Community and Governance Meeting

Date: 7 March 2024

Agenda Item: 11.CGi

Appendix: CG160

**Market Drayton Town Council**

**Markets Working Group Notes**

**Wednesday 31st January, 11.00am**

1. **Present**

Cllrs Aldcroft, Manton, Hughes

Siobhan Noake, LDS

Kate Gittins and Felicity Allen, Shropshire Council

Sue Thomas, Town Clerk

Apologies – Cllr Nellins and Dermot McGillicuddy, LSD

1. **Notes**

The notes from the working group meeting held on the 6 October 2023 were approved.

1. **Market**

Shropshire Council to provide an update on the management of the market from 1 April 2024 and on plans for the future of the market.

How the change in management of the market had been communicated was discussed. Cllr Aldcroft said that SC members and market traders should have been informed before the press release was issued.

It was agreed that a more joined up approach should have been taken. LSD had given letters to all traders that morning; it was agreed that occasional traders should also be sent a letter informing them of the change.

Felicity said conversations have been ongoing with LSD since December. A mutual agreement has been reached and Shropshire Council will be running the markets as of 1st April.

The market will continue to be run in its current form with a view to making improvements in the future.

During the handover period it will be determined as to how the ‘workings’ of running the market will continue.

Councillors raised concern that the contract with LSD has been terminated before Shropshire Council has a full understanding of how the market is run or without a plan or vision for the future of the market.

Felicity said that the aim is to move to a more self-sufficient run market, listening to the views of the stallholders and agreeing a collaborative approach to move forward.

Traders have said that they do well at the Wednesday market and will encourage other traders to attend. There has been a lack of communication with traders previously; they are keen to get involved and help.

Whilst paying the management contract there hasn’t been enough funding to focus on improvements. With Kate’s import this will hopefully be able to re-focus.

Kate is already having conversations about PR and marketing to raise the profile of the market and the town. Kate has volunteered to be the Town Champion.

One operative and the cleaner are being Tuped to Shropshire Council.

Cllr Hughes said going forward the Town Council does not have any capacity to help, we have however commissioned a survey of the street market and town center retail which will hopefully provide some information that can help inform the future of the town and market.

It was agreed that the Estates team need to look at the whole area, the inside of the market hall is a mess, the rubbish issues outside Rodenhurst flats need to be addressed; companies should be encouraged to recycle their waste. Felicity said that options for the bin area are being considered.

Felicity said it is hoped that everyone will work together to produce a vision to maintain and develop the markets, including the monthly artisan market.

1. **Next Steps**

Next meeting with Shropshire Council officers to be following the consultation with the traders and when they have information to share regarding the market.

Town Centre working group to meet regarding the town survey and any other issues.

The Town Council thanked LSD for running the market and for their input into the town. When LSD took over the market it was in a worse condition than it is now. LSD saved the market, which has recently had a downwards turn.

Shioban thanked the town council for their support during their time in the town.