
OPEN AIR MARKET, EDINBURGH ROAD CAR PARK, PEEBLES

Report by Service Director – Commercial Services

TWEEDDALE AREA FORUM

7 May 2014

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 **This report gives an update on the Peebles Open Air Market which is held each Thursday in the Edinburgh Road Car Park, Peebles and seeks approval to advertise and let the site for a five year period.**
- 1.2 The previous lease holder of the market site was declared bankrupt in March 2013. As a result of the bankruptcy, his lease was automatically terminated and since April 2013, Scottish Borders Council has collected the rent direct from the stall holders.
- 1.3 Following consultation with interested parties, the Edinburgh Road Car Park site is considered the most appropriate location in Peebles for the market.
- 1.4 A new tenant of the market site will ensure the proper running of the market and pay a regular rent to Scottish Borders Council.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **I recommend that the Tweeddale Area Forum gives approval for Scottish Borders Council Estates Manager to advertise and agree a five year let of the market site at the Edinburgh Road Car Park, Peebles on terms to be agreed by the Estates Manager.**

3 BACKGROUND & PROPOSALS

- 3.1 The Edinburgh Road Car Park has been used as a site for an open air market for at least 25 years and although much smaller than previously, the market is still active each Thursday with around 10 regular stall holders.
- 3.2 The lease of the market site was last advertised in 2008 for a three year lease.
- 3.3 The lease holder is responsible for ensuring the site is kept clean and tidy, arranging a market trader's licence, arranging insurance and paying a rent to the Council.
- 3.4 In March 2013 the tenant was declared bankrupt and his lease was therefore automatically terminated. Since April 2013, the Council have taken on the role of market operator including the collection of rent direct from the stallholders. However, it is appreciated that this is not a long term solution as there is no-one on site each week to be responsible for the running and promotion of the market.
- 3.5 Consultation with interested parties i.e. the stall holders and Community Council, has taken place. Ten questionnaires were handed out to the stall holders and four replied. The replies were unanimous in saying that the market should stay in its current location on Thursdays and should be better advertised and promoted. Their main concern is cars parked in the market area which restrict them setting up. They suggest more prominent lines to show the market area and discourage cars parking in the market area. The advantages of the current location is that there is good access for the traders' lorries, good potential footfall being in the main Peebles car park and next to the bus stop and it is close to the supermarket.
- 3.6 Following their meeting in February, the Community Council's view was that the market should stay in its current location. Peebles does not have a Chamber of Trade for consultation.
- 3.7 Some of the stall holders have expressed an interest in taking a lease and running the market at Edinburgh Road Car Park.
- 3.8 The proposed area for lease is the same as is currently used each Thursday (see attached plan with the area outlined and hatched in red).

4 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial

- (a) The previous tenant was often in arrears with rental payments and the Council are still seeking repayment from him although it may become a bad debt if it is unrecoverable. Since April 2013, the rent collected by the Council has averaged £325 per week; however, the current arrangements for the collection of this rent are not cost effective in terms of staff time and resources.
- (b) A new tenant will be required to pay a regular rent under standard Council terms e.g. direct debit in advance, without the costs involved in Council staff collected direct from the stall holders. References and credit checks will be carried out on any potential new tenant.

4.2 Risk and Mitigations

There is a risk that not finding a new operator of the market and a new tenant of the site will result in the demise of the Peebles market due to a lack of management and promoting. The uncertainty of the future running of the market has led to speculation of its demise.

4.3 Equalities

There are no adverse equality implications.

4.4 Acting Sustainably

There are no effects on sustainability.

4.5 Carbon Management

There are no effects on carbon.

4.6 Rural Proofing

None as there is no change of policy or strategy.

4.7 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

There are no changes to be made.

5 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The Chief Financial Officer, the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, Service Director Strategy and Policy, Chief Officer Audit and Risk, Chief Officer HR, Clerk to the Council and Traffic Manager have been consulted and their comments have been incorporated into the report. The market site was also discussed at the Peebles Parking Sub-group on 8 August 2013.

Approved by

Service Director Commercial Services

Signature

Author

Name	Designation and Contact Number
James Morison	Estates Surveyor, Property & Facilities 01835 824000

Background Papers: None

Previous Minute Reference: 27th November 2013

Note – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. James Morison can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies. Contact us at James Morison, Estate Management, Scottish Borders Council. 01835 824000 Ext 5295.