

Lichfield City Council

Donegal House, Bore Street, Lichfield, Staffordshire, WS13 6LU

Tel: (01543) 250011 e-mail: enquiries@lichfield.gov.uk

Town Clerk: Anthony Briggs BA (Hons), CiLCA

5 September 2024

To: Members of the Markets Working Group

Councillors B Watkins (Vice Chair) D Baker, R Bragger, P McDermott, C Pinder-Smith, and J Smith.

Also, to:

LCC Markets Officer (Jeremy Williams)

Office Administrator (Michelle Read)

Dear Councillor

Markets Working Group

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **Markets Working Group to be held via Zoom at 6.00pm on Thursday 12 September 2024** for the transaction of the following business. Any Councillor unable to attend should forward their apologies to the Deputy Town Clerk (sarah.thomas@lichfield.gov.uk).

Yours sincerely

Sarah Thomas
Deputy Town Clerk

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors R Bragger, P McDermott, and J Smith
Office Administrator (Michelle Read)

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 2 May 2024 (copy attached) [*Minutes adopted by Council on 10 June 2024*] and to consider any matters arising from those Minutes.

4. MARKETS UPDATE

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

RECOMMENDED: That the report be noted

5. **TRADER REPRESENTATIONS**

The following questions at **APPENDIX 2** have been submitted by Traders; the Markets officer will provide an update at the meeting.

RECOMMENDED: That the matters be discussed, and answers provided to the Traders following the meeting.

6. **MARKET CHARGES 2025/26**

Officers will shortly begin to prepare the draft 2025/26 budget which will be considered by Council at its meeting scheduled for 27 January 2025. At the same meeting, the Council also considers its fees and charges for functions such as the Guildhall and Markets. In order to assist officers in preparing a draft budget, the MWG is asked to consider the existing fee structure and give an indication as to whether it wishes any amendment for 2025/26 at this time. Members are reminded that this is to assist with draft budgets only and does not form a firm decision for 2025/26.

The current fees and charges are provided at **APPENDIX 3** (attached).together with the internal auditors' financial analysis for Members information.

RECOMMENDED: The MWG to consider the current Markets fee structure and decide upon any variations it believes appropriate for 2025/26 in order to assist with the development of the draft 2025/26 budget.

7. **CONTINUATION OF TRADERS 25% WINTER DISCOUNT.**

For many years, the City Council has offered a 'Winter Discount' to Traders during the difficult trading months of January and February. The discount provides for a 25% reduction in prevailing pitch fees (but not the associated service charge) for permanent Traders who attend the Market. Those traders who do not attend for any reason other than duly booked "free holiday" or a reason that subsequently results in the cancellation of arrears such as severe illness) will be liable for the full rent.

This incentivises traders to attend and reduces the cost of doing so during January and February, aiming to ensure good attendance throughout the year and associated footfall. Market Traders are very appreciative of this incentive, however at the request of the Chair of the MWG , Members are asked to consider once more the appropriateness of the Winter discount and the possibility of offering a 25% discount for the markets that are reduced to selling from vehicles because of high winds and severe weather.

RECOMMENDED: The MWG to discuss the appropriateness of the Winter discount and any possible continuation, withdrawal, or variation thereof. On conclusion of discussion, the MWG to make a corresponding recommendation to Council.

8. **MARKETS OFFICERS REPORT RE FOOD FESTIVAL AND USE OF POOL WALK.**

Members are asked to note the Markets Officers report at **APPENDIX 4** regarding the Food Festivals held in May and August and to determine whether or not they wish to impose further sanctions on the organisers

RECOMMENDED: That the report be noted and members to determine **whether or not** they wish to impose further sanctions on the organisers.

10. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

To be decided by the Working Group

ANY OTHER BUSINESS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIR

* * *

Lichfield City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Markets Working Group (MWG) held via 'Zoom' on Thursday 2 May 2024 at 6.00pm

PRESENT: Councillor J Blackman (Chair) and Councillors D Baker, P McDermott, and J Smith.

IN ATTENDANCE: A Briggs (Town Clerk), Jeremy Williams (Markets Officer).

APOLOGIES: Councillor C Pinder-Smith, Michelle Read (Office Administrator).

50. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

None.

51. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: *The Minutes of the MWG meeting held on 15 February 2024 be confirmed as a correct record [Minutes adopted by Council on 11 March 2024].*

52. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES

None.

53. MARKETS UPDATE

Members considered the agenda report and noted the new traders on the Market. The Working Group commended the work of the Markets Officer and was pleased to see the variety of produce now available on the Markets, that all markets were at capacity, and the strong social media performance.

RESOLVED: *That the report be noted.*

54. TRADER REPRESENTATIONS

Members considered the agenda report which contained a number of questions/comments from traders. These are detailed below with responses:

1. Some traders worried that some Facebook posts for other events will pull people away from Market Square and the page should be dedicated to events on Market Square only.

LCC try to not promote events that are in direct conflict with the markets, but this needs to be balanced with other events that can be promoted that are in the city centre – the aim being to both promote the markets as a destination in itself, but also any other nearby events that could lead to people visiting the market. A variety of posts also keeps the page fresh, and people engaged and is an opportunity for cross promotion of LCC functions. This arrangement is reciprocal – for example promotion of market square activity through the 'Guildhall' page. Traders are welcome to approach the Markets Officer to request additional social media coverage that is specific to them.

2. Why do other users of the electric on the Market Square i.e. catering truck for Food Festival and other events pay £3.93 per van when they clearly use a lot more appliances?

The Markets Officer stated that this arose due to Food Festival organisers paying the same amount for electricity as traders on the General Market but utilising the supply for (for example) cooking, when General Market traders used the same supply at the same cost for (for example) basic lighting. While meter readings are taken for large events utilising the Square's electricity supply, this is not possible when the same

supply is also being used by General Market traders. The Markets Officer will however take meter readings at the next such event, subtract the usual use of electricity from the General Market to give an approximate indication of electricity use by the other stallholders, and report back on findings.

3. Would it be possible to have extra markets i.e. on a Sunday when markets are cancelled due to weather conditions?

Though cancelled/reduced markets are undesirable, it is not felt that a hastily arranged market to replace it would be beneficial. A number of traders may not be able to attend, and unless the day was declared as a 'market day,' Street Trading would be payable. Additional markets also bring significant challenges in staffing, skip provision etc. The Square is also used for other markets, community days, outdoor seating to compliment other events etc and may therefore not be available. By their nature, such markets would be ad-hoc, and therefore unlikely to attract regular footfall even with social media promotion.

4. Could the market block have a deep clean and revamp (repaint etc) as some new market people have passed comment to older traders?

This is in hand – a quotation is awaited at the time of preparing this response.

5. Can more information be relayed for a reduced market in some cases, e.g. when it is possible to trade without covers and just tables set up.

The existing 'trading from vehicles' provision is clear to all – any decision as to whether uncovered stalls could be set up would need to be taken on an individual basis based on type of stall, produce, anticipated weather conditions etc. If traders wish to trade in this manner, they are advised to contact the Markets Officer following the issuing of the general 'trading from vehicles' email to discuss their own specific circumstances.

6. Traders should have an incentive to stand on reduced market days i.e. small reduction in rent.

Traders have the option to stand and pay rent or to not stand and not have arrears. There is no reduced cost to the council in providing a reduced market that could be passed to traders.

7. On some occasions Buskers have made it impossible to talk to customers in some areas of the market. When traders have complained to LDC they were told that the rules on busking are guidelines with no enforcement.

LDC holds the relevant powers in this matter, LCC does not, but the Markets Officer will continue to report the matter to LDC and to try to reduce the impact through a voluntary dialogue with the Buskers where possible.

8. Who has the final say on decisions made on the market day to day.

The Markets Officer has the final say on all matters relating to the day to day running of the markets.

9. Could Casual Traders pay for pitches up front to help encourage them to turn up or give good notice that they are not going to attend.

We ask that Casual Traders advise us the week before they are due to attend so that we know who is going to be on the market and whether we have a pitch to cover. However, if we ask for payment in advance, this could be confusing if payment is to be returned/carried over etc. Current process is notification only required, and while we will look at advance payments, it is unclear whether it would incentivise.

55. FAYRES – REVIEW OF HIRE CHARGES

The Working Group considered the Town Clerk's update, which followed circulation of an email to all MWG members on 15 March.

RESOLVED: That an inflationary increase be applied from 2025, and that the matter be otherwise left in abeyance pending outcomes of discussions with LDC.

56. SOCIAL MEDIA ANALYSIS

Members considered the agenda report which set out the additional staff provision to improve social media presence and engagement, together with detail as to the most popular posts. The Chair highlighted post reach and engagement, and commended Clive Read and the Markets Officer for their work in this regard.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

57. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

To be held at 6.00pm on Thursday 12 September 2024. The Town Clerk to contact members of the Working Group closer to the time to confirm whether the current preference for a meeting via Zoom remains, or if an in-person meeting is preferred.

**THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS
THE CHAIR DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 6.50pm**

Markets Working Group 12 September 2024: APPENDIX 1

A full market is still being maintained on Tuesday, Fridays, and Saturdays. Any traders that have left have been swiftly replaced from those on the waiting list.

TUESDAY MARKET UPDATE

Currently all pitches on the Tuesday market have been filled by casual traders. The turnover of traders on this market is quite high however, the waiting list maintained by Officers has proved effective in rapidly filling any spaces.



*"Bubbles in Bloom"
Soaps & Bath Products*

Unfortunately, due to the predicted high winds on 20 August a restricted market operated with traders permitted to bring vehicles on site, not only to act as a windbreak but also to facilitate the quick removal of stock and gazebos if the weather deteriorated further.



"The Gift Fairy"

FRIDAY MARKET UPDATE

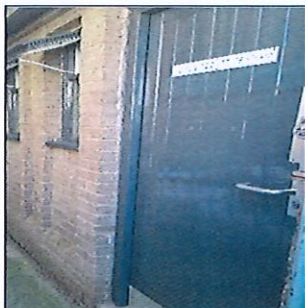
The Friday market is now full, and all traders have become permanent. The Markets Officer maintains a list of casual traders from all three markets that are invited to stand when permanent traders are absent or take holidays.

Again, there was a further restricted market on 23 August due to the predicted high winds and gust of up to 44 mph. Only six traders stood on this day.

SATURDAY MARKET UPDATE

The Saturday market also remains full. Officers continue to receive several enquiries each week from perspective traders as this is the most popular day to stand.

All food stalls continue to be monitored to ensure compliance with food hygiene regulations, this includes checking the temperature of stock sold and stored on the market. Lichfield District Council's Environmental Health Officer is kept informed of any new food trader who attends the market.



The Market square toilet block has now been repaired and repainted, with the installation of new splash backs, kettle and microwave for the traders use.



In addition, a new notice board has been erected on the Market Square to display the Council agenda.

On the 24 August, the last food festival of the year was held with several of the permanent Saturday traders opting to not attend. Some of these pitches were filled by casual traders. A full report on the two recent food festivals is contained at **APPENDIX 4** of this Agenda.

VEGAN MARKET

The Vegan market runs on the third Sunday of the month. This is becoming increasingly popular with an average of 26 traders helping to bring something different on to the market square with a range of diverse stalls.



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PRODUCERS MARKET

The Producers market, operated by CJ Events is held on the first Sunday of the month. This market is well supported by 30 traders standing and is immensely popular with customers, many revisiting every month.



FESTIVE MARKET

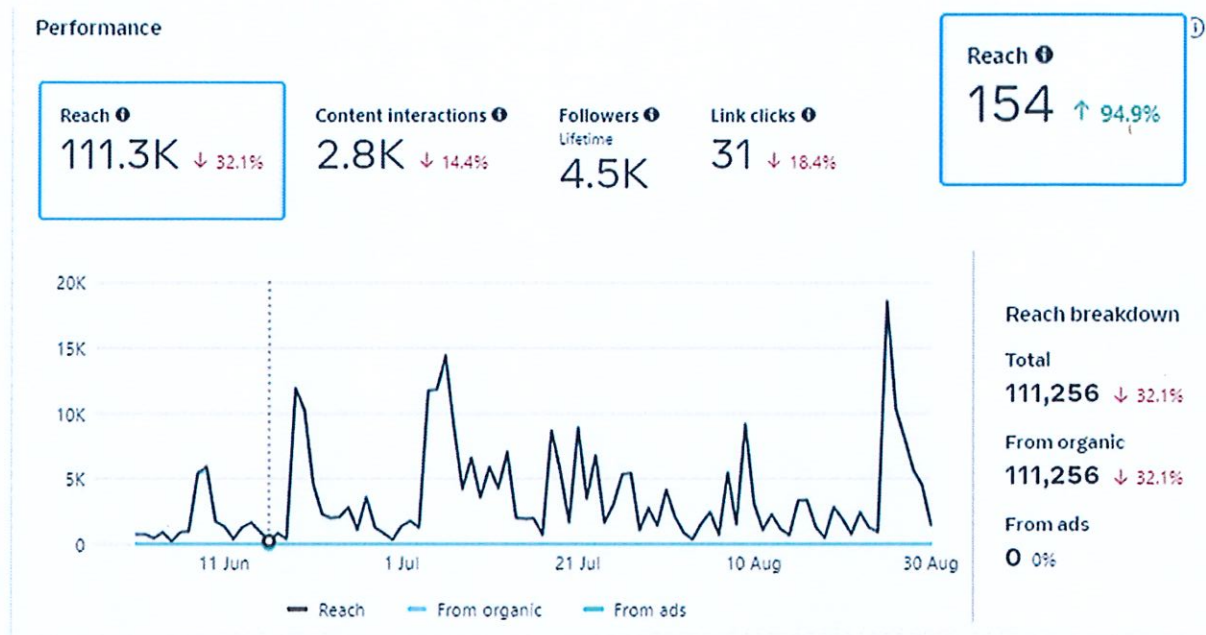
Preparations continue for the Festive Market being held in conjunction with the Christmas Lights Switch On event on Sunday 24 November. The agreed number of stalls for Pool Walk is 24 , however members are asked to note that as this is a City Council event with a road closure in place stalls will also extend partially down Dam Street.

In addition, general market traders have been asked if they wish to trade on extra days on the run up to Christmas. They have indicated that Thursday 19 and Sunday 22 December would be the preferred dates to trade. 0

Social Media

All social media platforms maintain a good following with reach steadily climbing thanks to the links with other City council Facebook pages.

The statistics below show the number of followers on Facebook and Instagram. Officers are continuing to track numbers and the posts that are most popular, with focus on specific traders, being the most effective along with posts on new traders.



COMMUNITY DAY

On Thursday 29 August Lichfield City Council hosted Community day on the Market square



Several local organisations came together including: Airborne Falconry , NHS Health checks , South Staffs Water , Liberty Jamboree , Citizens Advice , Greyhound Trust , Lichfield Garrick, the Hub at St Mary's, Samuel Johnson Birthplace Museum, St Giles Hospice, Late Night Listeners, Sandfields Pumping Station, RNLI, Cats Protection, Lichfield Police, Staffordshire Fire & Rescue, Lichfield Litter Legends, the Big Red

Bike, Lichfield Arts and many more all showcasing the wonderful work they do in our community.

Lichfield's Sophie Capewell, Olympic Team Sprint Gold medal winner for Team GB in the Paris 2024 Olympic Games came along and was interviewed by the Town crier Adrian Holmes. Sophie kindly brought along her medal, taking time to pose for photographs with the public and the organisations standing. A full account of the day will be issued in the Officers report to Council.

Markets Working Group 12 September 2024: APPENDIX 2

Traders have submitted the following questions. The Markets officer will provide an update at the meeting. .

- 1) Do Traders want to work between Christmas and New Year?
- 2) Can members of the Markets Working Group visit the Market.
- 3) Request only a 4% rise in pitch fees as agreed in January 2023.
- 4) Is the Lichfield Market Facebook Page for everything going on in Lichfield. It is taking trade away from the markets by advertising other events.
- 5) Could the markets Facebook page be run by the Markets Officer to save money.
- 6) There is confusion about who agrees new lines because two people have given permission. The Markets Officer sees the day-to-day lines so should have the final say.
- 7) Many thanks for refurbishing the market square toilet block , providing a new microwave and kettle .

RECOMMENDED: That the matters be discussed, and answers provided to the Traders following the meeting.

Markets Working Group 12 September 2024: APPENDIX 3

CURRENT GENERAL MARKET RENTS 2024-2025

1. Market Square Rents/Pitch Fees – General Markets

	Pitch Fee 10' x 10' (£)	Service Charge inc VAT (£)	Total Charge (£)
Tuesday Market	20.00	2.00	22.00
Friday Market	20.00	5.00	25.00
Saturday Market	20.00	5.00	25.00
Casual Traders - Tuesday Market	21.90	2.00	23.90
Casual Traders - Friday Market	21.90	5.00	26.90
Casual Traders - Saturday Market	21.90	5.00	26.90

Additional Charges: Electricity (per appliance): £2.50 (inc VAT)

Parking: £2.50

2. Market Square – Commercial Hire

Type of Hire	Cost (£)
Private/commercial whole square (plus £500 per day surety)	231.00
Private/commercial half square (plus £250.00 per day surety)	173.25
Private/Commercial promoting public services	63.25
Voluntary/charitable organisations for fundraising events	11.55
Large Commercial Event (plus £500/day deposit)	462.00
Private/Commercial daily pitch fee per Vehicle	28.88

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, <u>subject to a minimum of £100.00</u>	11.55
Hire of an individual 10'x10' (or approximate equivalent) pitch within the open space - Commercial	17.33
Hire of an individual 10'x10' (or approximate equivalent) pitch within the open space - Charities	11.55

4. Gazebo Hire

Type of Hire	Cost (£)
Gazebo and Weights - Rent per occasion	5.00
Surety deposit – must be a cheque which will be held and only cashed if the gazebo is found to be damaged beyond reasonable wear and tear	250.00
Purchase price of Gazebo	As per invoice inc VAT

MARKET 2023-24 ACTUAL COSTS

Cost Details	Actual	Service Charge	Misc Lettings	Friday Market	Saturday Market	Tuesday Market
	£	£	£	£	£	£
EXPENDITURE						
Employee Costs		49,400	-	9,016	13,435	15,022
Central Administration		16,258	-	2,967	4,422	4,944
Repairs and Maintenance		1,381	-	252	376	420
Energy						
• Electricity - Toilet Block	1,338		1,338	-	-	-
• Electricity-Pier	3,190		3,190	-	-	-
		4,528				
Rates and Water						
• Business Rates	18,089		-	3,301	4,920	5,501
• Water-Market Square	427		-	78	116	130
• Water-Toilet Block	1,559		1,559	-	-	-
		20,075				
Supplies and Services						
• Skip Hire	4,967		4,967	-	-	-
• Card Fees	1,514		-	276	412	460
• Card Machine Hire	228		-	42	62	69
• Annual Premises Licence	295		-	54	80	90
• Advertising	0		-	-	-	-
• NABM Subscription	884		-	162	240	269
• Mobile Phone	205		-	38	56	62
• Town Safe Subscription	375		-	68	102	114
• Cleaning Market Square	2,450		-	2,450	-	-
• Supplies and Services	1,757		-	321	478	534
		12,675				
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		£104,317	£11,054	£19,025	£24,699	£27,615
INCOME						
Misc Lettings						
Market Square						
• Commercial/Charity	8,841		499	8,342		
• Vegan Market	1,397			1,397		
• Cleaning Market Square	833			833		
Pool Walk						
• Commercial Hire	3,694			3,694		
• Christmas Festival	777			777		
		15,542				
Friday Market		31,725	4,122	-	27,603	
Saturday Market		31,034	4,158	-		26,876
Producers Market		3,476	21	3,455		
Tuesday Market		21,097	1,474	-		19,623
TOTAL INCOME		£102,874	£10,274	£18,498	£27,603	£26,876
NET COST OF SERVICE		£1,443	£780	£527	-£2,904	£739

Note 1 - Employee costs -Market Officer 24hours per week plus support.

Note 2 - Central Administration -Management costs.

Note 3

Number of Market Trading Days	Friday	Saturday	Tuesday	Total
Actual Trading Days	52	51	48	151
Non-Trading Days	0	1	4	5
Total	52	52	52	156

Note 4

Winter Discount (25% of rents)	Friday	Saturday	Tuesday	Total
January	£545	£523	£316	£1,384
February	£550	£393	£240	£1,183
Total	£1,095	£916	£556	£2,567

Note 5

Electricity Service Charge	KWH	Fixed Charge	Usage Charge	Total
Electricity Charge	7,623	£285	£2,905	£3,190
Service Charge				£1,836
Net Cost				£1,354

MARKET 2024-25 ORIGINAL BUDGET

Cost Details	Original Budget		Service Charge	Misc lettings	Friday Market	Saturday Market	Tuesday Market
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
EXPENDITURE							
Employee Costs		51,880	-	9,469	14,109	15,776	12,526
Central Administration		17,908	-	3,268	4,870	5,446	4,324
Repairs and Maintenance		2,310	-	423	627	702	558
Energy							
• Electricity-Toilet Block	1,600		1,600	-	-	-	-
• Electricity-Piler	3,220		3,220	-	-	-	-
		4,820					
Rates and Water							
• Business Rates	19,850		-	3,624	5,398	6,036	4,792
• Water-Market Square	220		-	40	60	67	53
• Water-Toilet Block	930		930	-	-	-	-
		21,000					
Supplies and Services							
• Skip Hire	5,450		5,450	-	-	-	-
• Card Fees	1,190		-	217	324	362	287
• Card Machine Hire	230		-	41	63	70	56
• Annual Premises Licence	300		-	55	82	91	72
• Advertising	1000		-	183	272	304	241
• NABM Subscription	430		-	78	117	131	104
• Mobile Phone	220		-	40	60	67	53
• Town Safe Subscription	120		-	22	33	36	29
• Supplies and Services	3,290		-	601	895	1000	794
		12,230					
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		£110,148	£11,200	£18,061	£26,910	£30,088	£23,889
INCOME							
Misc Lettings							
Market Square							
• Commercial/Charity	9,120		280	8,840	-	-	-
• Vegan Market	1,400			1,400	-	-	-
Pool Walk				0	-	-	-
• Commercial Hire	3,000			3,000	-	-	-
• Christmas Festival	780			780	-	-	-
		14,300					
Friday Market		30,600	4,375	-	26,225	-	-
Saturday Market		34,210	4,890	-	-	29,320	-
Producers Market		3,270	0	3,270	-	-	-
Tuesday Market		24,820	1,655	-	-	-	23,165
TOTAL INCOME		£107,200	£11,200	£17,290	£26,225	£29,320	£23,165
NET COST OF SERVICE		£2,948	£0	£771	£685	£768	£724

Note 1 - Employee costs -Market Officer 24hours per week plus support.

Note 2 - Central Administration -Management costs.

Note 3

Number of Market Trading Days	Friday	Saturday	Tuesday	Total
Actual Trading Days	51	51	48	150
Non-Trading Days	1	1	4	6
Total	52	52	52	156

Note 4

Winter Discount (25% of rents)	Friday	Saturday	Tuesday	Total
January	£390	£610	£330	£1,330
February	£440	£530	£430	£1,400
Total	£830	£1,140	£760	£2,730

Note 5

Electricity Service Charge	KWH	Fixed Charge	Usage Charge	Total
Electricity Charge	7,600	£300	£2,920	£3,220
Service Charge				£1,630
Net Cost				£1,590

MARKET 2024-25 REVISED BUDGET

Cost Details	Revised Budget		Service Charge	misc lettings	Friday Market	Saturday Market	Tuesday Market
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
EXPENDITURE							
Employee Costs		52,243	-	9,536	14,208	15,886	12,613
Central Administration		17,840	-	3,256	4,852	5,425	4,307
Repairs and Maintenance		2,310	-	422	628	702	558
Energy							
• Electricity-Toilet Block	1,000		1,000	-	-	-	-
• Electricity-Piler	2,110		2,110	-	-	-	-
		3,110					
Rates and Water							
• Business Rates	18,090		-	3,301	4,920	5,501	4,368
• Water-Market Square	220		-	40	60	67	53
• Water-Toilet Block	930		930	-	-	-	-
		19,240					
Supplies and Services							
• Skip Hire	5,450		5,450	-	-	-	-
• Card Fees	1,670		-	305	454	508	403
• Card Machine Hire	230		-	41	63	70	56
• Annual Premises Licence	300		-	55	82	91	72
• Advertising	1000		-	183	272	304	241
• NABM Subscription	430		-	78	117	131	104
• Mobile Phone	220		-	40	60	67	53
• Town Safe Subscription	120		-	22	33	36	29
• Supplies and Services	3,290		-	601	895	1000	794
		12,710					
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		£107,453	£9,490	£17,880	£26,644	£29,788	£23,651
INCOME							
Misc Lettings							
Market Square							
• Commercial/Charity	9,120		280	8,840	-	-	-
• Vegan Market	1,400			1,400	-	-	-
Pool Walk				0	-	-	-
• Commercial Hire	3,000			3,000	-	-	-
• Christmas Festival	780			780	-	-	-
		14,300					
Friday Market		30,600	4,375	-	26,225	-	-
Saturday Market		34,210	4,890	-	-	29,320	-
Producers Market		3,270	0	3,270	-	-	-
Tuesday Market		24,820	1,655	-	-	-	23,165
TOTAL INCOME		£107,200	£11,200	£17,290	£26,225	£29,320	£23,165
NET COST OF SERVICE		£253	-£1,710	£590	£419	£468	£486

Note 1 - Employee costs -Market Officer 24hours per week plus support.

Note 2 - Central Administration -Management costs.

Note 3

Number of Market Trading Days	Friday	Saturday	Tuesday	Total
Actual Trading Days	51	51	48	150
Non-Trading Days	1	1	4	6
Total	52	52	52	156

Note 4

Winter Discount (25% of rents)	Friday	Saturday	Tuesday	Total
January	£580	£550	£350	£1,480
February	£580	£420	£250	£1,250
Total	£1,160	£970	£600	£2,730

Note 5

Electricity Service Charge	KWH	Fixed Charge	Usage Charge	Total
Electricity Charge	7,600	£380	£1,730	£2,110
Service Charge				£1,630
Net Cost				£480

Markets Working Group 12 September 2024: APPENDIX 4

At the last meeting of the Markets Working Group members requested that the Markets Officer report back on the two forthcoming Food Festivals being held in May and August.

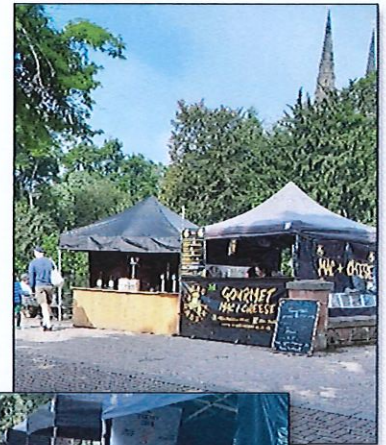
By way of background there have previously been issues with the organiser's non-compliance with LCC requests – notably the number of traders allowed along Pool Walk and the location of those traders. This led to a MWG recommendation (subsequently adopted by Council) that double charges be incurred by any hirer when they deviate from agreed plans. The Food Festival of August 2023 did indeed deviate from the agreed plans and a double charge was applied, but *only* to the extra stalls.

There have also been previous incidences of the organiser placing traders on LCC land without LCC's permission and moving LCC traders from LCC land or to other areas of LCC land without permission.

May Food Festival

The Town Clerk emailed Members of MWG on 24 May to report that LCC staff were present on both days of the May Food Festival and reported the following:

- On 15 May (3 days before the event), a stall plan was submitted indicating **21 stalls** along Pool Walk which was approved by the Town Clerk.
- Shortly thereafter, the Markets Officer questioned whether the (relatively) narrow area of Pool Walk by Speakers Corner would have stalls – none were indicated on the plan.
- In their response (17 May, one day before the event), the organiser stated there would be no stalls in that area as it was to be kept free for footfall.
- On Saturday there were 31 stalls (10 more than the submitted plan, 7 more than the maximum number as recommended by the MWG and supported by council resolution), including stalls in the narrower area supposedly kept free for footfall mentioned above.
- In addition, on Sunday, without permission, the organiser placed one of their traders on LCC land in front of the Markets skip. In doing so, and again without permission, the organiser moved an LCC trader onto the Square (where the Vegan market was being held)
- With permission, the organiser utilised LCC's electricity supply. Separate charges were levied for this based on usage. However, the resulting cabling was not protected by rubber coverings and was simply taped to the ground across roads etc.



August Food Festival

Officers were again on duty for the weekend of the August Food Festival and reported that there were no issues on Minster Pool Walk as the organiser had adhered to the 21 stalls agreed.

However, by way of completeness there were other issues around City Council buildings.

The Museum and Heritage Officer reported that although the Birthplace was closed staff were concerned about the vulnerability of the Grade I listed building. Two food stalls blocked both Market Street and Breadmarket Street entrances to the building. In the event of an emergency, access for staff and emergency services would have been severely compromised. Both stalls were cooking over hot plates and using gas cannisters, which raised serious concerns over the increased risk of fire, arson, and explosion.



Once again electric wires were not covered and just taped to the road. Traders also reported difficulty accessing the market square as the list of vehicle registrations had not been passed to the security team supervising the road closure, despite being issued to the organisers in good time.

In addition, stalls with large smokers were placed directly in front of the Guildhall. The Deputy Town Clerk was able to contact LDC Officers and express concerns regarding the safety and possibility of triggering the Guildhall fire alarm. Fortunately, LDC officers were able to contact the organiser and get the ovens moved to the opposite side of the stall, however the fumes still caused a considerable disruption for the hirer of the Guildhall who was holding a Craft Fayre, stating that footfall was down on previous bookings as their advertising had been totally obscured.



City Council Officers had not been notified or consulted regarding the placement of the stalls, and therefore did not have the opportunity to raise concerns or advise on concerns what appropriate measures should have been taken when leading an event near a historic building.