

For Council: 4 October 2023 APPENDIX 2

Lichfield City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Markets Working Group (MWG) held via 'Zoom' on Thursday 28 September 2023 at 10:00am

PRESENT: Councillors J Blackman (Chair) and Councillors, D Baker, M Field, C Pinder-Smith, P McDermott, and J Smith.

IN ATTENDANCE: S Thomas (Deputy Town Clerk), Jeremy Williams (Markets Officer), Michelle Read (Office Administrator)

APOLOGIES: None

20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

None.

21. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: *The Minutes of the MWG meeting held on 13 July 2023 be confirmed as a correct record [Minutes adopted by Council on 24 July 2023].*

22. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES

None.

23. MARKETS UPDATE

Members considered the agenda report. Councillor D Baker commented on the issues that occurred over the weekend of the Food Festival as detailed in the report and suggested representatives of both Lichfield District Council and Staffordshire County Council be invited to attend the next Market Working Group meeting in order to resolve these issues before the next Festival occurs.

RESOLVED: *That the report be noted*

24. TRADER REPRESENTATION

Members noted the resignation of the Trader's representative from the Committee and the so far unsuccessful canvassing of Traders for a replacement. The Markets Officer reported that one trader had offered to collate trader's comments and submit them to the Deputy Town Clerk for consideration by the Market Working Group, but that there would be no overall representative to attend meetings.

RECOMMENDED: *That the report be noted.*

25. ELECTRICITY CHARGES – INTERNAL AUDITOR REVIEW

Members considered the Town Clerk's report at agenda **appendix 2** which provided detail on the income from electricity charges and the cost of the electricity used. Members noted that for functions such as the Bower Fair where one party is using all of the electricity, readings are taken at the start and end of the event with an invoice then issued for the corresponding cost of electricity used. The Internal Auditor's report concluded that an increase from the present £2.50 charge to £5.35 would be required.

Members agreed that the Council should not bear all the costs of the increase in electricity charges but not wishing to impose a 114% rise on traders decided on an increase of 57% (equating in a rise of £1.42 [inc. VAT] per appliance)

Members also considered the issue of lighting and the role of the council in ensuring the Market is safe and whether charging for provision of lighting that is designed to enhance visibility (rather than simply illuminating items offered for sale) was appropriate.

RESOLVED:

- a) ***That the charge per appliance for electricity to Traders be increased by 57%***
- b) ***That for all private and commercial hirers of the market square meter readings be taken before and after the event and the electricity usage charged accordingly.***
- c) ***The revised costs for electricity be implemented on 1 January 2024.***
- d) ***That the cost of lighting designed to enhance visibility (rather than lighting designed solely to illuminate stock) be exempt from electricity charges.***

26. 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 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 will be liable for the full rent. Members considered the appropriateness of this provision for the winter of 23/24.

RESOLVED: That the 25% Winter Discount to Traders remain in place without any variation for the winter of 2023/24.

27. MARKET CHARGES 2024/25

To assist with the process of preparing the draft 2024/25 budget, Members considered the current pricing structure for the markets and Pool Walk hire. Members agreed in order to protect the viability of the general markets, as in previous years, only a small increase in fees should be applied to traders. However, members felt that commercial and private hire of the market square should be in line with inflation and that any surety deposit taken should reflect the cost of repairing any damage or additional cleaning that might be required after an event.

RESOLVED: The Committee wishes draft budgets to be prepared for formal consideration by council based on the following market rate changes for 24/25

- a) ***That a 5% increase in Rent/Pitch Fees be applied to the General Markets***
- b) ***That all Commercial and Private Hire of the Market Square and Pool Walk be increased by 10%***
- c) ***That a surety deposit of £500 per day (whole market square) and £250 per day (half market square) be applied to all Private and Commercial hirers.***

[Implications for pricing structure are shown at APPENDIX A of these Minutes and are subject to formal consideration by Council on 22 January 2024]

28. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Agreed as Thursday 23 November at 6.00pm in the Moulton Room, Guildhall.

29. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The chair requested that the condolences of the Working Group be sent to the family members of the Fruit and Vegetable trader who passed away recently.

**THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS
THE CHAIR DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 11.15am**

MWG Minutes 28 September 2023: APPENDIX A

GENERAL MARKET RENTS 2023-2024 and suggested increase for 2024 - 2025

1. Market Square Rents/Pitch Fees – General Markets **(plus 5%)**

| | Pitch Fee 10' x 10' (£) | Service Charge inc VAT (£) | Total Charge (£) |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|
| Tuesday Market | 19.05 (20.00) | 2.00 | 21.05 (22.00) |
| Friday Market | 19.05 (20.00) | 5.00 | 24.05 (25.00) |
| Saturday Market | 19.05 (20.00) | 5.00 | 24.05 (25.00) |
| Casual Traders - Tuesday Market | 20.86 (21.90) | 2.00 | 22.86 (23.90) |
| Casual Traders - Friday Market | 20.86 (21.90) | 5.00 | 25.86 (26.90) |
| Casual Traders - Saturday Market | 20.86 (21.90) | 5.00 | 25.86 (26.90) |

Additional Charges: Electricity (per appliance): £2.50 (inc VAT) **(plus 57% = £3.93)**

Parking: £2.50

2. Market Square – Commercial Hire **(plus 10%)**

| Type of Hire | Cost (£) |
|---|-----------------|
| Private/commercial whole square (plus £500 per day surety) | 210.00 (231.00) |
| Private/commercial half square (plus £250.00 per day surety) | 157.50 (173.25) |
| Private/Commercial promoting public services | 57.50 (63.25) |
| Voluntary/charitable organisations for fundraising events | 10.50 (11.55) |
| Large Commercial Event (plus £500/day surety) | 420.00 (462.00) |
| Private/Commercial daily pitch fee per Vehicle | 26.25 (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) **(Plus 10%)**

| Type of Hire | Cost (£) |
|--|---------------|
| Hire of the whole open space per 10'x10' (or approximate equivalent) pitch, subject to a minimum of £100.00 | 10.50 (11.55) |
| Hire of an individual 10'x10' (or approximate equivalent) pitch within the open space - Commercial | 15.75 (17.33) |
| Hire of an individual 10'x10' (or approximate equivalent) pitch within the open space - Charities | 10.50 (11.55) |

4. Gazebo Hire **(no changes to hire fees)**

| 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 |