



Chester-le-Street
District Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee



People & Place

Future of the Market in Chester-le-Street
Final Report Second Draft

January 2009

Contents

Foreword of the Chair	3
Membership of the Task and Finish Group	4
1. Introduction	5
2. Purpose of the Review	5
3. Scrutiny Review Process	5
4. Background	6
5. Terms of Reference	7
6. Methodology	7
7. Legislative and Strategic Context	9
8. Findings of the Review	9
9. Conclusions	15
10. Recommendations	16
Appendices	17

Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Review of the Future of the Market in Chester-le- Street

Foreword of the Chair

Insert Foreword Text to be provided by Jeff Armstrong

The review was carried out between June 2008 and December 2008.

Cllr Geoff Armstrong

Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Panel Committee

Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Review of the Future of the Market in Chester-le-Street

Membership of the Task and Finish Group

Future of the Market Task and Finish Group
Cllr G Armstrong (Chair)
Cllr J W Barrett
Cllr W Laverick
Cllr P Nathan
Cllr f Wilkinson
Cllr J Proud
Cllr S Greatwich
Cllr R Harrison
Cllr K Potts
Cllr M Potts
Cllr D Thompson
Cllr D L Robson

Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Review of the Future of the Market in Chester-le-Street

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The council's Transition Plan, in effect, replaces the Corporate Plan 2007/2010. The Transition Plan includes a schedule of proposals from the previous seven priorities which ought to be and can be achieved in the remaining life of the council. The council's choice to move towards a single priority of '**People and Place**' priority was considered as part of the budget setting process and forms a firm part of the Transition Plan.
- 1.2 At their meeting on 30th June 2008 and in response to the council's single priority of '**People and Place**', the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to undertake three scrutiny reviews all linked to the corporate priority. One of the key components of '**People and Place**' is 'Investment in the Town Centre'. The council has invested significantly in the town centre and the Civic Heart over the last five years. Its work is not finished and the Town Centre Master Plan needs to be implemented. Historically the market has been a significant attraction to residents of Chester-le-Street and beyond. Despite the investment in it, it has suffered from changing shopping patterns and personal taste. Projected Market income has not been realised over the last few years and the relationship between the council and market traders is not very good.
- 1.3 In view of this it was considered necessary for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to request a task and finish group to research the future of the market. This report is the outcome of the task and finish groups work. It provides recommendations to inform decisions by the new unitary council in Durham.

2 Purpose of the Review

- 2.1 The objective of the review as to evaluate the future of Chester-le-Street market in terms of its sustainability over the next five to ten years.

3 Scrutiny Review Process

- 3.1 Scrutiny reviews are in-depth studies into issues which have been identified by scrutiny members as important to the community and Council of Chester-le-Street.

3.2 Scrutiny reviews investigate issues by a process of gathering evidence through speaking to individuals and groups that are involved or affected. The review panel then formulates realistic evidence based recommendations which are presented to the Council's Executive.

3.3 Scrutiny reviews will carry out a number of stages in undertaking and completing a review. The stages broadly are:

Stage 1 Scope The initial stage of the review identifies the background, issues, potential outcomes and timetable for the review.

Stage 2 Investigate The panel gathers evidence using a variety of tools and techniques and arranges site visits where appropriate.

Stage 3 Analyse The key trends and issues are highlighted from the evidence gathered by the panel.

Stage 4 Clarify The panel discusses and identifies the principal messages of the review from the work undertaken.

Stage 5 Recommend The panel formulates and agrees realistic recommendations.

Stage 6 Report Draft and final reports are prepared based on the evidence, findings and recommendations.

Stage 7 Monitor The panel undertakes to monitor agreed recommendations on a regularly agreed basis.

4 Background

4.1 Chester-le-Street market has been a popular attraction for many years. However people's habits change when faced with the development of other improved retail opportunities and experiences. In a nutshell the 'market' for markets is changing. The market has been subject to significant investment as part of the regeneration of the Civic Heart. Its attractiveness has been improved and the work of the Action Learning Set has developed a significant programme of events throughout the year to improve footfall and dwell time. Unfortunately, income from the market has not been achieving targets. It is therefore the right time to consider options for the market's future.

4.2 The income target for the Market for 2007/8 was £203k whereas it made only half that figure. The targets remain static, but as the market declines this target gets further and further away. Nevertheless a slight improvement in rental has taken pace in 2008 as the result of the events programme initiated this year and which is to enthusiastically

driven by the Town Centre Development Manager. A question that these circumstances raise is whether this is a local phenomenon or are 'traditional' markets elsewhere suffering from prevailing economic forces such as the credit squeeze, which seems to be damaging the confidence of shoppers. The review seeks to look at such issues and make recommendations for the future.

5 Terms of Reference

5.1 The terms of reference of the review was to look to answer the following questions:

- Which are the top performing Market Towns?
- What do the best do?
- What do the traders think?
- Is the perceived decline in market performance a local phenomenon?
- Are 'traditional' markets elsewhere suffering from prevailing economic forces; such as the credit squeeze?
- In times of perceived economic difficulties markets should offer better value for money, what affect does the presence of discounters such as Aldi and Wilkinson's have on the market?
- What are the factors that are recognised to appeal to shoppers?
- Should the public sector continue to manage what is a private sector activity?
- Which companies run private markets and where?
- How do they compare?
- How does the relationship between such operators and local authority landlords' work?
- What rental could be raised from a relationship with a private sector operator?
- What is the sustainability of Chester-le-Street's market in the medium and longer term (five or ten year's time)?
- Suggest a way to maximize the investments that have been made and to increase profitability?
- What decisions do this and the new unitary authority need to make in the light of the research findings?

6 Methodology

6.1 The task and finish group was working to a clearly agreed timetable. The timetable was a useful tool by which progress could be monitored and also provided a basis for progress reports to the main task and finish and Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings.

6.2 The council agreed its methodology as part of the scoping report approved by the Overview and Scrutiny committee on 30th July 2008. The methodology is set out in the following paragraphs.

6.3 Interviews were conducted with the Council's Town Centre Development Manager and the council's consultants Smartspeed Consulting Limited. Their detailed report forms Appendix 1.

6.3 **Consultancy Guidance**

As indicated principle research support was provided by Smartspeed Consultancy Services working closely with the Town Centre Development Manager. This company:

- identified the top performing market towns and why they are the 'best';
- Obtained feedback from traders as to the current status of the market;
- Researched the factors that appeal to visitors / shoppers to visit a (local) market;
- Identified and evaluate privately run markets;
- Analysed information gained to evaluate sustainability over the next five to ten years;
- Undertook report writing and reporting to inform the Task and Finish Groups discussions and interim and final reports. The consultants final report from which recommendations are drawn are set out I annex 1 of this report

Visits

6.4 On the guidance of the consultants visits will be arranged to appropriate markets and operators to understand how they operate successfully. The following visits were made:

Insert Schedule and learning

Evidence Gathering

6.5 The Task and Finish Group sought to engage traders and public through a variety of techniques in order to gain opinion on the future of the market in Chester-le-Street. This involved website publicity and a meeting with the market traders on 25th October 2008.

Report Findings

6.6 The Task and Finish Group prepared a draft report of their findings to which was presented to the People and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consultation purpose on 3rd December 2008. A detailed report on the findings was agreed at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on XXth January 2009.

7 Legislative & Strategic Context

- 7.1 Provision of a market is not a legislative duty. The council has continued to provide a market in view of its importance to the town, its people and visitors
- 7.2 It is considered that the market is of strategic importance in helping maintain Chester-le-Street as a tourist and shopping destination within the region.

8 Findings of the Review

Views of Traders

- 8.1 The traders at Chester-le-Street were very forthcoming regarding the survey conducted at the market this summer. The views collected from the traders were generally constructive in nature and a summary of these comments is below:
- The market has declined (more so in the last 18 months)
 - Other markets are declining also
 - The red brick area is a point of contention
 - Flow and footfall is reduced
 - More traders are required (need to be incentives)
 - Advertising of the market is low
 - Parking costs are affecting visitor levels
- 8.2 The traders offered several solutions to help with the improvement of trade in the marketplace, a summary of these are as follows:
- Free parking on market days
 - Discounted rent for new traders
 - More meetings with the Council on Friday afternoons
 - Incentives for certain trader types (that are currently missing)
 - Work with bus companies to configure bus routes
 - Develop advertising for the market
 - Sign the market from the high street
 - Negotiate use of the red bricked area next to arch
- 8.3 The shoppers attending the markets were asked questions about why they had come to the market in Chester-le-Street, and were asked 'what made a great market'. Time and time again the main comment that was divulged was that of variety. The secondary factors that were recorded from the conversations experienced included:

- Car parking costs
- More traders to make it 'worthwhile'
- Weekday entertainment to help build up the weekday markets

The consultants advise that the feedback from the interviews this summer corresponds with the survey conducted last summer. The overriding theme of more traders to build the market was clear from this section of the project.

Evidence from Market visits

8.4 Full details of market visits are set out in Appendix B of the consultants report. The following is a summary of the points raised from the consultants visits to markets in the region:

- The markets visited were positioned at the 'heart of the town'
- There were a mixture of self-erecting stalls and 'gazebos'
- All markets visited have witnessed a decline in activity in the market
- Fee structure is roughly in line with that of Chester-le-Street, if not erring on the more expensive side (per stall, not per square foot)
- The markets run by privately owned organisations appeared more focussed on generating a profit.
- All of the town's visited had markets that struggle against the presence of supermarkets
- Two of the towns have promotion pots – where the traders contribute to a fund for advertising and promoting the market (which they get a say in what happens with the money)
- Art and 'features' are part of the market areas in the towns that have had recent refurbishment
- The other council run markets appear to be struggling to source and manage an events programme to support the market.
- The shops that surrounded these markets appeared to be 'in tune' with the market, providing a wide range of goods and service that compliment the market traders.
- Good levels of communication were recognised at each of these markets – in both directions between the management and the traders.
- Blyth and Stanley had free parking; Darlington and South Shields did not. The cost of parking was discussed at South Shields as being a deterrent – but not at Darlington.
- Clear policies were enforced 'flexibly' at the markets visited
- There has been a general drop off in terms of coach visits due to parking / drop off arrangements at some of the markets
- The level of 'banter' has decreased across all of the markets – this was mentioned at all of the markets and was felt that part of the market experience had been lost.

8.5 In addition the following main themes were also picked up from member's visits:

- Traders are put at the centre of the focus. They are provided with flexibility and deals as appropriate, but also penalised if they don't adhere to the regulations implemented.
- Promotion of the markets and the use of the space was aimed to maximise footfall.
- The gazebo style stall looks very good, but brings with it a raft of other issues, including costs, health and safety and further negotiation regarding available stall size.
- At Chester-le-Street there is a clear want, and need, to meet with the Council on a regular basis to support each other in moving forwards.

8.6 The consultants take the view that Chester-le-Street's market is ahead of many of the local markets in terms of trader levels and visitor levels. Other markets are however regarded as being 'more successful'. From a breakeven point of view this is at least partially true. The improvements that have been made at other markets are not a massive leap away from the market's current position and therefore put Chester-le-Street in good stead for moving forwards. Despite the differences in the markets visited there are a number of ideas and options that can be used at Chester-le-Street. There are also a number of parallels to the work that has already been conducted, giving the Council a good platform to proceed from.

Consultant's evidence of good performing markets.

8.7 The consultants contacted several markets which were 'doing well'. These were:

- Stockton
- Catterick
- Barnard Castle
- Durham
- Hexham

8.8 There were recurring themes from the operators of such markets why they felt their markets were performing. These are:

- They have a flexible approach towards the traders, both in terms of regulation and pricing.
- Diversity of traders is key to ensure that 'under one roof' the variety of goods area available so that 'value for money' is present.
- Promotion of the market is pro-active, with some of the markets levying a promotion charge to the cost of the rent. This promotion charge is then used as part of the ongoing

conversation with the traders as to how to best promote the market.

- All of the towns who have large supermarkets present, either adjacent to the market or out of town, recognised the pull that these organisations have. Market attendance has dropped inline with the opening of these stores.
- The majority of the people interviewed acknowledged that their markets had witnessed a downturn in traders and shoppers over the last 12 to 18 months.
- The websites used to promote the markets discussed were actively maintained.

Quantative Research

8.9 During Summer 2007 a quantitative research project was undertaken by Chester-le-Street District Council Regeneration Team to understand more about what makes the market at Chester-le-Street work. The information that has been compiled from this piece of research supports the research and analysis gained from this research project. Full details of the research can be seen in Appendix D of the consultants report. In summary , most of the respondents:

- Were female
- Were aged between 46 and 65 years
- Attended the market on a weekly basis
- Travelled less than 20 miles to get to the market
- Appreciated the variety of items on sale in the market
- Believed that more traders and the presence of toilets would vastly improve the market

8.10 Drawbacks to this information include:

- Vagueness of some of the responses
- Layout of the questionnaires could require interpretation
- Potentially limited set of results – only conducted during the Summer months may have provided a skewed view of the shoppers perspective

Research into 'local phenomenon'.

8.11 One of the key questions laid out at the start of this review asked if the decline witnessed in the Chester-le-Street market was a local phenomenon, or if this was indeed a widespread issue. During the phone interviews and market visits this question was answered through the experiences of the people working and running the markets. This is not a local phenomenon.

8.12 The consultants point out that general statistics for trading in traditional markets are not monitored by the Office for National Statistics and so other forms of research had to be conducted. Using the Internet to review news stories over the past four years there is a clear trend in a decline in 'high street' retail generally. Although this does not

specifically refer to traditional markets they are inextricably linked. Research provided by the National Market Traders Federation ('First National Survey of Retail Markets') confirms that this is not a local phenomenon. That report, which was written in conjunction with Manchester Metropolitan University, details that although market days and stalls have increased across the UK in the past five years, the level of trading and participation at the markets by traders is declining across the country.

- 8.13 The consultants consider that the pressures on market traders from the presence of 'large box' retailers such as Tesco (adjacent to the Chester-le-Street market) and ALDI (in the vicinity of Chester-le-Street market) is clear when discussing this matter with traders and shoppers. This said, there is also a factor that needs to be considered. People who shop at the market appear to shop there for the experience of the market, and this cannot currently be re-created in a large retailer's premises.
- 8.14 Members are recommended by the consultants to take into account the current economic pressures being faced by all businesses at the time of writing this report need to also be considered. The 'credit crunch' has now been in effect for the past fifteen months, which has changed perceptions to shopping and ultimately the level of shopping that is taking place. How strong this factor is in affecting the level of trade taking place in the market is difficult to ascertain but cannot be discounted from the research.
- 8.15 From the interviews conducted by the consultants with shoppers and the analysis of the 2007 survey there is a clear age profile that patronise the market. This is the '46+' category and raises the question "will markets die out with this generation?" From the research conducted the consultants advise that the decline of markets is not a local phenomenon. Work must take place to maximise the volume of shopping taking place within the market during trading days and a revised forecast of activity (or revenue) should take place once the current economic conditions have become positive once more.

9 Conclusions

- 9.1 The consultants report draws the following conclusions which are supported by the Task and Finish Group:
- The market is currently making a loss. Profitability needs to return to the market if Chester-le-Street is to remain as a 'Market Town'. If profitability is not made in the next two years then a decision needs to be made as to whether outsourcing the market to another operator would be a better option, or to consider the closure of the market.

- The general trend in traditional markets is that of a declining trade. The recognised markets in the North East are all suffering from the same issues that Chester-le-Street is. This is not a local phenomenon, but other areas are clearly dealing with the issue in a positive way and are developing and evolving their markets to address the current issues.
- The fixed stalls at Chester-le-Street are 'dead space' during the rest of the week when markets are not taking place. There is an opportunity to use this space for alternative revenue generating activities.
- The marketing spend at Chester-le-Street is not in line with the other markets in the local area and needs to be increased in order to attract more traders and more customers into the town.
- There is a lack of signage on the A1. Signage on the main roads leading into Chester-le-Street needs to be reviewed.
- The number of Traders needs to increase in order to populate the market and attract more shoppers. New traders arrive first - shoppers then follow.
- The event area is under utilised (used approximately 12 times per year) and could be used for self-erect market stalls. The event area is in a key location to maintain the continuity between the main shopping street (Front Street) and the market. Increasing usage of this area should help both the shopping streets and the market to share the current footfall.
- A flexible approach to managing the market (re: incentives for traders) could help in attracting new traders. This has been demonstrated at other markets in the local area and should be seriously considered.
- The rents at Chester-le-Street are roughly in line with the other regional markets, but the stall area provided makes it relatively expensive for the services provided.

Market	Cost per foot (depth assumed constant)
Chester-le-Street	£1.50
Darlington	£4.00
South Shields	£1.70
Blyth	£1.00 (N.B. This is due for an increase) ¹
Stanley	£2.00
Stockton	£1.70

- Public toilets are a necessary feature for the public and to the traders. The lack of toilet facilities has been commented on during this research and last year's research also.
- Better communication between the traders and the Council would support improvement and development of the market. Without a long term view on this partnership the success of the market will be compromised.
- Privately run markets may reduce some of the Council's costs, but this arrangement does not guarantee a more effective market.
- From visiting the other markets in the region that are considered to be performing well it is interesting to note that Chester-le-Street is still doing well in relative terms. This should be recognised when considering the next steps in the strategy to develop the market.

9.2 The review concludes that the market at Chester-le-Street is in a position where improvement and growth can be created. It is considered that in the short to medium term that there remains justification for the market to be provided by the District Council and subsequently the new unitary Council. In the short to medium term a phased improvement plan based on the consultant's recommendations ought to be developed and the market managed accordingly. Should the improvement plan fail to deliver the required change then consideration ought to be given to outsourcing the market. The consultant's recommendations for the future are fully set out in section 6 of their report.

10 Recommendations

10.1 The review recommends that:

1. The responsibility for the management of the market is retained by the local authority and subsequent local authority.
2. A phased improvement plan is developed in line with the recommendations in the consultants report.
3. The findings of the review and the proposals for the future are submitted for the consideration of the new Unitary Council as part of the Handing Over the Baton Report with a recommendation that the market ought to be continued to be operated by the local authority unless the improvement plan fails to deliver the necessary change.

10.2 It is recommended that this report is agreed and reported to the District Council's Executive on 2nd February 2009



Chester-le-Street
District Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee



People & Place

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Final Report Second Draft**

Appendix 1

January 2009



Research the future of the market

Project Update

Smartspeed Consulting Limited

Contents

Contents	19
1. Introduction	21
1.1. Background	21
1.2. Objectives	22
1.3. Schedule	22
2. Report Summary	23
3. Methodology	24
3.1. Market Surveys (Traders / Shoppers)	24
3.2. Best local markets – site visits.....	24
3.3. Recognised national markets – telephone interviews	24
3.4. Quantitative research – 2007 survey analysis	24
3.5. Private run markets – interviews with operators	25
3.6. Review of council costs and income for Chester-le-Street market.....	25
4. Summary of findings.....	26
4.1. Chester-le-Street Surveys (Traders / Shoppers).....	26
4.2. Best local markets – site visits.....	27
4.2.1. South Shields (run by South Tyneside Council).....	27
4.2.2. Blyth (run by Blyth Valley District Council).....	27
4.2.3. Stanley (run by Nobles Promotions)	27
4.2.4. Darlington (run by Darlington Borough Council)	28
4.2.5. Stockton Market (run by Stockton Borough Council)	28
4.2.6. A summary of the finding can be read below:.....	28
4.3. Recognised national markets – telephone interviews	29
4.4. Comparison to Member visits.....	30
4.5. Research into the ‘local phenomenon’	30
4.6. Quantitative research – 2007 survey analysis	31
4.7. Private run markets – interviews with operators	32
4.8. Review of council costs and income for Chester-le-Street market.....	33
5. Conclusions	34
6. Recommendations	37
Phase 1: Preparation / Infrastructure	37
Phase 2: Profit Centre for the Council, with a flexible approach to running the market	39
Phase 3: Depending on phase 2 results - privately run market (3 year contract)	40
Consideration of scenarios (for awareness only)	41
7. Appendix A – Details of visit to Chester-le-Street Market	42
Chester-le-Street Market	42
TUESDAY	42
FRIDAY	42
SATURDAY	43
QUESTIONS.....	43
8. Appendix B – Visit Notes	44

8.1.	Review of Darlington Market.....	44
8.2.	Review of South Shields Market	46
8.3.	Review of Blyth Market.....	48
8.4.	Review of Stanley Market	50
8.5.	Review of Stockton Market	52
8.6.	Review of Morpeth Market.....	54
9.	Appendix C – Telephone Interview notes	56
9.1.	STOCKTON.....	56
9.2.	CATTERICK	56
9.3.	BARNARD CASTLE.....	57
9.4.	DURHAM OUTDOOR MARKET	57
9.5.	HEXHAM.....	58
10.	Appendix D – 2007 Market Visitor Survey Results	59
11.	Appendix E – Proposed Regulations.....	60
	Appendix F – Costs and Income	65
	Appendix F (continued) – Costs and Income	66

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Chester-le-Street is considered to be a 'Market Town'. However evidence would suggest that this label is no longer appropriate.

A project known as 'Investment in the Town Centre' is considering the potential for the future of the market in Chester-le-Street. A specific project 'Research the Future of the Market' has been agreed as part of the Council's *People and Place* single priority, and approved by Chester-le-Street District Council's Executive.

Chester-le-Street market has been a popular attraction for many years. However people's habits change when faced with the development of other improved retail opportunities and experiences. In a nutshell the 'market' for markets is changing. The market has been subject to significant investment as part of the regeneration of the Civic Heart. Its attractiveness has been improved and the work of the Action Learning Set has developed a significant programme of events throughout the year to improve footfall and dwell time. Unfortunately, income from the market has not been achieving targets. It is therefore the right time to consider options for the market's future.

The target for 2007/8 was £203k whereas it made only half that figure. The targets remain static, but as the market declines this target gets further and further away. Nevertheless a slight improvement in rental has taken place in 2008 as the result of the events programme initiated this year.

A question that these circumstances raise is whether this is a local phenomenon or are 'traditional' markets elsewhere suffering from prevailing economic forces such as the credit squeeze, which seems to be damaging the confidence of shoppers.

What should Chester-le-Street District Council and the new Unitary Authority do in the light of such circumstances?

This research was commissioned to ask these questions; it should also ask a fundamental question - whether the public sector should continue to manage what is a private sector function. It will finally address questions relating to the sustainability of the market in five or ten years time and suggest a strategy to maximize the investments that have been made and to increase profitability.

1.2. Objectives

- Identify the top performing market towns and ask why they are the 'best'.
- Obtain feedback from traders as to the current status of the market.
- Research the factors that appeal to visitors / shoppers to visit a (local) market.
- Identify and evaluate privately run markets.
- Analyse information gained to evaluate sustainability over the next five to ten years.

1.3. Schedule

Chester-le-Street Market research	Tuesday 8 th July 2008 Saturday 12 th July 2008 Friday 25 th July 2008
Telephone Interviews	Tuesday 12 th August 2008 Wednesday 13 th August 2008 Thursday 14 th August 2008
Quantitative analysis	Wednesday 25 th September Thursday 25 th September
Regional market visits	Monday 15 th September Thursday 18 th September Saturday 20 th September Friday 26 th September Wednesday 8 th October

2. Report Summary

During the summer of 2008 this project reviewed the factors that attract shoppers to local (traditional) markets. This work supported the quantitative research conducted in 2007 and detailed that more traders providing a greater variety of goods are required (as denoted by the rise of car boot sale activity).

The infrastructure that is in place at Chester-le-Street market provides rigid stalls that hamper further utilisation of the market square during non-market days and lack public conveniences – noted by both the traders and the shoppers.

From visiting other local markets that are recognised as ‘doing well’ it is clear that Chester-le-Street is positioned to take advantage of its heritage as a market town by implementing a number of low cost improvements to bolster its current standing.

Resources are a key issue faced by Chester-le-Street District Council in order to progress the development of the market, an outline plan of activity is recommended at the end of this report.

3. Methodology

To understand why the market is operating the way it is, and to design a strategy, it was necessary to obtain more information than a quantitative research project would yield. Therefore a qualitative methodology was designed in order to more deeply understand the culture, economics and perceptions that affect the success of Chester-le-Street market. As the market is a system of individuals and organisations operating with boundaries and rules there is a wide margin for interpretation. A qualitative approach allows us to bring together the various information sources and derive a common thread, or themes, that will illuminate the real choices that can and need to be made in future strategies. The following sub-headings provide an overview of the compendium of techniques used during this project.

3.1. Market Surveys (Traders / Shoppers)

The initial question of ‘what do our traders and shopper feel about the market?’ was the starting point for this research project. The approach here was to approach members of the public and the traders with a short series of questions. This was a semi-structured approach as a short conversation was undertaken with each participant, sometimes leading away and around the set questions. By adopting this method a rich level of information was gained, which may not have been gathered if a rigid questioning procedure were used.

3.2. Best local markets – site visits

A well-used tool is that of benchmarking, however this is not directly applicable to this project due to varying social demographics, local attractions and management. To take advantage of this principle a series of site visits were undertaken to respected local markets. Each market was understood to be ‘doing well’, or have similar attributes to that of Chester-le-Street. A semi-structured approach was undertaken for this part of the research also. A checklist of questions provided a suitable backbone for our visits to each market, which was augmented by conversations with traders and market officers. The conversations that were specific to the individual market generated a vast array of additional information that provided further insight and ideas.

3.3. Recognised national markets – telephone interviews

Supporting the activity with the local markets research were the phone interviews. To deliver an economical solution to the research required was the rationale behind this approach. Conversations were conducted with a variety of markets who from local knowledge, Internet research and nationwide competitions were regarded as ‘good’ markets.

3.4. Quantitative research – 2007 survey analysis

During the summer of 2007 a survey was conducted in Chester-le-Street so that an understanding of where people were travelling from and why they came to the market was gained. This information has been analysed and supports the research conducted during this project.

3.5. Private run markets – interviews with operators

With differing objectives and infrastructures there is a clear difference in the approach between a privately run market and one that is run by a local council. Interviews with the private sector operators of markets assisted with gaining new insights into the potential options for the future of the market.

3.6. Review of council costs and income for Chester-le-Street market

To get a firm grasp on the financial situation of the market, and so as to provide context to the research analysis was conducted on the financial information available from the council. This provided a window to the bottom line details that affect decisions about the future of the market.

4. Summary of findings

In this section the research findings are summarised so that the important themes are laid out.

4.1. Chester-le-Street Surveys (Traders / Shoppers)

The traders at Chester-le-Street were very forthcoming regarding the survey conducted at the market this summer. The views collected from the traders were generally constructive in nature and a summary of these comments is below:

- The market has declined (more so in the last 18 months)
- Other markets are declining also
- The red brick area is a point of contention
- Flow and footfall is reduced
- More traders are required (need to be incentives)
- Advertising of the market is low
- Parking costs are affecting visitor levels

The traders offered several solutions to help with the improvement of trade in the marketplace, a summary of these are below:

- Free parking on market days
- Discounted rent for new traders
- More meetings with the Council on Friday afternoons
- Incentives for certain trader types (that are currently missing)
- Work with bus companies to configure bus routes
- Develop advertising for the market
- Sign the market from the high street
- Negotiate use of the red bricked area next to arch

The shoppers attending the markets were asked questions about why they had come to the market in Chester-le-Street, and were asked 'what made a great market'. Time and time again the main comment that was divulged was that of variety. The secondary factors that were recorded from the conversations experienced included:

- Car parking costs
- More traders to make it 'worthwhile'
- Weekday entertainment to help build up the weekday markets

The feedback from the interviews this summer corresponds with the survey conducted last summer. The overriding theme of more traders to build the market was clear from this section of the project.

Information about the days attended and the questions asked can be found in appendix A.

4.2. Best local markets – site visits

Despite the general decline of markets (both in attendance and revenue generation) in the UK there are still notable markets of interest to this research project.

4.2.1. South Shields (run by South Tyneside Council)

South Shields was visited on a sunny Saturday morning and was noticeably busy from the outset. There was a good selection of stalls around the old town hall, which in itself provides a very attractive backdrop. Cafes surrounded the market and provided a pleasant complimentary and relaxed feel to the market. Some of the traders provided 'banter' which drew in the crowds to these stalls. With bus stops adjacent to the market and the main shopping street leading directly from the market it appears to be in a good location. The stalls were gazebos, which offered the traders plenty of display area and are erected by the Council's staff. Parking was paid and ample.

4.2.2. Blyth (run by Blyth Valley District Council)

The main market square at Blyth has been undergoing some major renovation works. The visit to Blyth was interesting for a number of reasons, including the fact that Chester-le-Street has been through a very similar transformation in the last two years. The visit was on a busy Friday morning, with bright dry weather. As the main market square was cordoned off due to construction work the market has been moved next to a public car park. This still provides plenty of foot traffic to the market, which appeared to be well visited by shoppers. The stalls were self-erected, although this is a point under current discussion as the Council may opt for Council erected 'gazebos'. Parking was free and ample.

4.2.3. Stanley (run by Nobles Promotions)

During market days the market in Stanley can be found taking up the entirety of the high street. The visit to this market was on a Thursday morning with bright sunshine. Self-erected stalls were present and this gave the market a very earthy feel to it. There was a wide range of traders covering all the major categories of selling, this complimented the types of shops that were adjacent to the stalls (a lot of discount shops were present) and trade seemed to be supporting both the market stall traders and the shops. The new bus station gave a good focal point for the high street and ensured that shoppers poured out from the bus station right in to the heart of the market. Privately run the operators appeared to run a tight ship and had been promoting the market proactively. Parking was free, although difficult to find spaces.

4.2.4. Darlington (run by Darlington Borough Council)

Darlington town centre has been recently refurbished and was visited on a bright Monday morning. Their 'pedestrian art' was clearly visible as were the gazebos that they use. The gazebos have their own power and were clean, large in size and emblazoned with the Council's slogans. The stalls were laid out around the indoor market and the shops adjacent to the stalls were again complimentary. The shops around the town centre were big names and included department stores. Paid parking was ample and the market itself appeared busy.

4.2.5. Stockton Market (run by Stockton Borough Council)

A well presented market in the centre of the town. The market area is pedestrianised and appears busy. The town was busy on the day of the visit and this was reflected in the amount of trade appearing to take place in the market. The market was full of traders and the general feedback was very positive from the traders. Stockton market has levied a fee on the traders to help with promotion although it was stated that most of the publicity was generated through word of mouth.

4.2.6. A summary of the finding can be read below:

- The markets visited were positioned at the 'heart of the town'
- Mixture of self-erecting stalls and 'gazebos'
- All have witnessed a decline in activity in the market
- Fee structure is roughly in line with that of Chester-le-Street, if not erring on the more expensive side (per stall, not per square foot)
- The markets run by privately owned organisations appeared more focussed on generating a profit.
- All of the town's visited had markets that struggle against the presence of supermarkets
- Two of the towns have promotion pots – where the traders contribute to a fund for advertising and promoting the market (which they get a say in what happens with the money)
- Art and 'features' are part of the market areas in the towns that have had recent refurbishment
- The other council run markets appear to be struggling to source and manage an events programme to support the market.
- The shops that surrounded these markets appeared to be 'in tune' with the market, providing a wide range of goods and service that compliment the market traders.
- Good levels of communication were recognised at each of these markets – in both directions between the management and the traders.
- Blyth and Stanley had free parking; Darlington and South Shields did not. The cost of parking was discussed at South Shields as being a deterrent – but not at Darlington.
- Clear policies were enforced 'flexibly' at the markets visited
- There has been a general drop off in terms of coach visits due to parking / drop off arrangements at some of the markets

- The level of 'banter' has decreased across all of the markets – this was mentioned at all of the markets and was felt that part of the market experience had been lost.

Despite the differences in the markets visited there are a number of ideas and options that can be used at Chester-le-Street. There are also a number of parallels to the work that has already been conducted, giving the Council a good platform to proceed from.

The notes from the visits can be found in appendix B.

4.3. Recognised national markets – telephone interviews

Following the initial research into which markets were regarded as 'doing well' a number of phone interviews took place.

The markets that were successfully contacted were:

- Stockton
- Catterick
- Barnard Castle
- Durham
- Hexham

From talking with the Market Officers (or equivalent) there were some obvious consistent themes coming back as to the reasons that they believed their markets were thriving in this current economic climate.

In summary:

- They have a flexible approach towards the traders, both in terms of regulation and pricing.
- Diversity of traders is key to ensure that 'under one roof' the variety of goods area available so that 'value for money' is present.
- Promotion of the market is pro-active, with some of the markets levying a promotion charge to the cost of the rent. This promotion charge is then used as part of the ongoing conversation with the traders as to how to best promote the market.
- All of the towns who have large supermarkets present, either adjacent to the market or out of town, recognised the pull that these organisations have. Market attendance has dropped inline with the opening of these stores.
- The majority of the people interviewed acknowledged that their markets had witnessed a downturn in traders and shoppers over the last 12 to 18 months.
- The websites used to promote the markets discussed were actively maintained.

There are two key lessons here that we can apply to Chester-le-Street:

- 1 – We can review our pricing plans to attempt to draw new traders into the town
- 2 – We can develop a low effort route to achieve pro-active marketing.

For a full listing of the notes for each interview please see appendix C.

4.4. Comparison to Member visits

Councillors from Chester-le-Street District Council visited several of the local markets around the region, conducting their own research for this project. The markets visited included Blyth, Darlington, Chester-le-Street, South Shields, Stockton and Stanley. The themes that come out from this tranche of research reflected the findings from the other approaches used during this project. The key points:

- Traders are put at the centre of the focus. They are provided with flexibility and deals as appropriate, but also penalised if they don't adhere to the regulations implemented.
- Promotion of the markets and the use of the space was aimed to maximise footfall.
- The gazebo style stall looks very good, but brings with it a raft of other issues, including costs, health and safety and further negotiation regarding available stall size.
- At Chester-le-Street there is a clear want, and need, to meet with the Council on a regular basis to support each other in moving forwards.

Chester-le-Street's market is ahead of many of the local markets in terms of trader levels and visitor levels. Other markets are however regarded as being 'more successful'. From a breakeven point of view this is at least partially true. The improvements that have been made at other markets are not a massive leap away from the market's current position and therefore put Chester-le-Street in good stead for moving forwards.

4.5. Research into the 'local phenomenon'

One of the key questions laid out at the start of this project asked if the decline witnessed in the Chester-le-Street market was a local phenomenon, or if this was indeed a widespread issue.

During the phone interviews and market visits this question was answered through the experiences of the people working and running the markets. This is not a local phenomenon.

General statistics for trading in traditional markets are not monitored by the Office for National Statistics and so other forms of research had to be conducted. Using the Internet to review news stories over the past four years there is a clear trend in a decline in 'high street' retail generally. Although this does not specifically refer to traditional markets they are inextricably linked.

Research provided by the National Market Traders Federation ('First National Survey of Retail Markets') confirms that this is not a local phenomenon. This report, which was written in conjunction with Manchester Metropolitan University, details that although market days and stalls have increased across the UK in the past five years, the level of trading and participation at the markets by traders is declining across the country.

The pressures on market traders from the presence of 'large box' retailers such as Tesco (adjacent to the Chester-le-Street market) and ALDI (in the vicinity of Chester-le-Street market) is clear when discussing this matter with traders and shoppers. This said, there is also a factor that needs to be considered. People who shop at the market appear to shop there for the experience of the market, and this cannot currently be re-created in a large retailer's premises.

The current economic pressures being faced by all businesses at the time of writing this report need to also be considered. The 'credit crunch' has now been in effect for the past fifteen months, which has changed perceptions to shopping and ultimately the level of shopping that is taking place. How strong this factor is in affecting the level of trade taking place in the market is difficult to ascertain but cannot be discounted from the research.

From the interviews conducted with shoppers and the analysis of the 2007 survey there is a clear age profile that patronise the market. This is the '46+' category and raises the question "will markets die out with this generation?"

From the research conducted the decline of markets is not a local phenomenon. Work must take place to maximise the volume of shopping taking place within the market during trading days and a revised forecast of activity (or revenue) should take place once the current economic conditions have become positive once more.

4.6. Quantitative research – 2007 survey analysis

During Summer 2007 a quantitative research project was undertaken by Chester-le-Street District Council Regeneration Team to understand more about what makes the market at Chester-le-Street work.

The information that has been compiled from this piece of research supports the research and analysis gained from this research project.

In summary - most of the respondents:

- Were female
- Were aged between 46 and 65 years
- Attended the market on a weekly basis
- Travelled less than 20 miles to get to the market
- Appreciated the variety of items on sale in the market
- Believed that more traders and the presence of toilets would vastly improve the market

Drawbacks to this information include:

- Vagueness of some of the responses
- Layout of the questionnaires could require interpretation
- Potentially limited set of results – only conducted during the Summer months may have provided a skewed view of the shoppers perspective

In appendix D you can see the full breakdown of the results.

4.7. Private run markets – interviews with operators

During the phone interviews and visits a number of conversations were conducted with organisations that privately run markets.

The first observation made was they were very much focussed on the profitability of the market, an obvious factor to consider, but one that is more prominent in the private sector approach.

The other key feature observed was the maintaining of rules to keep order and control in the market.

There are many forces at work in a market (including political and economic), and keeping control during the market times was clearly part of the private sector approach. Finally, a consistent theme from the private operators was that of promoting the market. This was done pro-actively and consistently.

One of the questions raised prior to this research commencing was ‘what rental could be raised from a relationship with a private sector operator?’ The only arrangement that this research is aware of is the of Stanley market (in partnership with Derwentside District Council). Their arrangement is:

- 3 year Licence
- 12 month break option with 3 month notice
- 50% of stall takings paid as rent
- Licencee to carry appropriate insurance
- Licencee responsible for site clearing

From the Council’s perspective the 50% of stall takings would generate an income of approximately £52,000.00 (assuming that the trader volume and stall charges remained constant with current figures).

During this project the researcher and the Town Centre Development Manager attempted to contact Spook Erections, which manage numerous markets (including car boot sales) without success.

From this brief analysis there are many factors that are identical between the private and public sector management approaches. The key difference is the level of effort put in by the private sector to maintain control, promote the market and to monitor profits.

4.8. Review of council costs and income for Chester-le-Street market

The income target is static – the actual revenue has halved in the last four years.

The 2008/09 period for results is currently showing a 50% attainment of the targets set.

The budget for the year states that the costs for running the market are:

Total direct expenditure	£117,790.00
Net direct expenditure	£33,120.00
=> Running cost	£150,910.00

The budget income is set at £206,400.00 (the static target)

This would give a 'profit' of £55,490.00

However, the figure is likely to be closer to £110,000.00

So, the new 'profit' would be - £40,910 (hence a loss)

From reviewing the budget there is approximately £90,000.00 worth of re-charges and capital charges. The questions that this raises are:

- Would a private organisation be burdened with these recharges?
- Are the recharges adequately apportioned?

From the trends of the markets income, coupled with the overall trends in markets it becomes clear that under the current working model Chester-le-Street market is not viable.

Without changes being made to entice new traders into the market, or without cutting the re-charge costs the market will remain a drain on public monies.

Please see appendix F for more information around these figures.

5. Conclusions

From the research conducted a number of conclusions can be drawn. This information helps to inform decision-making regarding the future of the market and as such the recommendations from this research project can be reviewed in section 6 of this document.

- The market is currently making a loss. Profitability needs to return to the market if Chester-le-Street is to remain as a 'Market Town'. If profitability is not made in the next two years then a decision needs to be made as to whether outsourcing the market to another operator would be a better option, or to consider the closure of the market.
- The general trend in traditional markets is that of a declining trade. The recognised markets in the North East are all suffering from the same issues that Chester-le-Street is. This is not a local phenomenon, but other areas are clearly dealing with the issue in a positive way and are developing and evolving their markets to address the current issues.
- The fixed stalls at Chester-le-Street are 'dead space' during the rest of the week when markets are not taking place. There is an opportunity to use this space for alternative revenue generating activities.
- The marketing spend at Chester-le-Street is not in line with the other markets in the local area and needs to be increased in order to attract more traders and more customers into the town.
- There is a lack of signage on the A1. Signage on the main roads leading into Chester-le-Street needs to be reviewed.
- The number of Traders needs to increase in order to populate the market and attract more shoppers. New traders arrive first - shoppers then follow.
- The event area is under utilised (used approximately 12 times per year) and could be used for self-erect market stalls. The event area is in a key location to maintain the continuity between the main shopping street (Front Street) and the market. Increasing usage of this area should help both the shopping streets and the market to share the current footfall.
- A flexible approach to managing the market (re: incentives for traders) could help in attracting new traders. This has been demonstrated at other markets in the local area and should be seriously considered.

- The rents at Chester-le-Street are roughly in line with the other regional markets, but the stall area provided makes it relatively expensive for the services provided.

Market	Cost per foot (depth assumed constant)
Chester-le-Street	£1.50
Darlington	£4.00
South Shields	£1.70
Blyth	£1.00 (N.B. This is due for an increase) ²
Stanley	£2.00
Stockton	£1.70

- Public toilets are a necessary feature for the public and to the traders. The lack of toilet facilities has been commented on during this research and last year's research also.
- Better communication between the traders and the Council would support improvement and development of the market. Without a long term view on this partnership the success of the market will be compromised.
- Privately run markets may reduce some of the Council's costs, but this arrangement does not guarantee a more effective market.
- From visiting the other markets in the region that are considered to be performing well it is interesting to note that Chester-le-Street is still doing well in relative terms. This should be recognised when considering the next steps in the strategy to develop the market.

The conclusions from this project are in line with previous expectations and understanding. However, this means that the market at Chester-le-Street is in a position where improvement and growth can be created. The next section will explore the recommendations from this research project in detail.

² This increase has recently been reported in the local press - <http://blyth.journallive.co.uk/2008/11/stallholders-in-blyth-hit-out.html>. Since the completion of the regeneration works at Blyth market and the return of market traders, several arguments have been played out in the local press where complaints about the rents and the suitability of the gazebos are being aired.

6. Recommendations

From the research conducted a number of options are available; this has been put into a phased approach as detailed below.

Phase 1: Preparation / Infrastructure

There are several features missing from the market as it currently stands. This first stage is to ensure that there is a solid foundation on which to build upon as the market develops.

- Provide full toilet facilities for both shoppers and traders within reasonable distance of the market.
- Introduce a (brown) sign on motorway to encourage coach drivers and tourists to visit the town.
- Remove of some of the fixed stalls and move towards a greater proportion of self-erecting stalls being used. This will allow the market square to be better used during the rest of the week and to allow more suitable coverings to be put in place to protect both shoppers and traders.
- Implementation of a 12-month event plan (in conjunction with other local councils) – funding and support would be required to implement this.
- Implementation of a 12-month marketing plan – funding required to allow expansion plans to proceed (or a levy being applied to the traders). A budget to extend the work already done would need to be agreed; a figure in the region of £10,000.00 would be a good starting place if dedicated to marketing and not events. Examples of marketing opportunities could include:
 - Banners indicating the days of the market and its location
 - Bags promoting the town and the market
 - Flyers to be distributed in local shops
 - Advertisements in local newspapers and selected magazines
 - Basic Search Engine Optimisation to increase website traffic

By introducing a levy on the stallholders this £10,000.00 budget could be extended further. It would also be proposed that the money spent would be done in conjunction with the traders – through regular consultation.

- Introduce incentives to acquire new traders (to increase overall trader volume and hence shopper)
 - Reduce the rent during fallow months (January, February and March)
 - Offer '2 for 1' on quiet trading days (e.g. Tuesday)

- Apply subsidies to new traders for a fixed period of time
- Implement regulations to give further control and support to the market (see Appendix E).

Phase 2: Profit Centre for the Council, with a flexible approach to running the market

Once the fundamentals are in place there is the opportunity to develop a better working relationship, bridging the gap between the Council and the Traders. By working together the full testing approach that marketing and improvement requires can be embraced. Keeping the market under the control of the Council brings many benefits including integration with the rest of the town and is proposed as the preferred option.

- Develop working relationships with traders to implement a continuous improvement culture. This will allow for more ideas and improvements to be made over a longer period of time. This will also allow for flexibility in approach to take place. Meetings could be held more frequently in the early stages of growth, such as a monthly frequency. Once the changes start to take effect this could then be moved a quarterly frequency.
- Expand the market onto the event area when events are not taking place. This should improve the footfall at the bottom end of this main shopping street as well as footfall through the market itself.
- Actively promote the market by working with the traders to encourage other traders to participate at Chester-le-Street and to generate more ways to promote the market.
- Track market profitability on a monthly basis and use this information to support further improvements and developments.
- Gradually remove the fixed stalls in the marketplace to allow other revenue streams to be implemented on non-market days. This could include car parking during the non-market days.
- Actively market to coach drivers to draw their passengers to the market.

If profitability has not returned to the market by September 2010 phase 3 could be considered.

Phase 3: Depending on phase 2 results - privately run market (3 year contract)

Private operators bring with them a sense of urgency and a focus on profit

maximisation. Should the Council struggle to achieve the performance that the market needs then this focus could help to improve the market.

- Engage with private management organisations to tender for the contract of running the market.

Consideration of scenarios (for awareness only)

Scene setting:

We've made a number of changes to the way the market has been run in Chester-le-Street. We have introduced flexible arrangements for the traders and promoted the town heavily. Every month we meet up with the traders to discuss how things are going and generate a whole plethora of ideas to continue to build upon the Chester-le-Street brand, this includes how to spend our marketing budget. Every three months the local market officers from the other districts meet up and we have a rolling plan of events designed to increase the number of shoppers visiting the town, however...

Scenario 1:

There has been a massive drop off in trade over the last two years –the market has failed despite doing the work that we outlined in 2008. We still fail to attract new traders and don't know why it is happening.

Scenario 2:

The market failed to achieve profitability under public sector management and so a private sector operator was brought in. After three years of running the license they can't turn it around and we're stuck for ideas.

Scenario 3:

The market has become a huge success and more resources are required. Chester-le-Street is a market town with a capital 'M' once more. We become the envy of the local area and we go from strength to strength. The only question we have is how can we expand our service offering to continue this growth.

The questions that are raised are to put this report in context.

- What happens if the market fails?
- What happens if the market becomes a runaway success?
- Can we cope with either eventuality?

This report has looked at the current state of the market and options as to how it could be moved forwards. There are many factors outside the control of the Council who operate the market. By being aware of the potential outcomes the Council can be better suited for deciding what course of action is best needed.

7. Appendix A – Details of visit to Chester-le-Street Market

Chester-le-Street Market



Photo notes:

The yellow line outlines the location of the market stalls on the day visited.

TESCO is located on the left hand side of the photo.

The main shopping street leads off from the edge of the market area on the right hand side of the photo (running from top to bottom)

The market stalls not within the yellow line are no longer present – this is the event area.

TUESDAY

Date of visit: Tuesday 8th July 2008

Time of visit: 9am until 12pm

Initial thought: Very quiet – lots of blue stands empty

Comments:

Traders were very friendly, but complained a lot about their situation. Low levels of shoppers attended. Several traders claimed not to be able to breakeven on the Tuesday market.

FRIDAY

Date of visit: Friday 25th July 2008

Time of visit: 9am until 12pm

Initial thought: Full of shoppers and traders

Comments:

Good mix of traders and shoppers observed during the market. Friday appears as a well-attended market.

SATURDAY

Date of visit: Saturday 12th July 2008

Time of visit: 9am until 12pm

Initial thought: Vibrant and busy

Comments:

It was clear that Saturday is a different trading style to Friday and Tuesdays with many second hand goods stalls; this was part of the attraction to shoppers.

QUESTIONS

Shoppers:

- Why do you visit CLS market?
- How often?
- How is the credit squeeze affecting your buying decisions?
- How has this (or any other) markets changed over the last 5 – 10 years?
- What do you look for in a good market?

Traders:

- How does CLS market compare today with 10 years ago? Number of shoppers?
- What is the support like from the Council?
- Access to the pitches?
- What impact has the credit squeeze had on you?
- What impact has Aldi / Wilkinsons had on you?
- What other markets do you trade at? Any comments?

8. Appendix B – Visit Notes

8.1. Review of Darlington Market



Photo notes:

The yellow line outlines the location of the market stalls on the day visited.
 The grey building in the centre of the photo is the indoor market.
 In the bottom right hand corner is the old market square (market displayed).
 Opposite the indoor market are large department stores

Visit Date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15th September 2008
Condition of the Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very good – it looks great • The marques look very professional and are in good condition
Attendance over the last 18 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stable • They have traders who 'do the rounds' • They have professional traders who are 'resident'
Promotions / Marketing spends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a formal traders association • Senior traders and Alan Draper are 'the voice' • Budget is approx. £5k from the Council • Continental markets should be on a monthly schedule • The stalls are costed according to the richer and poorer ends of the high street • Advertising is self-fuelling – profits reinvested • Local radio has been used

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each trader contributes 70p toward the advertising pot • Events team at the Council then arrange promotions • Subsidy given to new traders as this can help increase footfall • Buy 4 get 1 free (on Saturdays) • Pedestrian art • Darlington has a good selection of shops already to draw shoppers • Speciality markets on Sundays double the footfall
Fee Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £30 / £60 (half / full gazebo)
Management Type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public
Type of Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional
Market Profit / Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently sustainable
Number of Stalls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Between 18 and 26 doubles
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80p per hour • Abundant
Additional Attractions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good spread of shops
Additional Notes / Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gazebos are hired out on non-market days • Reputation building is a key objective • A few questions were raised: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 'What does the market need to do in the town?' ○ 'What will that look like and do?' ○ 'What does the town do?' • Many traders have forgotten how to trade • Charity stalls are sometimes used • Footfall counters are used by the Council to monitor attendance (not particularly accurate system) • Show man ship and vibrancy is required • Insurance is mandatory <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ £5 to be added to Council's policy for one day ○ £47 for the year privately (product and public) • Standards of working agreed

8.2. Review of South Shields Market



Photo notes:

The yellow line outlines the location of the market stalls on the day visited.

Main shopping street on right hand side middle of photo

Building in the centre of the photo is the old town hall

Bus stops at the bottom of the market

Visit Date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20th September 2008
Condition of the Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean – good access to sites / trader carparking (£1.50 per day) • Marques are now old, but look good still. They offer a good display area. • The market was vibrant and busy
Attendance over the last 18 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downturn recognised
Promotions / Marketing spends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotional carrier bags
Fee Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £26 per stall
Management Type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public
Type of Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional
Market Profit / Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakeven
Number of Stalls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 70 out of 108 spaces - typical
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See note regarding new ASDA • Paid parking around South Shields – plentiful but complained about

Additional Attractions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lots of cafes adjacent to the market square • Certain traders have been encouraged to take part in the market and flexibility has been taken to arrange this – this has included the support being given to a local artist.
Additional Notes / Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The market was being held on a fine day • A new ASDA supermarket will offer 2 hours free parking – this is expected to be located near to the market. This is seen as a positive development. • Wilkinsons is located in the corner of the market square • Lynn has a trading standards background • They have a policy to help ensure that variety is maintained • Promotion activities have been semi-proactive • The council has been slow at supporting • Flexible decisions have been made to keep traders happy, but under control • All decisions are accounted for • Lynn focuses on the relationship with the traders • More space could be sold (/108) but this would affect the quality of the market and the layout • Public toilets are adjacent • Traders need their own insurance • Coach visits now have problems with their drop off points • Ferry terminal and bus stops are in ideal locations • There is some banter from the traders (especially the meat auctioneers)

8.3. Review of Blyth Market

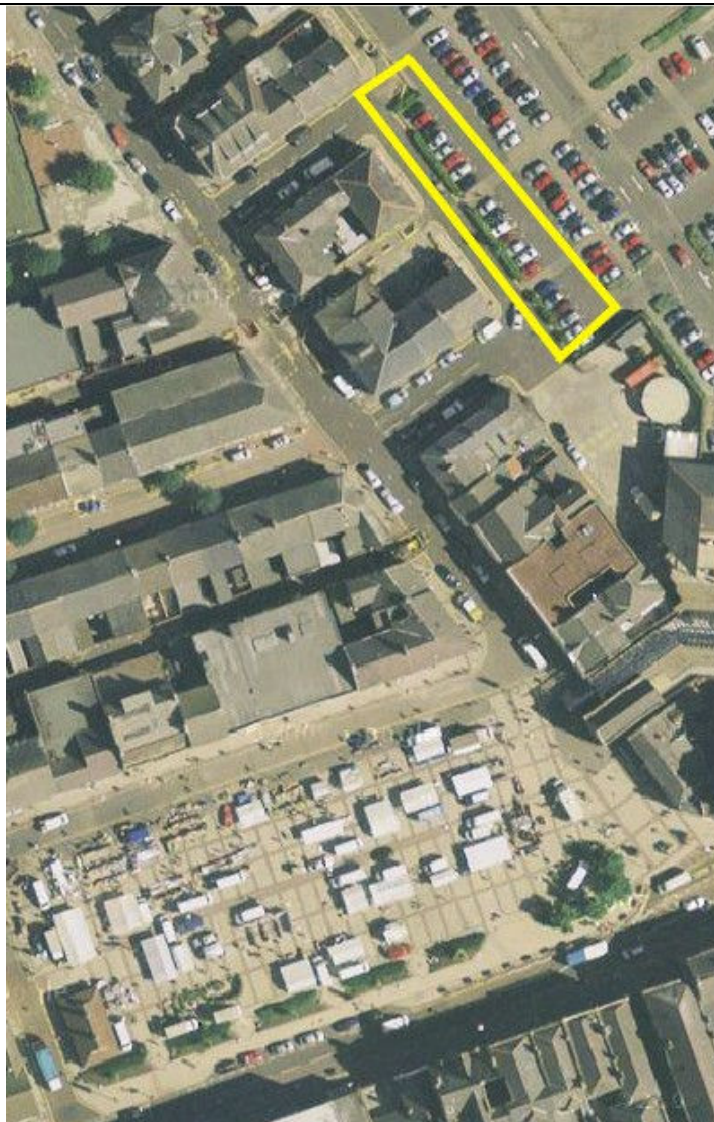


Photo notes:

The yellow line outlines the location of the market stalls on the day visited.
 The redevelopment of the town centre is at the bottom of the photo (where the market is shown)

Visit Date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 26th September 2008
Condition of the Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self -erecting stalls – tidy in appearance
Attendance over the last 18 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declined
Promotions / Marketing spends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £1 fee levied on all traders each time they take a stall at the market • This money is discussed quarterly at a meeting between the Council and the market traders and a rolling plan of activity is agreed

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> upon to promote the market.
Fee Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medium stall ranges from £18 to £29 depending on the day of the market This is under review due to the cost of the new changes proposed.
Management Type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public sector – determined due to political reasoning.
Type of Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traditional
Market Profit / Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negative – they are attempting to breakeven
Number of Stalls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50 max (30 visible today during visit)
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abundant and free
Additional Attractions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town centre features (when completed)
Additional Notes / Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Heart of the town centre' Bill Tarbit New Morrisons Superstore to be built next to current shop ASDA on the outskirts negates the need for people to visit the town centre Regeneration in the area has been approached so that all the areas of the town have been tackled. Water and art features being introduced into the market to attract visitors New stalls are going to be marquees Rent offset ideas are considered Events programme planned for the next 6 months Market is staffed by 1 market officer There has been a loss of the team – council is struggling

8.4. Review of Stanley Market

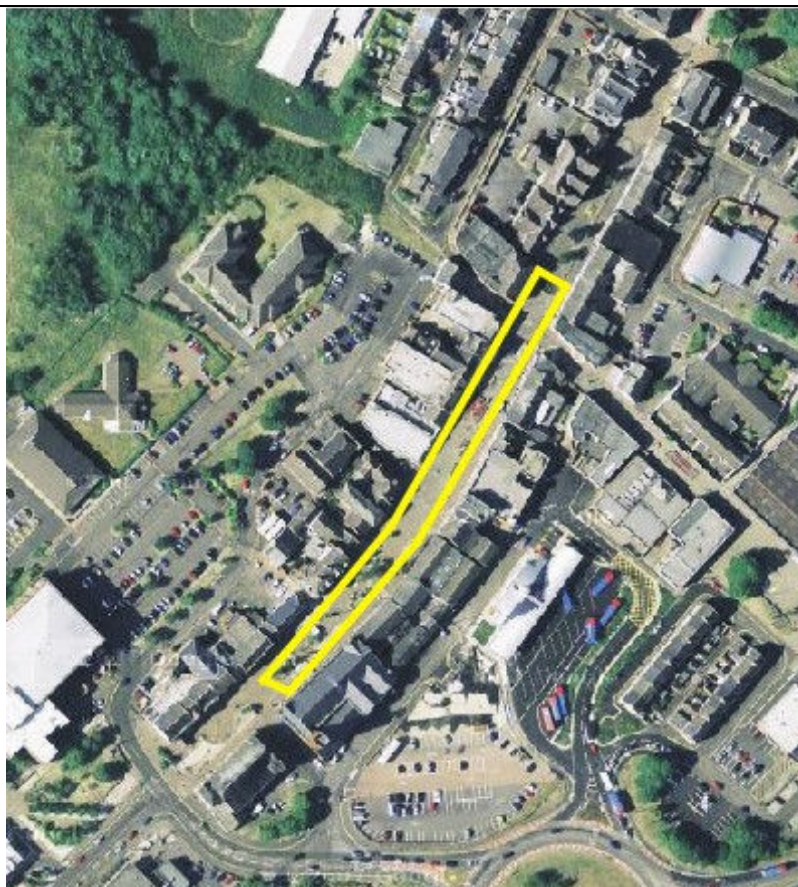


Photo notes:

The yellow line outlines the location of the market stalls on the day visited.
 Main shopping street is pedestrianised.
 ASDA is located just off the photo - bottom left.

Visit Date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18th September 2008
Condition of the Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The market stalls are self-erected and give a less standardised image than other markets visited. The display stands used were appropriate for the types of merchandise being offered – this did include items being located on the street floor. Overall the market area is in good condition with adjacent shops being supportive in appearance.
Attendance over the last 18 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintained a full 'cast membership' since taken over by Nobles.
Promotions / Marketing spends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is done through local and national pro-active working.

Fee Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £2 / foot
Management Type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private Sector
Type of Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional
Market Profit Sustainability /	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Profitable.
Number of Stalls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50 stalls were present on the day of this research
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking is free around Stanley and the congestion on the roads around the market and carparks was clearly visible.
Additional Attractions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The shops that surround the market compliment the market. There are many cafes and discount shops adjacent to the market itself and this appears to be synergistic with the market as opposed to working in direct competition.
Additional Notes / Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We visited McKays and Woolworths whilst visiting the market. Both shops mentioned that they receive extra footfall during market days. One of the days is a Saturday which one would normally expect to be higher anyway. • The flowers surrounding the market stalls on the high street, combined with recent redevelopment make the Stanley market a refreshing and vibrant place to visit.

8.5. Review of Stockton Market



Photo notes:

The yellow line outlines the location of the market stalls on the day visited.
Main shopping street is pedestrianised.

Visit Date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wednesday 8th October 2008
Condition of the Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tidy.
Attendance over the last 18 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stable
Promotions / Marketing spends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Much of the promotion comes from word of mouth. • Previous promotions have included carrier bags and sponsoring local football teams. • 50p surcharge for promotions levied on stall holders
Fee Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £20.50 per 12ft frontage
Management Type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public sector
Type of Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional
Market Profit / Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slightly profitable

Number of Stalls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 150
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easily accessible – some free.
Additional Attractions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good array of shops surrounding the market. • Classed as an attraction in itself.
Additional Notes / Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full on wet weather days – clauses in their regulations about the need to stay. • This is operated more like a private sector run market. • The traders work with the councils promotions group to decide on the best way to use the money to promote the market. • Located on the central street in Stockton. • Bus stops adjacent. • Self-erect stalls (uniform use of blue and white sheets). • Good range of traders and subsequent variety of products available – from fruit & veg to disability equipment. • Close to Thornaby and Middlesborough.

8.6. Review of Morpeth Market



Photo notes:

The yellow line outlines the location of the market stalls on the day visited.

Visit Date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wednesday 29th October 2008
Condition of the Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The market is on the central crossroads of the town. It is integrated within the heart of the main shopping area.
Attendance over the last 18 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stable at 17 stalls per market day
Promotions / Marketing spends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considerable marketing takes place – the market manager has access to a good marketing fund and uses local, regional and national publications.
Fee Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
Management Type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Authority Castle Morpeth Council
Type of Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General
Market Profit /	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The market is a profitable organisation

Sustainability	
Number of Stalls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 17
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plentiful in the area but a charge is made
Additional Attractions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Morpeth is an attractive town with several tourist attractions nearby. The market is very popular with traders, who also trade at Chester-le-Street. Although it's more expensive to trade at Morpeth trader feel that it presents value for money
Additional Notes / Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

9. Appendix C – Telephone Interview notes

9.1. STOCKTON

- Spoke with Colin Watson (Market Manager) – 077152 95910
- Over the last 12 months they have maintained the number of traders they have at the market (about 90% are weekly regulars).
- Full on wet weather days – clauses in their regulations about the need to stay.
- They pride themselves on being flexible to accommodate their traders.
- The market is seen as good value for money in Stockton and this helps to attract shoppers.
- Shoppers largely go to the market because of the diversity of traders they have.
- Types of traders are regulated, so they don't have too much of any one type (including new versus old) – this helps to give the market the diversity that shoppers like.
- The cost per 12ft frontage is £20.50, with every extra 6ft adding £10.00 to the cost.
- The 50p is a promotion surcharge which the traders own, but the council appear to manage.
- The traders work with the councils promotions group to decide on the best way to use the money to promote the market.
- Previous promotions have included carrier bags and sponsoring local football teams.
- Much of the promotion comes from word of mouth.
- Thornaby market is also under the local council's control and this going through a period of change. The town centre is being redeveloped and this has led to half of the regular traders to move one. The large ASDA store is also detracting from the market.
- Billingham market is also under their control and has been hit badly by the opening of a large TESCO next to the market.
- Colin has seen the general downturn in markets over the past 12 months.
- This is operated more like a private sector run market.

9.2. CATTERICK

- Main contact is Greville Worthington
- Phone number 01748 812 127
- They have noticed a downturn in spending over the last 12 months
- They have a privately funded website to help promote the market
- Promotion is often in the form of radio and local papers

- From reading their website there appears to be a number of other attractions to the market:
 - Kiddies entertainment
 - Giveaways
 - Entertainers
 - Free car parking
 - Promotion for coach drivers
 - 'Cheap rent' scheme

9.3. BARNARD CASTLE

- Spoke with Julie Fletcher 01833 690 000
- The last 12 months has been quiet
- Same number of stalls
- Slight decrease in shoppers
- The summer markets do better due to general tourism
- These levels are inconsistent over the year, but the traders don't appear to be bothered by this.
- Promotion is on the website
- Julie visits other markets on other days actively recruiting traders – these visits are on non-competing days
- Julie agrees that working with the traders on their customer service is a good thing and can certainly help both the trader and the market
- She has good rapport with the traders (but they know where the line is!)
- There is a good variety of traders on the market – she tries to limit the trades to one of each
- She has seen a trend of shopping that follows the credit squeeze
- They have about 20 stalls at their market

9.4. DURHAM OUTDOOR MARKET

- Spoke with Colin on 0191 384 6153
- The market is run by Durham Markets Company Ltd
- Colin is willing to host a visit if required
- It was felt that it's better for a market to be run by a non-council operator (I interpreted this as being mainly due to lower costs and focus).
- They take a management fee, remove the running expenses and then split the profit with the council 50/50
- Things have been 'ficking over nicely' during the last 12 months compared to other markets.

- The farmers market has remained static, the outdoor market has had a loss of traders and the indoor market is staying full.
- Colin stated that markets are labour intensive to run, and they benefit from having the indoor market so close to the outdoor market.
- Promotion was mainly made towards the coach drivers ('crack the driver and you've cracked the visitors'). They give the driver a food voucher to get a free meal when stopping at the market. Colin said that coach drivers often get to make the choice about where they stop on a long trip.
- Colin also stated that Durham benefits from the having the cathedral as part of the attraction of visiting Durham.

9.5. HEXHAM

- Spoke with Keith Gray – Market Superintendent
- Two years ago the market was dying – today it is doing well and has expanded.
- During the same period the profitability of the market has gone from a loss of around 30 – 40 k to a positive one.
- To recruit traders they ran a marketing initiative (their budget is £1200 per year) and they proceeded with an advertorial in the market traders news, followed by press from the local papers. They also used an online advert for traders which cost them around £150.00.
- They have self-erecting stalls to reduce time and cost, these can be bunched up into a 'bazaar' type format when there are less traders present, so that the market does not appear sparse.
- The traders have noted that there is a general downwards trend being faced currently.
- Keith stated that the most important thing is to look after your traders.
- They entered a NABMA competition and did well their first year, but did not win.
- They flex their prices to encourage and maintain their traders. New traders are offered a discount to allow them to ramp up their selling activities and become established.
- There is a good variety of traders on the market, this includes clothes, organic meat, fish and game, jacket potatoes, plants, brocksbushes and music.
- There are generally more shoppers visiting the market compared to 2 years ago.
- A kaizen approach has been taken as many of the changes over the last 2 years have been very small – but there have been quite a number.
- The market has now expanded to cover most days of the week.

10. Appendix D – 2007 Market Visitor Survey Results

How did you get to the market today?

Method	Walk	Car	Bus	Train	Other	No resp.
Number	31	91	30	0	0	4
%	19.9	58.3	19.2	0	0	2.6

How far have you travelled to be here?

Location	C-L-S	<20 miles*	>20 miles	No resp.
Number	25	118	3	10
%	16.0	75.6	1.9	6.4

*Most common locations included: Sunderland, Sacriston, Durham, Pelton and Birtley

Gender

Gender	Male	Female	No resp.
Number	49	91	16
%	31.4	58.3	10.3

Ages of respondents

Range	19 – 29	30 – 45	46 – 65	Other	No resp.
Number	19	35	75	31	7
%	11.4	21.0	44.9	18.6	4.2

Frequency of visits to the market

Frequency	Weekly	Fortnightly	Monthly	Other	No resp.
Number	91	17	14	32	2
%	58.3	10.9	9.0	20.5	1.3

Popularity of trading days

Day	Tuesday	Friday	Saturday	No resp.
Number	34	102	80	4
%	15.5	46.4	36.4	1.8

Reasons to visit the market

Reason	Fabric	Clothing	Food	Household	Other	No resp.
Number	25	32	64	66	116	8
%	8.0	10.3	20.6	21.2	37.3	2.6

Proposed improvements to the market

Item	More stalls	Toilets	Better Parking	Entertainment	No resp.
Number	77	72	5	15	27
%	39.3	36.7	2.6	7.7	13.8

11. Appendix E – Proposed Regulations

Chester-Le-Street District Council Market Regulations and Conditions

1. Opening times, accessibility and attendance

1.1 The market will be accessible for vehicles from 0730hrs on Tuesday and from 0700hrs on Fridays and Saturdays and all vehicles must be clear of the market by 0930hrs. Any trader who is not at the market by 0830hrs will lose their position on that day unless they have made prior arrangements with the market officer.

1.2 Any trader failing to inform the market officer that they are going to be absent will be charged a reserve fee of £5 per stall.

1.3 No vehicles will return to the market until the market officer closes the market, which will normally be at 1500hrs on Tuesday and 1530hrs on Friday & Saturday.

1.4 Traders must observe the trading hours and keep their stall open whilst the market is in operation and may only pack their goods away early if they have the market officer's permission.

1.5 Where a regular trader is absent for three consecutive market days or their attendance falls below 75% of the available market days in any 13-week period, their pitch will be considered vacant and may be reallocated by the Market Officer.

1.6 Traders are required to exhibit their stall number and register their name, address, telephone number and email address with the market officer. A valid form of identification is also required (i.e. driving licence, passport or other official document).

1.7 All tolls and fees must be paid to the Market Officer promptly on demand. Traders are liable for all tolls and fees when a stall or pitch has been occupied, (i.e. when goods have been displayed, offered for sale or sold).

1.8 Casual traders will be allocated pitches using a points system. One point will be awarded to the trader for each day that they attend, whether or not they are allocated a pitch. The casual trader with the most points will be allocated the first available appropriate stall. There is a separate system for each trading day (e.g. points awarded for a Saturday do not count for Friday).

1.9 Traders are not permitted to bring animals onto the market or any stall. This rule does not apply to guide dogs.

1.10 The Market Officer has the right to change the layout and position of stalls, pitches, mobiles and trading positions especially in bad weather in order to concentrate the market.

1.11 Traders must keep their goods within the boundaries of their stall.

1.12 Boxes, tables or dress rails cannot be put on the market square without the permission of the market officer. Permission will not be given if the boxes, tables or dress rails obstruct a neighbouring trader's position. These will be charged an additional rent.

1.13 All regular traders have been issued with a blue and white tarpaulin to fit each stall. All casual traders must use a blue and white tarpaulin to cover their stall. However this may be waived if the Market Officer considers it appropriate.

1.14 It is the responsibility of each trader to put tarpaulins on their stall, take them off and store them from week to week. These tarpaulins remain the property of Chester-Le-Street District Council at all times. If a trader decides to cease trading or to leave the market the tarpaulins must be returned to the market officer

1.15 Traders may use a their own tarpaulins providing it complies with the colour and standard expected by the District Council and at the discretion of the Market Officer.

1.16 Casual traders will pay a returnable deposit of £5 for any tarpaulins borrowed from the Market Officer.

2. Weather conditions

2.1 In severe weather conditions it may be necessary to cancel the market. The market will be cancelled at the discretion of the Market Officer having taken appropriate advice from the meteorological office.

2.3 The Market Officer will decide before mid-day if the weather is sufficiently inclement to adversely affect trade. In such circumstances the Market Officer may issue a 50% credit note that should be used by the trader for the next week's stall rental.

3. Goods for Sale

3.1 Any trader selling foodstuffs shall comply with:

- The Food Safety Act 1990
- The Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2006
- E. C. 852/2004
- All food sellers must be registered with a local authority

3.2 No person shall display, offer for sale or sell any goods or hold sales by auction on the Market Square except on market days and in accordance with these Regulations

3.3 Goods not intended for open sale and display must not be brought onto the market.

3.4 All stallholders must give access to their stall and stored goods to the Market Officer or Trading Standards Officers to enable them to inspect goods brought onto the Market

3.5 No person shall display, offer for sale or sell, keep or store on the Market Square any of the following

- i. Any laser product commonly referred to as laser pointers or laser pens
- ii. Any alcohol or tobacco
- iii. Any gunpowder, fireworks or other explosive substance or any naphtha, bottled gas, petroleum, paraffin oil or other flammable substance.³
- iv. Any weapon, including air guns, ornamental weapons and replica weapons.
- v. Live animals
- vi. Pornographic material
- vii. Counterfeit goods –e. g. clothing copy DVD's perfume
- viii. Any items the sale of which is deemed by the Market Officer to be detrimental to the efficient operation or image of the Market.

Traders who contravene the above will be reported to the police and/or trading standards officers and will forfeit their pitch immediately.

4. Waste and litter Disposal

4.1 Chester-le-Street District Council cleans the market daily. However Market Traders have the responsibility to ensure that their pitches and stalls are kept free of litter and debris. Traders should deposit such waste materials in the rubbish cage that the Council provides. There may be occasional markets when the cage is not available – in such circumstances traders should ensure that waste material is appropriately bagged and removed. The Market Officer has the duty to ensure that the

³ The sale of lighter fuel, glues and other solvents to adults may be permitted at the discretion of the Market Officer.

market is a safe place; any trader who fails to maintain their pitch or stall appropriately may be asked to leave the market.

5. Public liability

5.1 Every trader shall arrange and maintain a policy of insurance against public liability and third party claims in the sum of at least £5,000,000 for any one incident, a certificate for which should be available for inspection by the Market Officer.

6. Appropriate Conduct and Behaviour

6.1 Chester-le-Street District Council is committed to ensuring that all citizens in the District, its staff and all those associated with the Council receive fair and appropriate services and treatment, irrespective of their nationality, ethnicity, race, sex, marital status, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or other social factor.

6.2 Traders operating within the Market Place, the Civic Heart or its environs are expected to apply the same high standards in their dealings with customers officers and fellow traders.

7. Market tariffs

7.1 Tuesday

One stall £14.00	Casual trader one stall £17.00
Two stalls £23.00	Casual trader two stalls £29.00

Tuesday Standage

£13 per stand approximately 12ftX10ft

7.2 Friday

One stall £18.00	Casual trader one stall £21.00
Two stalls £29.00	Casual trader two stalls
Three stalls £49.00	

Friday Standage

£17 per stand approximately 12ftX10ft

7.3 Saturday

One stall £16.00
Two stalls £29.00
Three stalls £41.00

Casual trader one stall £17.00
Casual trader Two stalls £31.00

Saturday Standage

£16 per stand approximately £12 X10ft

Appendix F – Costs and Income

Chester Le Street Market

Year	Budget	Total Income
2001/2002	268,810.00	237,125.80
2002/2003	253,300.00	246,689.96
2003/2004	267,970.00	217,844.75
2004/2005	240,000.00	200,910.91
2005/2006	216,900.00	175,315.18
2006/2007	206,400.00	130,347.78
2007/2008	206,400.00	103,822.64
2008/2009	206,400.00	TBC [expected to reach £112k]

Appendix F (continued) – Costs and Income

BUDGET 2007/08 (1)	REGENERATION (3)	Inflation (4)	Growth (5)	Account Code (6)	Cost Centre (7)	Sub- Analysis (8)	BUDGET 2008/09 (9)
£		£	£				£
	REGENERATION PROGRAMMES MANAGEMENT						
	EMPLOYEES						
46,450	Salaries	1,390	-47,840	A1000	CH003		0
0	Agency Fees	0	0	A8000	CH003		0
	TRANSPORT & PLANT						
2,000	Car Mileages	60	-1,460	E7000	CH003	MIL001	600
	SUPPLIES & SERVICES						
800	Equipment	20	-20	G1000	CH003	EQU001	800
1,000	Printing & Stationery	30	-780	G2000	CH003	PRT001	250
170	Publications	10	-10	G2005	CH003	PUB001	170
350	Postages	10	-160	G4000	CH003	CPO001	200
200	Telephones	10	140	G4005	CH003	TEL002	350
200	Hospitality	10	-10	G6040	CH003		200
100	Publicity	0	0	G2015	CH003		100
1,100	Project Costs	30	-130	G7010	CH003		1,000
52,370	TOTAL DIRECT EXPENDITURE	1,570	-50,270				3,670
	Less-						
0	Income from Grants & Contributions	0	0	R4000	CH003	CON001	0
0	TOTAL DIRECT INCOME	0	0				0
52,370	NET DIRECT EXPENDITURE	1,570	-50,270				3,670
	Add						
1,570	Insurances	50	-50	A5000	CH003		1,570
1,260	Office Accommodation	40	-1,300	N1010	CH003		0
18,780	SUPPORT SERVICES (SLA)	560	-560	N3010	CH003		18,780
21,610	TOTAL RECHARGES	650	-1,910				20,350
73,980	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	2,220	-52,180				24,020
	MARKET						
	EMPLOYEES						
17,050	Salaries	1,020	1,400	A1000	JE001		19,470
1,070	Wages	40	-40	A1100	JE001		1,070
	PREMISES						
2,000	Buildings-Structure	60	-2,060	C1000	JE001	BRP001	0
	Energy-						
1,350	Electricity	40	-40	C2000	JE001		1,350
460	Water	10	-10	C2000	JE001		460
35,610	Rent & Rates	1,070	-3,420	C3000	JE001		33,260
	TRANSPORT						
100	Car Mileages	0	0	E7000	JE001	MIL001	100
	SUPPLIES & SERVICES						
100	Equipment	0	0	G1000	JE001	EQU001	100
0	Clothing	0	0	G1200	JE001		0
200	Printing & Stationery	10	-10	G2000	JE001	PRT001	200
500	Telephones	20	-20	G4005	JE001	TEL002	500
0	Licences	0	0	G7030	JE001		0
300	Promotion	10	-10	G7050	JE001		300
2,000	Security Arrangements	60	940	G3005	JE001	SVP001	3,000
	THIRD PARTY PAYMENTS						
	Payments to Other Services:-						
29,040	Internal Recharges	870	-870	J2000	JE001	INT006	29,040
28,940	Internal Recharges	870	-870	J2000	JE001	INT007	28,940
118,720	TOTAL DIRECT EXPENDITURE	4,080	-5,010				117,790
	Less						
79,000	Fees-Friday	2,370	-2,370	R2015	JE001	MKT*	79,000
110,000	Fees-Saturday	3,300	-3,300	R2015	JE002	MKT*	110,000
17,400	Fees-Tuesday	520	-520	R2015	JE003	MKT*	17,400
206,400	TOTAL DIRECT INCOME	6,190	-6,190				206,400
-87,680	NET DIRECT EXPENDITURE	-2,110	1,180				-88,610
	Add						
110	Insurances	0	0	C7000	JE001		110
2,910	Insurances	90	-90	A5000	JE001		2,910
35,680	Capital Charge	1,070	-15,790	C9000	JE001		20,960
3,700	Office Accommodation	110	-1,560	N1010	JE001		2,250
6,890	SUPPORT SERVICES (SLA)	210	-210	N3010	JE001		6,890
49,290	TOTAL RECHARGES	1,480	-17,650				33,120
-38,390	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	-630	-16,470				-55,490