

For Council: 23 January 2023 APPENDIX 1

Lichfield City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Markets Working Group (MWG) held via Zoom on Wednesday 11 January 2023 at 10:00am

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

IN ATTENDANCE: S Thomas (Deputy Town Clerk), Michelle Read (Office Administrator), A Briggs (Town Clerk).

APOLOGIES: Cllr D Robertson, C Read (Markets Officer).

21. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

None.

22. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: *The Minutes of the MWG meeting held on 26 October 2022 be confirmed as a correct record [Minutes adopted by Council on 12 December 2022].*

23. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES

None

24. MARKETS UPDATE

The Working Party discussed the Markets Officer's report at agenda Appendix 1, and thanked the Markets Officer and Office Administrator for a full and informative report.

RESOLVED: *That the report be noted.*

25. ADVERTISING AT LCC BUS SHELTERS

Members considered the draft markets poster that emerged following requests made during informal consultation since the previous meeting.

RESOLVED: *That the draft design be approved and that corresponding posters be procured for LCC bus shelters and other suitable advertising opportunities*

26. NABMA SURVEY 2022

Members considered the 2022 NABMA survey circulated as an enclosure to the agenda, together with the Town Clerk's brief summary report. The NABMA survey highlighted the increasing age profile of Traders, and the Chair asked whether traders at (for example) the Producers' or Vegan Markets were younger than many of the City Council's permanent traders as his observations appeared to indicate. Officers confirmed that may be the case, but that markets such as the Producers' or Vegan Market may attract part-time traders who also have shop premises, whereas regular Markets attract career traders whose numbers are in decline and age profile increasing.

RESOLVED: *That the report be noted.*

27. 2023/24 MARKET CHARGES

The Working Group considered the agenda report which included representations from Traders regarding proposed increases in pitch fees for 2023/24 as previously discussed by this Working Group (9% increase) and as discussed by the Leader of the Council on adoption of the minutes of the meeting of this Working Group at Council (preference for 5% increase).

The Town Clerk confirmed the Markets function as a whole was likely to incur a deficit of around £14,000 for the year 2022/23 financial year, but Cllr McDermott stated that while every regard needed to be given to costs to the public purse in providing services, the Market fee increases should perhaps not be seen as a straightforward cost-based exercise due to its role in attracting people into the City centre.

Following consideration of the report and also the evidence from the NABMA survey, it was unanimously agreed that a 5% increase be recommended. Cllr J Smith asked whether the resulting pitch fee amount could be rounded up or down, rather than including odd pennies; the Chair advised that payments were now all via BACS or card.

RESOLVED: That the MWG believe an increase of 5% is appropriate.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: That an increase of 5% on prevailing market pitch fees, Pool Walk hire charges and commercial hire rates be favourably considered by Council at its meeting of 23 January 2023.

28. CASUAL TRADERS

Following changes to the Casual Trading Policy as agreed by the Working Group at its October meeting and subsequently adopted by Council, a verbal update on the limited feedback received to date was provided. A further report to the Working Group will follow at the next meeting.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted

29. PERMANENT TRADERS – NON-ATTENDANCE

Members considered the Town Clerk's agenda report which followed the decision of the Working Party to recommend the introduction of a 'double pitch fee' for non-attendance unless at least 48 hours' notice was given or acceptable extenuating circumstances were communicated to the Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk.

The Town Clerk's report highlighted potential issues with implementation and enforcement, with Cllrs C Spruce and P McDermott stating that while something needed to be done, the rigid 'double pitch fee' was perhaps not the correct route.

Following further discussion it was unanimously agreed that this idea be revisited, with a focus on linking non-attendance to disciplinary sanction but not to the rigid penalty originally proposed, perhaps based upon a minimum attendance level and/or a sliding scale of penalty depending upon the amount of notice given. The Town Clerk confirmed that officers would look at the various options and report back to the next meeting.

RESOLVED: That a further report be provided to the Working Group to allow options for other sanctions to be considered.

30. VEGAN MARKET

The Vegan Market Company asked that consideration be given to the hosting of six Vegan Markets during 2023 on the dates listed below.

- Sunday 19th March 2023
- Sunday 21st May 2023
- Sunday 16th July 2023
- Sunday 17th September 2023
- Sunday 15th October 2023
- Sunday 10th December 2023

It was proposed that a contract be entered into in order that these Markets can be provided, and that the terms of the contract broadly reflect those already in place with CJ's Events for the Producers Market – those terms being reproduced for the three trial Vegan Markets held in 2022.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the income from these Markets would offset losses incurred in other areas of the Markets function. The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed the suggested dates are all the third Sunday of the month except 10 December (to coincide with the Food Festival) in order to avoid clashes with the Producers; Market and Burntwood's Market. It was also confirmed that the Vegan Market Company did not wish to make the event monthly at this time.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL:

a) Utilising its powers under the Food Act Part III, the City Council creates a market to take place on 19 March, 21 May, 16 July, 17 September, 15 October and 10 December 2023

b) the City Council enters into appropriate contractual arrangements with the Vegan Market Company to provide these markets

31. CITY CENTRE PEDESTRIANISATION

The Working Party was updated on the City Centre Pedestrianisation trial as implemented by LDC, with particular emphasis on the role played by LCC officers in administering the scheme for LCC Market Traders and associated events. It was confirmed that permits had been successfully procured and circulated. Cllr C Spruce noted that the co-operation between the City and District Council on this matter had been excellent. The Deputy Town Clerk formally thanked the Office Administrator for her efforts in this regard, the thanks being echoed by the Working Group.

The Chair advised of an email he had received from a Guildhall hirer, expressing concern as to how to load for concerts etc during the pedestrianisation trial. The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that the car park to the rear of Donegal House can be made available for unloading – but not for parking and that the Guildhall Bookings secretary automatically facilitates hirers requirements as part of the booking procedure.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

32. BODY CAMERAS

Following its request for such provision at its last meeting, the Working Group was advised that body cameras for Markets staff had now been purchased and issued. Cllr C Spruce stated that he was pleased to see the body cameras had been introduced as unacceptable behaviour should be appropriately evidenced and the perpetrator dealt with.

Cllr J Smith raised a query contained in a submission from a Market Trader regarding any permissions or licences required by the City Council to use body cameras. The Town Clerk expressed the view that the cameras in this instance were little different to a dash camera. The Chair stated that as the camera was being used to protect officers and record specific

confrontational incidents as they unfold, rather than to monitor the general public or specified individuals, no licence should be required. The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that appropriate storage/viewing of any footage was being considered and it would be held/viewed securely.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

33. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Following discussion it was agreed that the previously agreed date be changed to allow the Markets Officer to attend future meetings. The next meeting to take place on Tuesday 28 February at 10.00am via Zoom.

**THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS
THE CHAIR DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 10.45am**