

## **STOCKPORT TOWN CENTRE: PROPOSED MANAGED SITES**

### **Report of Corporate Director Place**

#### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Members' views and approvals on proposals to:
- A. Change the designation of a number of 'Prohibited Streets' to 'Consent Streets' within the current Town Centre Street Trading Restriction Area for the purpose of operating 'Managed Sites', and,
  - B. Agree a modification to the current Council's Street Trading Policy.

#### **2.0 INFORMATION**

- 2.1 The use of public open spaces in Stockport town centre has always been important. Squares and spaces that are being actively used are a good indicator of commercial viability and vibrancy. These areas can also be used to help promote public campaigns, support worthwhile community initiatives and generate income through commercialisation.
- 2.2 Over the last 10 years the Council has introduced a range of practical measures that have helped deliver these objectives and outcomes; encouraging activities & events, animating open spaces, providing support for public and community campaigns and generating income.
- 2.3 It is now appropriate to create a number of additional Managed Sites in the light of changing circumstances, increased expectations and new opportunities including:
- The imperative to give Stockport town centre a broader offer and appeal and make it a 'place destination'.
  - The impetus to provide areas of the town centre in which attractive, diverse and interesting events and activities can be held throughout the year.
  - To support the need to extend the hours that the town centre is 'open for business'
  - The need to connect public spaces and different areas across the centre.
  - The acquisition of Merseyway Shopping Centre by the Council.
  - The creation of new public open spaces as part of the Redrock development, Prince's Street improvements and Stockport Exchange.
  - The establishment of the Stockport Town Centre Business Improvement District (BID).

#### **3.0 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 In late 2000 and early 2001 a series of reports were presented to Area Committees and the Environment and Economy Development Committee which sought to "agree the principle of introducing new controls for street trading" and identified a need "to protect district shopping centres" by "prohibiting street trading around

these centres". (*Specific protections were put in place for the market with the report stating that "Stockport market will not be affected by these proposals. The market charter covers trading in the market and all streets in the vicinity are within a proposed area of prohibition."*). One of the areas designated was the 'Town Centre Street Trading Restriction Area'. (see appendix A).

Under these controls the Council's recently approved Street Trading policy states that a trader must be at least 50 metres from any other street trader and at least 50 metres from any other business selling similar products.

- 3.2 In 2004/2005 the Council began to operate 'promotional pitches' within the Town Centre Street Trading Restriction Area' and it became apparent that the street trading regulations covering the town centre would restrict certain activities that the Council wanted to take place on these sites. Specifically it prevented these sites from operating in a commercial manner.
- 3.3 To address these issues proposals were developed for the creation of a number of Town Centre Managed Sites based on the following objectives:
- Reconcile prevailing licensing issues associated with on-street trading within the town centre.
  - Provide clear, simple, legal and deliverable management arrangements and protocols to enable specific external public open spaces within the town centre to be used for commercial on street sales without compromising the existing wider street trading restricted area.
  - Provide formal public open space areas for use by the Council, other public bodies and community groups to promote worthwhile campaigns
  - To generate income for the Council
  - To help encourage and introduce activities into town centre public open spaces that will add vibrancy to the centre.
- 3.4 In January 2006 LEAS approved a proposal for consultation to designate a number of the 'Prohibited Streets' to 'Consent Streets' within the 'Town Centre Street Trading Restriction Area' for the purpose of operating 'Promotional Pitches' commercially and following completion of the consultation and notification period and a follow up report to LEAS the Council agreed for the designation of the sites at Mersey Square, Town Square Merseyway and Warren Street to be changed from their current status as Prohibited Streets to Consent Streets for street trading under Schedule 4 of The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982. This became effective on 2 August 2006.
- 3.5 In 2008 the Council also agreed to designate St Peters Square as a Consent Street and Town Centre Managed site.
- 3.6 In 2014 as a result of road improvements at the junction of Warren Street and Bridge Street, the Council agreed to modify the location of the Consent Street on Warren Street and relocate it to the junction of Merseyway and Bridge Street. This new location is called the 'Lancashire Bridge' site.

## **4.0 STOCKPORT TOWN CENTRE MANAGED SITES**

- 4.1 Since the designation of the Stockport Town Centre Managed Sites they have largely met and delivered their initial aims and objectives. In each successive year the sites have been used for commercial on- street sales without compromising the existing wider street trading restricted area. They have provided formal areas for use by the Council, other public bodies and community groups to promote worthwhile campaigns, generated income for the Council and have helped encourage and introduce activities into town centre public open spaces that have added vibrancy to the centre.
- 4.2 There are four existing formal Managed Sites within the town centre:
1. Mersey Square site
  2. Lancashire Bridge site
  3. St Peters Square
  4. Town Square (Merseyway)

Appendix A shows the location of these sites; details can also be found at:  
<https://www.stockport.gov.uk/managed-sites-in-the-town-centre>

The sites at Mersey Square, Lancashire Bridge and St Peters Square are managed by the Council's Growth Section. The site at Town Square is managed by Merseyway Shopping Centre.

- 4.3 In 2015, following a STAR supported tender & procurement process, local company Pinpointer was engaged by the Council to help enhance the promotion of the Council managed sites, add value to the commercial bookings, (such as children's activities, music, drama), help generate additional income for the Council and reduce officer time and involvement in the bookings procedures. In January 2017 the Council agreed to extend the contract with Pinpointer for a further 6 months (to 11th August 2017). The contract extension is based on the same terms & conditions of the initial contract.

## **5.0 PROPOSALS**

- 5.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Members views and approvals on proposals to:
- A. Change the designation of an additional number of 'Prohibited Streets' to 'Consent Streets' within the current Town Centre Street Trading Restriction Area for the purpose of operating 'Managed Sites', and,
- B. Agree a modification to the current Council's Street Trading Policy.
- 5.2 Unless the Council re-designates these areas as proposed, the Council, BID and other stakeholders will be hampered in the ability to provide an appealing programme of events and activities in the town centre.

## **6.0 PROPOSED CONSENT STREETS**

- 6.1 This report asks members to comment on and give their approval for the proposal to change the designation of the following 'Prohibited Streets' to 'Consent Streets':

- Merseyway
- Prince's Street/Bridgefield Street/Redrock
- Public circulation areas at Stockport Exchange

A plan of the town centre showing the location of both the existing and proposed 'Consent Streets' is attached in Appendix A.

## **7.0 PROCESS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CONSENT STREETS**

7.1 If the Committee agree in principle to the proposal for the creation of the additional 'Consent Streets' in the areas designated for Managed Sites there are a number of procedures and protocols - under both the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 and the Council's own constitution - that must be followed. These are described in the following sections:

### **7.2 COMMITTEE CONSULTATION AND SUPPORT**

#### **7.2.1 The Licensing, Environment and Safety Committee (LEAS)**

LEAS must first pass a resolution to give notice of the intention to change the current designation of these areas to Consent Streets for the purpose of street trading. A positive resolution will activate a series of statutory notifications (see below)

Once the statutory notification period has elapsed a further report must be submitted to LEAS to consider the results of any comments or objections received as a result of the committee consultation and public notices *and* decide on whether to approve the establishment of the new Consent Streets.

If the committee decides to approve the proposed changes to the current designation of these areas to Consent Streets, further notices will be activated.

#### **7.2.2 Highways and Planning Sub Committee.**

Subject to the resolution of LEAS, a copy of the notice intending to establish the Consent Streets will be served on the Highways and Planning Sub Committee. Any views and comments expressed by the committee on the proposals will be passed back to LEAS.

#### **7.2.3 Central Stockport Area Committee**

Subject to the resolution of LEAS, for the proposals to go forward, Central Stockport Area Committee will need to be asked to support the creation of the additional Consent Streets.

7.2.4 Programme: Appendix B outlines the approval and consultation timeline.

### **7.3 NOTICES**

#### **7.3.1 Initial Notices**

Once the council has agreed to resolve to give notice, the proposals must be advertised and copies of the notice served on the police and highway authority (see above). Objections have to be submitted within 28 days of the notice being advertised.

### **7.3.2 Follow-up notices**

If a resolution to establish the proposed Consent Streets is agreed the resolution must be advertised for two consecutive weeks before the new status comes into effect.

## **7.4 PLANS**

- 7.4.1 Accurate plans together with dimensional details must be prepared to accompany the statutory notices.

## **8.0 CONTROL & MANAGEMENT OF THE SITES**

- 8.1 With the exception of Town Square, in terms of the control and management of the use of the existing town centre Managed Sites, this falls within the Council's Growth Section supported by a private external promotions company (see 4.3 above). If the additional Managed Sites are approved, the control and management of the use of these areas will continue to fall within the Council's Growth Section. Under existing terms within the contract with Pinpointer the promotion of the additional sites will also initially be included within the current promotional contract.
- 8.2 Use of the existing sites is subject to a number of terms and conditions. Whilst some of these terms and conditions are generic across all of the sites, others are site specific. The proposals to increase the number of Consent Streets in the town centre requires the existing terms & conditions to be modified but also provides the opportunity to update the terms & conditions for all sites – both existing and proposed. Details of the proposed revised and updated terms & conditions are contained in Appendix C.

## **9.0 THE COUNCIL'S STREET TRADING POLICY**

- 9.1 To ensure that the use of the existing and proposed Consent streets are aligned and comply with the Council's Street Trading Policy, the Policy itself requires updating. An extract from the Street Trading Policy covering these proposed revisions is contained in Appendix D.

## **10.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 10.1 This Committee is asked to agree the following:
- (i) The Council's intention to change the designation of the sites identified and described in Appendix E from their current status as Prohibited Streets to Consent Streets for street trading under Schedule 4 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982.
  - (ii) To agree a modification to the Council's Street Trading Policy (described in Appendix C of this report).
  - (iii) To authorise the Corporate Director, Place to issue the necessary notices required under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

1. Street Trading – A report of the Director of Environment and Economic Development to the Environment & Economic Development Committee 9<sup>th</sup> November 2000
2. Street Trading - A report of the Director of Environment and Economic Development to the Environment & Economic Development Committee 1<sup>st</sup> February 2001 and the Corporate Policy & Strategy Committee 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2001

Anyone wishing further information, please contact Graeme Vout on 474-4562