

For Council: 10 June 2024 APPENDIX 3

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**