

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP – 8 JANUARY 2014

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| Title of report | UPDATE ON INVESTMENT IN COALVILLE INDOOR MARKET |
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| Purpose of report | To provide an update to Policy Development Group on the improvements to Coalville Market which were agreed by Cabinet on the 24 th September 2013. |
| Council Priorities | Value for Money |
| Implications: | |
| Financial/Staff | The working arrangements for the employees currently employed at the Coalville public conveniences are under review. |
| Link to relevant CAT | None |
| Risk Management | The investment is based on preliminary cost estimates. A contract will not be entered into unless the contractor can fix at a price within the investment agreed by Cabinet. |
| Equalities Impact Assessment | None |
| Human Rights | None |
| Transformational Government | None |
| Comments of Head of Paid Service | The report is satisfactory. |

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| Comments of Section 151 Officer | The report is satisfactory. |
| Comments of Monitoring Officer | The report is satisfactory. |
| Consultees | Coalville Indoor Market Traders, Legal Services, Property Services, Human Resources |
| Background papers | Investment in Coalville Indoor Market - Report considered by Cabinet on 24 September 2014 Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on 24 September 2013 |
| Recommendation | POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP NOTES THE REPORT AND PROGRESS FOR INVESTMENTS IN COALVILLE INDOOR MARKET |

1.0 BACKGROUND AND UPDATE

- 1.1 At its meeting on the 24th September Cabinet agreed an investment of £168,000 for the development and improvement of the indoor market and its surroundings. Cabinet also noted that the strategy for developing and promoting the Market would be driven by the Council and that a third party private sector interest would no longer be sought.
- 1.2 As it had become apparent that a private partner could not be sourced, the approach to developing and promoting the Market was switched to an in-house driven solution. The promotion of a successful Indoor Market is regarded, in terms of attracting footfall to a range of retail and other services and attractions, as a key contributor to the ongoing regeneration of Coalville Town Centre.
- 1.3 Since the decision was made to retain the market in its current location there has been an improvement in trading conditions. Generally the traders have reported that takings have improved since April 2013 and certainly compared to last year. Three new traders have been attracted to the market, including a fresh fish trader and a plot has been leased to a hot food van on the forecourt. A series of events and promotions have also been organised to raise the profile of the Market and attract new customers.
- 1.4 The reasons for the relative improvement of trading conditions in the Market could be attributable to a number of factors:
 - General improvement in retail trading conditions in Coalville since the economic downturn in 2008.
 - Appointment of a Market Manager with considerable experience.
 - Recovering footfall levels as customers are attracted back to the market now they are aware that it is to remain open.

2.0 WHAT ARE THE PRIORITY INVESTMENTS WHICH WILL ENHANCE THE INDOOR MARKET'S TRADING PERFORMANCE AND CUSTOMER/TRADER CONFIDENCE?

2.1 In consultation with the Traders and the Market Manager a range of improvements have been prioritised which will enhance trading confidence and the customer experience. The improvements will greatly enhance the external appearance of the Market and improve its visibility from the car park and access to the Belvoir Centre. The improvement and development works can be summarised as follows:

- The highest priority identified was the need to improve the appearance and visibility of the Indoor Market. It is proposed to improve the forecourt, entrance and approaches to the Market, designed in conjunction with the proposed car park resurfacing contract. Improving the visibility and appearance of the market can best be achieved with the demolition of the toilet block and enhancement of the forecourt area. The opportunity exists to relocate the public toilets into the Market and form a new access to the side of the building which would also be used to access the popular Market cafe. A number of options for incorporating the toilets into the Market have been explored and the preferred option is now to create three new individual toilets accessed off the front of the market with coin access and with an electronic key for disabled.
- A cleared, enhanced forecourt space would not only create an open, attractive approach to the market which would attract more footfall but would also be used for events and new traders, generating additional income.
- A range of internal improvements and alterations to improve trading conditions and improve the customer experience.
- Improved advertising signage on the building on Hotel St subject to County Highway approval.

2.2 In addition to these physical improvements a promotional campaign is underway which seeks to attract new customers, events and activities to the market. A marketing plan has been developed which includes promotion of the market and events through facebook, twitter, leafleting and adverts on Hermitage FM.

2.3 Using the East Midlands Council's construction framework, a suitable contractor has been engaged to explore the feasibility of the proposed works and prepare a preliminary costing plan. The cost estimates for the improvements are described in the table below.

| Improvement works to the Indoor Market and surrounding environment. | Preliminary Cost Estimate (including contingency) |
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| Environmental improvements to the forecourt area and approaches to the market following demolition of toilet block. | £33,000 |
| Environmental improvements to create new access to the market cafe and address health and safety issues of ramp access. | £25,000 |
| Creation of new improved toilet facility into the frontage of the market. | £50,000 |
| Improvements to the Market building; including roofing repairs and new entrance canopy. | £60,000 |
| TOTAL | £168,000 |

2.4 In order to avoid the busy Christmas trading period the implementation of the works is programmed to commence in February 2014.

3.0 FINANCING THE IMPROVEMNTS TO THE INDOOR MARKET

3.1 The estimated cost for the improvement works is £168,000. Cabinet has agreed that £125,000 of the improvement works are funded from reserves (£72,430 Value for Money Reserve and £52,570 earmarked reserve), a contribution from Planning section 106 sources, and a grant secured from the Leicestershire County Council's Better Places Fund. The funding breakdown is shown in the table below.

| Funding Source | Funding Amount |
|---|-----------------------|
| Council reserves | £125,000 |
| Planning S.106 contributions for Coalville Town Centre Regeneration | £30,500 |
| Leicestershire County Council – Better Places Grant Fund | £12,500 |
| Total | £168,000 |

3.2 The operational staffing and management arrangements for the toilets are the subject to an ongoing service review which will consider how best to deliver this service following the investment.