



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Estates Management – Markets
Date:	13 August 2008
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Relevant Background Information

To inform and update Committee of progress on issues concerning the management of St. George's and Smithfield Markets.

Vehicle Parking at St George's Market.

Belfast City Council officers along with some Members of Council have held regular meetings with DRD Roads Service, PSNI, and Market Traders since the refurbishment of St George's Market in 1999 to discuss trader and customer car parking issues at the Market.

Smithfield Market

Up date on Smithfield Market

St George's Market

St George's Market was renovated in 1999 and has had continuous trading since that date.

Key Issues

Vehicle Parking at St George's Market.

Recent changes to car parking have taken place in the area around St George's Market, eight extra 'Pay and Display' parking bays have been added to Vernor Street and three extra in Oxford Street.

Smithfield Market

The Committee is asked to note Smithfield Market is still currently running with 27 out of 28 Units fully let. Alternative usage is being sought for the vacant double unit. As a short term measure the Department has been seeking to use the space as an area for local art & craft students and community groups to use as a display/showcase area. This would hopefully give a rise to a bigger footfall in Smithfield and also promote young local arts and crafts artists. At no time would any goods be for sale but for display purposes only. Approval is requested that the use of this unit be free of charge as no profit is being made by any of the exhibitors. As it is anticipated the usage of the unit will contribute to a higher footfall to Smithfield Market it would therefore be of benefit to the present traders.

We have contacted local art students and Community Centres and groups to assess interest in using the space as a display area and have had some positive responses.

This proposal is suggested as a short term measure and the Unit would remain 'To Let' with signage remaining in the window. The Unit would be vacated immediately on the Unit being successfully let.

Landscaping front Entrance

No estimate has been received to date on the cost of landscaping from Facilities Management.

Advertising

The BCC web-site for Smithfield has been recently updated with the assistance of Corporate Communications, giving more information on the various units that are currently trading there. Web site address is www.belfastcity.gov.uk/markets.

Discussions are ongoing between Markets Officers, Corporate Communications and Genesis Advertising Agency on promoting Smithfield Market. A television and radio advertising programme has just ended and will recommence late August/early September 2008.

St George's Fish Area

The constant cleaning and power washing of the fish area after a successful days trading had taken its toll on the rear wall. Even after regular refreshing and painting, after a few weeks it looked dirty again. A new, hygienic plastic clad wall has been fitted along the fish area (1.6 metres high) and has received excellent reviews from those who trade in that area. It is more hygienic and looks a lot cleaner and more refreshing, especially to the customers using the facility. The cost of this work was covered within the 2008/2009 maintenance budget for St George's.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- Committee note the continuation of discussions between Belfast City Council, Market Traders and the DRD Roads Service with a view to progressing the parking issues at St George's Market for the benefit of traders, customers and local residents.
- Committee agree to the short term use of vacant double unit in Smithfield Market as an exhibition area for local arts and crafts.

- That Committee note the update on front of house landscaping at Smithfield
- That Committee note the update on advertising for Smithfield
- That Committee note the update on the improvements to St George's Market fish area.

Key to Abbreviations

DRD – Department of Regional Development
B.C.C. – Belfast City Council

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