



nabma consultancy services

Health-check

Market/portfolio: Ryedale District Council

Client's name: S. Richmond

Client's job title: Health and Environment Manager

Name of person conducting review: S Richmond/P Crossley

Date of review: 5 November 2008

1. Client overview of local issues/priorities/problems:

1. Pickering Market – small 31 pitch market run directly by Council – the location restricts the number of stalls. Traffic in the Market Place has been prohibited on market days (Monday) this year – certain exceptions apply but this closure is not bound to continue indefinitely. If traffic is allowed back then the closeness of cars to stalls and congestion in the area is a problem. Endeavouring to ensure a variation in wares among traders is an issue that occurs from time to time.

Helmsley Market – 50 pitch market operates on a Friday. Livery is not uniform (like Pickering) some would like to see more consistency. Helmsley and Pickering both have good attendance although more gaps at Helmsley during the winter period. The number of traders wishing to attend as casuals at both markets is low.

Malton Market – Up to 100 pitches available – Saturday – on contract to a new private operator. Contract is only for one year until April 2009 due to the Council renegotiating the lease from the estate which is due to expire at the same time. Lease still not agreed. The Committee making decision on how to progress on 27/11/08. Substantial gaps most Saturdays at the moment. Continental Market held on 29-31 August in conjunction with existing market. Further Continental Market planned in mid December 2008. Farmers market run by local auctioneer once a month approximately 100m from location of Malton Market.

		Yes	No	Evidence
2	Does the market/portfolio have Member support?	Yes		Members support the Markets
3	Does the market/portfolio have an annual business plan?		No	No specific business plan. New traders as some leave, continuous adjustments made. Fees usually increase in line with all other Council fees and charges
4	Does the market/portfolio make an annual profit?	Yes		
5	Does the market/portfolio have a modernisation strategy? e.g. retail offer, management, physical condition, location.		No	No written strategy, but listen to trader comments and if practical react. In recent times the rent collection system, traffic management changes and alterations to the procedures for the erection/dismantling of stalls have been made.
6	Does the market/portfolio have an investment plan (capital or revenue)?		No	No, but money is made available In budget for repair/updating equipment etc..
7	Does the market/portfolio have a marketing/promotional plan?	Yes		Pickering and Helmsley market are marketed through the Tourist Information Centres. Markets publicised on free town maps
8	Does the market/portfolio have written procedures? e.g. lettings, regulations, disciplinary procedures, risk assessments)	Yes		Basic regulations provided but ongoing contact is through either personal agreement/letters to all traders

9	Does the market/portfolio monitor legal compliance? e.g. H&S, counterfeit goods, employment of young people, Market Rights.	Yes		Yes, with respect to Market Rights and and Safety. Trading standards make visits to the markets.
10	Is the market clear what action must be taken if evidence of non-compliance is found?	Yes		Traders expect a direct communication Be that a personal visit, letter or both.
11	Does the market/portfolio collect demographic data?		No	Except that marketing is aimed primarily at the visitor/tourist trade
12	Does the market/portfolio engage its staff, traders and shoppers in consultation?	Yes		Staff and traders are engaged routinely –less so shoppers. Public meeting on the future of markets held in July 2008 – Copy attached
13	Does the market/portfolio act on feedback?	Yes		If practical

14. What are the stall occupancy rates for each market over each of the past 3 years?

Stall occupancy approximates to 80% at Helmsley and higher at Pickering. Reasonably consistent over the last 3 years.

15. How many traders/businesses has the market/portfolio supported for each of the past 3 years?

42 permanent traders(some at both Pickering and Helmsley markets).
Up to 30 different casual traders.

16. How much money has been spent promoting the market/portfolio for each of the past 3 years?

£1,998 over the last three years.

17. What has been the market/portfolio's bottom-line financial performance for each of the past three years (profit/lbreak-even/loss)?

The last 3 years have provided a profit at all 3 markets.

18. Where would you like the market/portfolio to be in 5 years' time?

The markets to be still to taking place, the markets continue to attract locals and visitors alike, to be enjoyable places to visit, to maintain favour with our long established traders and to provide them with a well managed market and a market they want to trade out of.

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In conclusion all 3 markets have been run in a similar manner over many years hopefully to the general satisfaction of the traders. Indeed when Helmsley and Pickering were put out to contract in 2004, the traders wanted the Council to retain control – which it did.

NABMA conclusions

Rydale Council no longer has an interest in Malton market. Of the remaining two markets, Council officers wanted the half-day visit to focus on Pickering market. The market visit took place on Monday 8 June 2009, and following discussion with Steve Richmond and Paul Crossley a meeting was held with the Town Clerk of Pickering Town Council on issues relating to the market.

Overview

The markets appear stable and although the number of casual traders has diminished, both markets are usually full (with some seasonal variation). The transition from the Council providing, erecting and dismantling stalls to the traders taking on this task appears to have been well managed, with no loss of traders occurring. The market operation makes a trading profit each year, which is used to support other Council services. There is little evidence of re-investment in the market operation.

Specific conclusions

1. Market Rights. Pickering market is a one-day a week Charter market. However, there is an indoor private market operating on Market Place, a weekly car-boot sale close to the town centre, and a monthly farmers' market. None of these are licensed under the Council's market rights. This, coupled with the absence of a Market Rights Policy, means that the Council's ability to protect its market is severely limited.
2. Pickering market offer. From the discussion with the Town Clerk, it is clear that some businesses currently see the market as a detriment rather than an asset. This view relates to the perceived quality of the offer, the physical appearance of the stalls, and the road closure order that is in place on market day. They would like to see the offer realigned to better appeal to the significant tourist industry in Pickering (railway, coach and private vehicle). Whilst the market offer does appear to be aimed at a local/residential customer base, the town is busier on Mondays. No research has been carried out to identify the demographic profile of the market customer base.
3. Encroachment. Many market stalls are encroaching onto the pavement, causing significant 'pinch-points' along the length of the market.
4. Location of the market. Some discussion took place on a potential relocation of the market, linked particularly with the potential redevelopment of the Vivis Lane/Hungate. Currently, Market Place remains the heart of the town centre, and any potential relocation of the market would have to be considered carefully, not just in terms of the viability of the market, but in relation to the viability of the independent high street.
5. Marketing. Marketing is minimal, although effective use made of the Tourist information map. There was no evidence of market signage in the town, and the Council website information on markets could be improved.

Recommendations:

Undoubtedly improvements can be made, but consultation and sensitivity with respect to the traders/public must be maintained. A good number of traders have been with us for many years and have a reliable local trade and it is important to keep the two.

NABMA recommendations

1. **Market Rights.** Create and publicise a Market Rights Policy as a matter of urgency.
2. **Encroachment.** Ensure that traders do not encroach onto the pavement. There are health and safety issues to be addressed - the need for emergency vehicles to access Market Place during the road closure, traders' vehicles loading and unloading, and the drop from the kerb edge to the road surface. This could best be achieved by having the stalls trade up to the kerb edge but not beyond (although a different line would be needed at the bottom end of the market, where the pavement curves out).
3. **Retail Offer.** A research project should be carried out to identify the demographic profile of the market customer base. In particular this needs to identify the current extent of tourist purchases on the market and how that might be increased. This project could be carried out in partnership with the Town Council. The results can then inform the debate on re-aligning the retail offer of the market. This information would also help inform the debate on any potential relocation of the market.
4. **Marketing.** Install signage for the market around the town. This should be aimed at pedestrian and vehicle access. Improve the Council market webpage. Adopt an improved stall cover for the market. Whilst this is difficult because of the different design and lay-out of the individual stalls, one option would be to look at a standard liveried backdrop for all stalls, with design/logo facing out onto the shops opposite.