

Lichfield City Council

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Town Clerk: Anthony Briggs BA (Hons), CiLCA

30 March 2022

To: Members of the Markets Working Group

Councillors J Checkland (Chair) and P McDermott, D Robertson, J Smith, C Spruce and M Warfield.

Also to:

LCC Markets Officer (Hayley Howen) LCC Deputy Town Clerk (Sarah Thomas)

Dear Councillor

Markets Working Group

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Markets Working Group to be held via Zoom at **10:00am on Wednesday 6 April 2022** for the transaction of the following business. Any Councillor unable to attend should forward their apologies to the Town Clerk. A link enabling members to join the meeting will be circulated separately.

Yours sincerely

Tony Briggs Town Clerk

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

3. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the MWG meeting held on 12 January 2022 (copy attached) [*Minutes adopted by Council on 24 January 2022*] and to consider any matters arising from those Minutes.

4. MARKETS UPDATE

To consider the Market Officer's report at **APPENDIX 1** (attached).

RECOMMENDED: That the report be noted

5. PRICING STRUCTURE – MARKET SQUARE & POOL WALK

At its January meeting, the City Council adopted the recommendation of the MWG that stall fees for general markets increase by 2.5% for 2022/23. With the possible use of Pool Walk for extended markets, the differing charging rates for various activities on the Square that have previously been before Council, and following discussions with the Internal Auditor, it was thought appropriate to place all current charges before the MWG. It is intended that for 2023/24 onwards this table be used by the MWG to make recommendations to Council regarding any changes in prevailing rates and is therefore presented solely for noting at this stage.

	Pitch Fee 10' x 10' (£)	Service Charge inc VAT (£)	Total Charge (£)
Tuesday Market	18.14	2.00	20.14
Friday Market	18.14	5.00	23.14
Saturday Market	18.14	5.00	23.14

1. Market Square Rents/Pitch Fees – General Markets

Additional Charges: Electricity (per appliance): £1.00 Parking: £2.50

2. Market Square – Commercial Hire

Type of Hire	Cost (£)
Private/commercial whole square	200.00
Private/commercial half square	150.00
Private/Commercial promoting public services	55.00
Voluntary/charitable organisations for fundraising events	10.00
Large Commercial Event (plus £500/day deposit)	400.00
Private/Commercial daily pitch fee per Vehicle	25.00

Additional charge of £20 per stall when part or all of the square is to be sub-let by hirer to more than two stallholders (the first two sub-lets being included in the relevant commercial hire rate set out above).

3. Pool Walk – Commercial Hire (based on approved stall layout)

Type of Hire	Cost (£)
Hire of the whole open space per $10'x10'$ (or approximate equivalent) pitch, subject to a minimum of £100.00	10.00
Hire of an individual 10'x10' (or approximate equivalent) pitch within the open space - Commercial	15.00
Hire of an individual 10'x10' (or approximate equivalent) pitch within the open space - Charities	10.00

Delegated authority to MWG to vary layout/charging regime for LCC events (e.g. Christmas Market).

RECOMMENDED: That the report be noted.

6. SEVERE WEATHER POLICY - HIGH WINDS

To consider the Town Clerk's report at APPENDIX 2 (attached).

RECOMMENDED: The MWG to consider the draft text set out in the report and to make a recommendation to Council that the text (as amended) be incorporated into the Severe Weather Policy.

7. MARKET SQUARE TOILET BLOCK – RENOVATION WORKS

Following the decision of Council to support the recommendation of the MWG to allocate £3,500 to the improvement of the Market Square toilet block, those who had previously quoted for the work were contacted. The provider of the lowest quotation advised of a need to revisit to check measurements etc and also stated that costs had increased since the original quotation was provided. On receipt of the revised quotation, the cost of the work had almost doubled. The second contractor was contacted to confirm his quotation but has not responded to several calls/emails. Alternative suppliers are being sought.

RECOMMENDED: That the update be noted.

8. MARKET EXTENSION – POOL WALK

Further to Minute 26 of the MWG meeting of 12 January 2022, the Town Clerk contacted LDC to establish whether they would endorse the legal position previously received, namely that an extension of existing markets onto Pool Walk (or other LCC owned land) would not incur street trading charges. A response was received from Gareth Davies at LDC as below:

I agree with your view that if the City Council operates a Market "acquired by virtue of a grant or acquired or established by virtue of an enactment or order then street trading does not apply". I know the Charter/s you hold only apply to certain days but I'm not sure if they or the Statutory markets you have established have any other limitations (such as location). You can of course create other markets to address any limitations that may exist.

I haven't attended the Christmas lights switch on recently so I'm not familiar with what takes place and where. If however, it takes place on your land (you may be able to create a market on others land with their permission) and is a legal market then the traders don't need to apply for street trading consents.

If you're not already aware if any Planning Permission is required for a Market in a new location you may wish to discuss this with Claire Billings our Planning Development Manager.

This response appears to endorse the legal view previously provided. The Town Clerk responded to the specific point regarding any restriction as to location contained within the Charters; the charters apply to the City of Lichfield 'and the precincts thereof', meaning there is seemingly no restriction to the Market Square. As markets acquired by grant and markets enacted by Order (for example the Saturday 'statutory' Market) cannot be separated in legislation unless that legislation expressly allows for it, the lack of restriction evident for the Charter Markets would necessarily apply to Statutory Markets as well.

Enquiries have been received regarding trading along Pool Walk and these are being progressed by the Markets Officer currently. A verbal update will be given at the meeting.

RECOMMENDED: That the update be noted.

9. MARKET ARRANGEMENTS - POOL WALK - JUBILEE WEEKEND 2022

To consider the Town Clerk's report at APPENDIX 3 (attached).

RECOMMENDED:

a) Given the current stage of discussions, the MWG is asked to delegate authority to the Markets Officer in consultation with the Deputy Town Clerk and Town Clerk to finalise an appropriate layout along Pool Walk for Markets to take place during the Jubilee Weekend; a copy of the layouts to be circulated informally to the MWG for comment when available.

b) Utilising its delegated authority, the pricing structure for Pool Walk to be varied by the MWG for the Producers' Market; charges to reflect those normally applied to CJ's Events for the provision of the Producers' Market when it takes place on the Market Square.

c) The MWG to support the creation of a market to take place on Monday 6 June 2022, with a recommendation to Council that such a market be established by the Council utilising its powers under the Food Act Part III.

10. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

To be decided by the Working Group.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIR

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Lichfield City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Markets Working Group (MWG) held via Zoom on Wednesday 12 January 2022 at 10:00am

PRESENT: Councillors J Checkland (Chair), P McDermott, J Smith, C Spruce and M Warfield.

IN ATTENDANCE: S Thomas (Deputy Town Clerk), A Briggs (Town Clerk), Hayley Howen (Markets Officer).

APOLOGIES: None

20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

The Chair advised of his position on the District Council's Regulatory and Licensing Committee; the Town Clerk confirmed this was covered by the City Council's adopted general dispensation relating to dual hatted members.

21. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: The Minutes of the MWG meeting held on 6 October 2021 be confirmed as a correct record [Minutes received by Council on 6 December 2021].

22. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES None.

23. MARKETS UPDATE

New Markets officer Hayley Howen was formally introduced by the Town Clerk and welcomed by all present. Councillor C Spruce asked whether the market layout was under regular consideration given the relaxation of restrictions and the possibility of introducing more stalls onto the Square. The Town Clerk confirmed that removal of the 1 metre gap between stalls was not welcomed by traders when previously mooted and that such a change would only allow for one or two more stalls to be added. Moreover, there was concern as to consumer confidence if the COVID provisions on the Square were to be relaxed currently. The Markets Officer confirmed social media posts were now increasing and new opportunities for sharing information via local groups had been identified and actioned.

The Chair enquired as to the practice of not allowing duplicate stalls to stand and questioned whether it would be appropriate to revise this policy. Officers confirmed that while duplication of goods was not allowed on the Market, this was subject to a degree of judgment based on actual products for sale and likely demographic of purchasers; the Markets Officer gave an example of this relating to a stall offering home-made artisan sweets being considered for the market currently, even though another stall on the market also sells sweets of a different kind.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

24. MARKET SQUARE TOILET BLOCK – RENOVATION WORKS

Members considered the agenda report confirming the renovation work was to be scheduled shortly and that it would include improvements to toilets and the addition of an outside tap; officers confirmed that the tap would be secure.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

25. 2022/23 PITCH FEES – GENERAL MARKETS

Members considered whether the Working Group wished to recommend an increase in prevailing market pitch fees/service charge costs for 2022/23. While noting the fragile consumer environment currently, Councillor C Spruce stated that a 2.5% increase should be considered as no increase has been implemented for three years; with the inflationary loss to the council mounting and, if current trends continue, this could only be recovered through larger increases in the future. The proposal was seconded by Councillor P McDermott. The Chair asked whether a balanced revenue budget for 2022/23 should preclude such an increase; Councillor Spruce stated that the issues were not directly comparable. Following further discussion it was resolved that:

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL:

A 2.5% increase in prevailing pitch fees be implemented for 2022/23.

26. MARKET LAYOUT

Members considered the Town Clerk's agenda report which set out the legal advice received in relation to the possible extension of the City Council's Markets function along Pool Walk and the advice that street trading charges would not apply. Clarity was sought on the implications of extending and relocating the market, and the possibility for Council to resolve to create new markets or vary existing ones; the Town Clerk confirmed that as a local authority, the City Council has the powers to create, dissolve and amend markets, but would be subject to any prevailing hire charges implemented by the landowner if the market was not on LCC land.

Following further discussion and in light of the District Council's current Street Trading review, it was agreed that the Town Clerk would approach the Cabinet member responsible for this function at LDC, provide the legal advice received and ask for LDC's view on that advice and its implications; the Town Clerk to report back to the Working Group in due course.

RESOLVED: Following legal advice received and in order to seek clarity as to LDC's position, the Town Clerk to raise the matter of street trading implications relating to the possible extension/relocation of LCC markets along Pool Walk with the appropriate District Council Cabinet Member.

27. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING Confirmed as 10.00am on Wednesday 6 April 2022.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS THE CHAIR DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 10:34am

Markets Working Group 6 April 2022: APPENDIX 1

MARKETS UPDATE

Hayley Howen the new Markets Officer has now been in the role for over 3 months and has been focusing recently on the new licence documentation in readiness for the annual renewal on 1 April. Hayley has been working with CJ events and attended the Producers' Market, which was a good opportunity to get to know the traders. The working relationship is paramount moving forward and Hayley is keen to be able to compile a list of casual/permanent traders that may wish to stand on Lichfield's General Markets.

Shrovetide saw the 'crazy cars' children's ride from Pat Collins fair on the square into which the Mayor and Sheriff managed to climb following the traditional declaration of the opening of the Fair.

The recent high winds and storms have created an air of uncertainty amongst traders, with 4 markets in a row where traders were been asked to trade from their vehicles if they wished to attend. The safety of our traders and public alike is paramount and the days in question saw the market officer out all day making sure everyone was safe. This year so far has only seen 1 cancelled market on a Friday when storm Eunice was forecast. If a market is restricted to vehicle trading only or cancelled, no arrears are charged to those who do not attend, though full rent is payable by those who do attend as the LCC provision is the same as for a full market (i.e. the pitch, toilet block and kitchen etc).

Early discussions are being held with 'Vegan Markets Company' who showcase independent, ethical and sustainable producers from across the country, including many local to each event. Offering a range of vegan stalls including vegan street food, bakery, eco-lifestyle, handmade cosmetics, ethical clothing, they would like to bring their markets to Lichfield, likely in a similar manner to the arrangements in place with CJ's Events for the Producers' Market. *A verbal update will be given at the MWG meeting*, but if initial discussions prove positive, it may be appropriate for the MWG to make a recommendation to Council that a market be established.

Traders have expressed concern as to the installation of height barriers on LDC car parks, preventing them from parking their vehicles. The Markets Officer is pursuing this with LDC currently.

Social Media

Social media numbers and engagements are increasing weekly with more enquires coming through this medium. As we come to the spring and summer months with more events in Lichfield the market officer will be promoting via Twitter and Facebook with photographs, traders' goods, special offers, new traders, Market Square events etc. The Markets officer compiled an 'on the day' post at the Producers' Market of 6 February and engaged the local pages. The event was well attended, especially in the afternoon.

Tuesday Market

Tuesday is the day we have more of a challenge to fill, with 5 small spaces or two double pitches and a singular pitch. The singular pitch is the subject of an enquiry from a ladies' fashionwear stall. At present they are waiting for their weatherproof gazebo to arrive but are looking to stand from April 2022.

Friday Market

Continues to be a popular day with traders and we are about to welcome back the garden ornaments stall through to October. This will leave another double space that the Tuesday shoe stall is also looking to trial from the end of March. This will leave one small space by the Boswell statue that can be used as the charity or casual space

Saturday Market

The Saturday market of recent weeks has seen a regular trader move to the Rag market in Birmingham as this market offers greater protection from the weather. The decision was expedited due to the difficult weather conditions of January and February with trading from vehicles markets being in place. Another trader who was casual has now decided to reduce to just one stall. To fill this space we have the designer clothes seconds who trade with us on a Tuesday and Friday and are trialling a Saturday from 19 March 2022.

General Market

Applications and enquiries continue to be received each week with trader's applications/details kept on file for future use. Many applications are received from traders wanting to sell goods that are already sold on our markets, duplication of items on such a small market is not encouraged. Saturday continues to be the most requested day for market applications.

The Producers' Market

The Producers' Market is very popular in Lichfield and is well attended. The Markets Officer will be attending these regularly to get to know the traders and gain more experience working with CJ's events. The last market saw a full capacity of 30 traders with stalls ranging from natural dog treats to silver jewellery, and there were also various food stalls. Traders reported an excellent trading day.

Market Square Bookings - Community Use - Non-Market Days

Staffordshire County Council have been utilising the Square regularly for free COVID testing, but this is scheduled to end at the end of March. We have the regular chip van, and the ice cream van is attending until the end of October 2022.

The Ice cream trader has recently purchased a new van with a Euro6 compliant engine meaning emissions are greatly reduced when compared to the previous vehicle.

There are further enquiries from local charities and a promotion company that may book in the future, and there are also early plans to hold another 'Community Day' on the Square, the original events being piloted prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and proving to be very popular. The events diary is booking up with more coming onto the square on non-market days into the summer.



Market Layout - Covid Restrictions - Update

The market continues to operate with the large middle aisle walkway for customers to shop and one-metre gap between each stall. The one-way system has been removed. Hand sanitisers remain in place at either end of the market, but though this is under review as restrictions have ended, the public does seem to like to have the measures in place. Traders are also keen to maintain the one metre gap between stalls, and the central walkway gives a spacious feel to the market that was absent before its introduction. There is potential for two extra stalls if the large walkway in the centre is retained.

It may be that Pool Walk becomes a market 'overflow', especially if more unique or unusual stalls could be interspersed among more usual market fare to draw the public in to the new (for a general market) area.

Markets Working Group 6 April 2022: APPENDIX 2

SEVERE WEATHER POLICY - HIGH WINDS

Following the introduction of trader supplied gazebos, the previous 45mph wind speed limit applied to the City Council's more robust stalls was reduced to 35mph. In reality, the previous 45mph limit was somewhat high even for LCC's stalls, and 35mph is in line with numerous insurances for similar items that officers have seen over the past few years. When forecast wind speed is between 35mph and 45mph, the option to trade from vehicles is usually provided (thereby negating the need for a gazebo), but those choosing not to attend are not charged arrears as this method of trading does not suit all traders.

Weather forecasts as supplied by the Met Office are used to determine what wind gust speeds will be, and to comply with its own terms and conditions, the City Council must advise traders of any cancelled or reduced market due to forecast severe weather prior to 4pm on the day before the affected market.

The windy weather in February meant that several markets were disrupted, and criticism was received from a minority of traders for decisions to reduce the market when wind speeds consistently exceeded 35mph, an extract from one such complaint follows:

'It is a running joke in the market world that the wind only has to blow and Lichfield cancels. Other market operators look at Lichfield as a joke'.

On Monday 21 February, the weather forecast indicated that wind speeds for the Tuesday Market would be around the 35mph maximum and would exceed this by 1mph during a one-hour period of the trading day. The decision was taken to allow the market to continue as normal but to advise all traders that wind speeds were near or at the maximum, that all gazebos should be properly weighted, and that if conditions deteriorated the market may be cancelled or some traders asked to leave as appropriate.

Only five traders attended the Tuesday Market, most absentees citing the poor weather conditions as the reason for non-attendance. The Markets Officer did not feel the need to reduce or close the market due to weather conditions on the day and the market went ahead as normal; as the market had not been cancelled/reduced, rent arrears were payable. The conditions were as forecast, and while there was no need to cancel the market, it was felt by officers that the tricky conditions reinforced the appropriateness of the current 35mph limit.

An appeal against the decision to charge arrears for this market was subsequently received from a Trader who did not attend. As part of the appeal, a screenshot of the Met Office forecast showing winds of 36mph at 10am and 37mph at 1pm was used to support the view that the market should not have gone ahead, and arrears should not therefore be payable. The forecast supplied was from the day of the Market (approximately 7.30am) and therefore after the 4pm deadline of the previous day for the decision to be made by LCC officers.

The Town Clerk has refused the appeal, but it does highlight that often the market operator cannot do right for doing wrong; the Council allows the market to go ahead and is criticised for it, but reduced markets or cancellations due to high winds make Lichfield markets 'a joke'. As a result, policies and procedures need to be robust enough to withstand considerable scrutiny, and at this time it is not felt that the Severe Weather Policy addresses this element sufficiently well as it refers only in general terms to the 35mph limit.

It is therefore proposed to add clarity to the Severe Weather Policy, with draft text provided below:

The wind speed limits of 35mph for a normal market and 45mph for trading from vehicles are not absolute; a pragmatic view based on risk and judgment will be taken on each occasion. However, trading from vehicles will <u>normally</u> be instigated at the discretion of the Market Officer (in consultation as necessary with the Town Clerk and/or Deputy Town Clerk) on occasions such as:

- Wind speeds are forecast to be well in excess of the 35mph limit but below the 45mph limit (for example whole day forecast to be between 38 and 44mph)
- wind speeds are forecast to be <u>consistently</u> slightly above the 35mph limit and consistently below the 45mph limit (for example 37mph from 8am – midday, 38mph from midday – 2pm and then dropping to 34mph from 2pm – 4pm)
- there is a forecast increase in winds during the normal trading day that lead to gusts significantly above the 35mph limit, even if this is only for a relatively short period (for example 20mph at 8am but rising to 45mph at midday and back to 20mph by 4pm).

The decision as to whether a market will be cancelled in its entirety will be similarly considered and subject to the same pragmatic view, but where winds are consistently forecast to be above 45mph, the Market is to be cancelled and no legal trading can therefore take place. Wind speed information [as is the case now] to be as provided by the Met Office. Any decision to reduce or cancel a market to be communicated to traders prior to 4pm on the day before the affected Market.

The discretion of the Markets Officer or other appropriate LCC officer to close the market and/or Market Square on any trading day to some or all traders if it is considered necessary to do so to protect traders and/or the public remains in place <u>at all times.</u>

Recent events have shown that such clarity would be beneficial, and the MWG is asked to support the inclusion of this draft text into the Severe Weather Policy and to make a corresponding recommendation to Council.

RECOMMENDED: The MWG to consider the draft text set out above and to make a recommendation to Council that the text (as amended) be incorporated into the Severe Weather Policy.

Markets Working Group 6 April 2022: APPENDIX 3

MARKET ARRANGEMENTS - POOL WALK - JUBILEE WEEKEND 2022

General Markets

During the Jubilee Weekend the Market Square will be utilised by the Fair as is traditional on Bower Weekend and has been approved by Council for 2022. A relocated market is usually offered along Market St (on LDC pitches), but this has not proven popular over recent years and most traders elect not to stand.

However, with confirmation from LDC that a relocated Market on *LCC land* would not attract Street Trading charges, the opportunity to relocate to Pool Walk is once again being investigated. This option has previously been rejected by established traders, but there is the possibility that some may reconsider and that new traders (notably via the Producers' Market) may wish to stand. Given the special nature of the weekend there is also the opportunity to have additional activities – music, face painting etc to in addition to market stalls. The relocated Markets would be on Friday 3 June and Saturday 4 June 2022.

Producers' Market – Sunday 5 June

The Producers' Market takes place on the first Sunday of each month (except January) and is therefore due to take place on Sunday 5 June during the Jubilee weekend. During initial discussions with the Bower in 2021 it was hoped that the Producers' Market could be relocated to Beacon Park as part of the wider Bower offer, with arrangements to be made for this between the Bower Committee and CJ's Events who provide the Producers' Market for LCC.

However, at the Council meeting of 14 March, the Town Clerk was advised that the decision had been taken not to progress this option, meaning that the June Producers' Market will not go ahead either on the Square or within Beacon Park. It would however be possible to relocate the Producers' Market to Pool Walk on this occasion.

Creation of a Monday Market for Jubilee Weekend

With relocated markets on the Friday and Saturday, plus the Producers' Market on the Sunday, it would be logical to extend this presence to Monday 6 June to complete the Jubilee weekend celebrations. As this would not be the relocation/extension of an existing Market, Council would need to resolve to create a Market for that day in order to exempt traders from Street Trading charges. Such a step would appear completely aligned with the response received from LDC regarding Street trading (agenda item 8) which states 'You can of course create other markets to address any limitations that may exist.'

Stall provision

One of the issues surrounding the use of Pool Walk is accessibility for loading/unloading of stalls. Initial discussions with CJ's Events confirmed their willingness to provide stalls for use across the weekend (i.e. for LCC use on Friday, Saturday and Monday, and for their own use at the Producers' Market on the Sunday). The provision of stalls would significantly reduce the logistical burden and contribute greatly to the smooth running of each of the Markets If the Producers' Market were to take place on Sunday along Pool Walk. However, the costs to hire the stalls proved to be prohibitive, and this option is not being progressed.

Pool Walk Layout

The usual number of stalls on the Producers' Market is 26-30, but the approved stall plan for Pool Walk currently allows for only 21 stalls. Discussions are underway with CJ's Events for the Producers' Market, but matters are far from finalised at this stage. The MWG has delegated authority from Council to vary the arrangements along Pool Walk for City Council events.

Pricing Structure

Pool Walk hire charges are detailed elsewhere on this agenda, but the MWG does have delegated authority to vary this regime for LCC events and is asked to do so to enable the usual fees for the Producers' Market to apply.

The relatively low cost of a pitch along Pool Walk compared to the Market Square is partly due to the relative lack of facilities (toilet block/skip etc) and partly due to the location not being perhaps as obvious as the Market Square. It is hoped that the relatively low cost will encourage new and existing traders to stand and create a worthwhile spectacle across the weekend and perhaps instil a view that Pool Walk is worthy of consideration for other events in the future.

Current Situation

At the time of preparing this report, discussions with traders and CJ's Events are in their infancy; an up-to-date verbal report will be given at the meeting. In the current circumstances however, the MWG is asked to consider the following recommendations.

RECOMMENDED:

a) Given the current stage of discussions, the MWG is asked to delegate authority to the Markets Officer in consultation with the Deputy Town Clerk and Town Clerk to finalise an appropriate layout along Pool Walk for Markets to take place during the Jubilee Weekend; a copy of the layouts to be circulated informally to the MWG for comment when available.

b) Utilising its delegated authority, the pricing structure for Pool Walk to be varied by the MWG for the Producers' Market; charges to reflect those normally applied to CJ's Events for the provision of the Producers' Market when it takes place on the Market Square.

c) The MWG to support the creation of a market to take place on Monday 6 June 2022, with a recommendation to Council that such a market be established by the Council utilising its powers under the Food Act Part III.