bazaar have not been realised i.e.

- The market has not failed to attract new shoppers.
- There is no evidence that the market has drawn trade away from existing businesses to any degree.
- Operating the new market does not generate additional requirements and costs.

Other than the usual ongoing commercial risk to the operator Select 2 Ltd of operating a market there are no new anticipated risks or uncertainties going forward.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

A vibrant and successful market is an essential part of an attractive town centre and a key element in delivering Corporate Priorities 1 and 4 in that opportunities are being provided to enable business start-up and growth, and a wider more diverse service is being provided - more people come to the town centre for work, shopping and things to do and see. The Bazaar helps to support the sustainability of the markets operation which is a major footfall attractor for the town, currently drawing in on average circa 85,000 visits per week.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Rotherham Town Centre Shopper Survey 2012

Retail Group Shopper & Trader surveys 2014

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