

## **RESPONSE TO O + S Town Centre Task Group**

**August 2009**

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### **1. BACKGROUND**

This response was prepared following an approach from the O + S Town Centre Task Group, enquiring as to what progress had been made on the recommendations in the 2004 Customer O +S Panel's report into Chorley Markets.

It's important to note that members of the Executive Cabinet did not endorse the recommendations and that any progress in this area has been driven by the Council's Communications and Marketing team, as part of a corporate approach to supporting improvements to the Town Centre and Chorley Markets.

### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS: ADVERTISING/MARKETING**

#### **R7 To e-enable stall holders to apply for stalls**

Information about Chorley Markets and the Town Centre as a whole was improved as part of a corporate project to overhaul the Council's website in 2006/07. Stall holders can now apply for a stall online and pay their rent through the friendly url [www.chorley.gov.uk/markets](http://www.chorley.gov.uk/markets) This address is featured on literature for stall holders.

#### **R10 To encourage Flat Iron traders to have similar colourful protective covers for visual enhancement**

This would be something for the Town Centre Manager rather than comms.

#### **R13 To concentrate advertisement on the Tuesday market as the busiest day on the markets**

There has been a programme of advertising for Chorley Markets, including newspaper advertising in local and regional press, radio campaigns and 'trade' campaigns in bespoke publications such as Market Trader News, which stall holders read and is useful in encouraging new traders to visit the market.

In addition, much media relations and reputational management support has been provided to traders on a weekly basis by the communications team, resulting in lots

of local and regional coverage for the markets, as well as some articles in the national press.

This work publicises the weekly programme of market activity as a whole, in a bid to build trade through other days, but Tuesday is usually highlighted as the busiest day.

In addition, some work has been undertaken around search engine optimisation (SEO) to ensure that Chorley Markets features highly on Google when searching for markets or Tuesday markets.

**R14 To increase advertising for traders for the markets, directly targeting under represented trades eg pottery, by utilising trade magazines and the Internet**

Covered in answers above – there has been some work carried out by the Town Centre Manager to highlight underrepresented areas of trade and we have highlighted this in media work. New stallholders which bring a new dimension to the market have also been highlighted eg the barbers stall.

**R15 To develop the website page regarding the markets, to include advertisements and information about market stalls**

See answer to R7 – the website has been improved dramatically, with a good focus on the markets and friendly url. The web content is split into two areas - one has specific information for traders such as booking your pitch, regulations and fees, the other is visitor focused with details of parking, what there is to do, opening times and information for coach parties. There is also information provided on the farmers' market and specialist markets that visit the town. There isn't information about specific stalls as some traders moved around and the covered market in particular has been less static during the improvement works, but there are plans to produce a Town Centre guide in the future highlighting the offer of shops and traders together as a package for customers.

**R16 To implement an advertising strategy for the markets, eg using Chorley cakes**

The markets have been provided with a new logo and strap line which now runs throughout all advertising, marketing and promotional material – this is *Chorley Markets – real shopping, real value, real choice*. This was developed in conjunction with traders on the markets steering group. The logo features on the covered market

site and has featured on advertising, promotional items such as the Chorley Markets leaflet and merchandise such as the bags for life given out free to customers.

**R17 To advertise via different methods, eg radio, local papers and the Internet**

Covered in answers above.

**R19 To offer sponsorship opportunities, eg planted flowerbeds under the district boundary signs**

This idea is part of a wider project in the pipeline to bring income into the Council by offering advertising opportunities to businesses and organisations in the borough.

There are issues to consider around Lancashire County Council's role in highways assets and planning regulations around advertising, which make the recommendation more difficult to deliver.

**R23 To provide information, for customers, regarding product ranges and stall location, e.g. flyers**

See answers above – there has been a comprehensive communications and marketing campaign around the markets, including production of adverts, editorial in newspapers and 'trade' press, flyers to coach drivers in conjunction with Botany Bay and many posters and supporting materials such as flyers to promote individual events.

**R24 To advertise Chorley market particularly for customers who live out of the area, e.g. the Internet, magazines, specific radio advertising, local paper and flyers etc**

See answers above.

**R25 To approach the management of Chorley Interchange regarding coaches parking at the Interchange as part of a future exercise to increase the number of coach operators running trips to Chorley**

This is an issue for the Town Centre Manager rather than comms.

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**Shelley Wright**

**Head of Communications, Marketing and Tourism**

**Chorley Council**

August 21, 2009