

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – ECONOMY
10 SEPTEMBER 2015

QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR PROWSE UNDER STANDING ORDER 20 to
PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ECONOMY AND CULTURE

Councillor Prowse submitted the following question:-

Would the Portfolio Holder please detail all discussions prior to the Planning Committee meeting of 27th July regarding the future of the Exeter boot sale in the event of the application being approved that may have taken place with Officers of this Council and Councillors likely to have had an input. Pursuant to the application being approved can the Portfolio Holder detail any current plans regarding the future of the boot sale at its current site and with whom those discussions are taking place?

Councillor Denham replied in the following terms:-

The Markets & Halls team were made fully aware of the planned development. The Events, Facilities and Markets Manager met with the Leader of the Council, and the Chief Executive and subsequently with the Portfolio Holder to discuss the effect on the market of the possible relocation of the bus depot.

It was agreed that, should planning permission be granted, we would look at how best we could assure continued delivery of the market. The Events, Facilities and Markets Manager discussed the market with staff at The Matford Centre with a view to identifying an alternative location for the market or the best way to deliver the market on the current site with less space available.

Consideration was given to moving the market to Sowton Park & Ride but this was discounted because of several factors:

- the extent of the area available at Sowton varies little, if at all, to the area which would be available at the Matford Centre post bus depot development.
- the Sowton site is not a secure site and it is essential for the market to be organised on a secure site. The management of the market would be made far more difficult with an open site.
- the infrastructure for the market is all in place at The Matford Centre (such as the boundary fence, toilets, catering service, and refuse collection). The Matford Centre is a City Council site and the infrastructure is utilised throughout the week in the operation of the centre.
- The roads around the Sowton site are already very busy on a Sunday. The increasing number of Exeter Chiefs games being played on Sundays and the expected opening of Ikea will only add to congestion.

No other alternative suitable site was identified and it was agreed to look at how the market could continue to be organised on the present site.

The Events, Facilities and Market Manager together with the staff members involved with the organisation of the market have been carrying out consultation with the following groups:

- Public attending the market to buy items from car boot sellers and market traders.

- Market traders attending the market.
- Charity groups who assist with the organisation of the market.

This consultation was carried out to ascertain the best way to organise the event with reduced space available. A survey of the buyers and traders was undertaken at the market and an email survey was carried out for the charity/community organisations.

The objective was to find out:-

- how buyers travelled to the market.
- where those who drove parked their vehicles.
- whether they would be likely to attend the market if car parking space was reduced.
- why buyers attended the market – was it for the car boot sale, the market traders or both?
- what products people regularly purchased at the event.
- whether traders would be interested in attending a smaller market
- whether charities/community groups would still value the market as a fund raiser if fewer helpers were needed and the charity donation was reduced to reflect this.

This consultation was nearly complete and an analysis of the responses will be made with a view to deciding on how best the market can be delivered when the bus depot development commences. A written update would be provided to ensure Members were kept advised. Officers continue to speak to Devon County Council to see if there can be a relaxation of the parking restrictions on one side of Matford Park Road on Sundays. Officers were able to coordinate a site visit. Councillor Prowse advised that he would like to take up the site visit invitation.

QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR PROWSE UNDER STANDING ORDER 20 to PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CITY DEVELOPMENT

Councillor Prowse submitted the following question

In connection with planning Application No 15/0387/03, proposed maintenance depot and ancillary buildings and works at the Park and Ride Site Exeter (Marsh Barton) can the Portfolio Holder confirm that this application appeared on a delegation briefing prior to the application being dealt with at Planning Committee held on 27th July 2015.

Councillor Sutton replied in the following terms:-

There was no requirement to have reported to Delegation Briefing, and the application was not presented. The purpose of Delegation Briefings is to brief on applications that officers are minded to approve under delegated powers, specifically applications ward members request be brought to a meeting, City Council applications not subject to objections and proposed officer approvals of applications subject to objections.

The application was presented to Planning Committee. It was advertised by press notice and site notices and by letter. No objections on the grounds of loss of space for the Car Boot Sale were received.