

For Council: 8 December 2025 APPENDIX 2

Lichfield City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Commercial Services Committee held on Monday 10 November 2025 at 6.00pm in the Moulton Room, Guildhall

PRESENT: Councillors J Blackman (Chair), H Ashton and P McDermott.

IN ATTENDANCE: S Thomas (Deputy Town Clerk), M Read (Markets Administrator) J Williams (Markets Officer), H Winter (Guildhall Bookings Officer).

APOLOGIES: Councillors D Baker, R Bragger, and S Schafer and H Chatwin (Civic Officer).

24. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

Councillor H Ashton declared an interest in agenda item 9 (Minute 32) as he is the Lay Chair of Churches Together who have hired the Market Square for carol singing in December.

25. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: *The Minutes of the Commercial Services Committee meeting held on 18 September 2025 be confirmed as a correct record [Minutes adopted by Council on 30 September 2025].*

26. MATTERS ARISING

Councillor H Ashton asked if there was any update on further open days at the Guildhall and the cost of an electronic A Board.

The Deputy Town Clerk stated that further open days were being considered and suggested they were combined with a craft fayre to increase footfall. Officers are yet to identify specific dates but recommended the Open Day takes place in the Spring of 2026.

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that the price of an electronic A Board ranged from £900 - £3,000 noting that there was no budget for such a purchase. Councillor J Blackman suggested there may be some funding available but could not specify where this might be found.

27. NEW MICRO WEBSITES FOR THE GUILDHALL AND MARKETS

The Deputy Town Clerk updated Members on the progress of the new Guildhall micro website. Councillor J Blackman requested that when the website was ready to go live the Council issue a press release drawing particular attention to the 3D Guildhall walkthrough.

Members also discussed the content and logo supplied by Vision ICT for the new markets micro website and requested the Deputy Town Clerk liaise with Vision ICT to communicate the amendments required.

RESOLVED: *That the amendments as discussed be communicated to Vision ICT via the Deputy Town Clerk.*

28. GUILDHALL UPDATE

Members considered the Guildhall Booking Officer's update report at **Agenda Appendix 1** noting that the roof repairs in 2026 would likely have an impact on bookings.

Councillor J Blackman suggested that the President and Vice President of the Sutton Coldfield, Lichfield and Tamworth Chamber of Commerce be invited to visit the Guildhall in the hope that they would secure the venue for the Chambers AGM.

The Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that Guildhall Facebook page now has 1,000 followers.

RESOLVED: That the Guildhall Officers update be noted.

29. MARKETS UPDATE

Members considered the Market Officer's update report at **Agenda Appendix 2** noting the growing success of Social media posts and the high occupancy across all three markets.

RESOLVED: That the Markets Officer's update be noted.

30. VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS MARKET

Members were informed that the Deputy Town Clerk and Market Administrator would be attending a meeting at LDC with representatives of the Victorian Market on 11 November 2025. This will provide officers with the opportunity to request that LDC works collaboratively with LCC to ensure LSD Events adheres to all stall plan requirements set out by LCC.

In addition, Officers sought guidance regarding the Community Day that Members have requested take place on Thursday 4 December [the first day of the Victorian market] noting that inclement weather would be likely. Councillor H Ashton suggested that the Emergency Services and Neighbourhood Policing etc be invited to attend.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted and the Emergency Services be invited to attend a Community day on 4 December.

31. TRADER REPRESENTATIONS

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

- Can traders have a separate bin as on Saturday it is quite often full of waste from Fruit and veg and we all pay for it.
The Council will provide an additional 1100 Litre wheelie bin to alleviate the problem.
- Are the City Council still getting regular information from LSD about the Victorian Market
City Council Officers are working closely with LDC Officers and attending regular meetings which provide up to date information.
- Will the working group act if the Victorian market cause issues and not let the organiser get a foothold like other organisers have.
The City Council will work collaboratively with all event organisers. LCC Officers are in regular contact with LDC Officers and any issues during or after an event are reported immediately. The Market Square and Minster Pool Walk are privately owned by LCC and will not be used without the express permission of the Council, however LCC has no control over the utilisation of other sites in the city.
- Will Saturday the 27 December be a normal market day speaking to some traders they are booking holidays for this day.

As with all retail Saturday 27 December will be a normal trading day as it is not a Bank Holiday. Any trader failing to attend will be charged arrears.

- *Would it be courteous to ask general market traders if they want to stand on non-market days before it is offered to other trader selling the same products.*
All general market traders can stand on non-market days if they wish and should contact the Markets Officer to book.
- *Could the Council advertise the general market in places other than social media.*
In addition to social media the markets are advertised on bus stops, the Council's quarterly newsletter published in City Life magazine and on the Visit Lichfield website. In addition the Committee is currently working on a dedicated Markets website and plans to communicate to local hotels and Tourist Association the trading days of the General markets. The markets will also have a dedicated advert on the 46sqm screen at the Christmas Lights Switch on event on 23 November.
- *Could we have A boards at either end of the market square to welcome people and advertise events and market days.*
The Council does not wish to add to the large amount of A Boards which are already around the City and are concerned that they may become a tripping hazard or vandalised.
- *Would the Council look at putting in more anchor points that could be used by traders as weather conditions change.*
The Council will consider this at a later date.

RESOLVED: That the Traders comments be noted and the Markets Officer to report the Committees response to the Traders in writing.

32. FEES AND CHARGES 2026/27

To assist with the process of preparing the draft 2026/27 budget, Members considered the current pricing structure for the Markets, Minster Pool Walk, and Guildhall room hire.

As is customary, for illustration purposes, Officers prepared figures based on an inflationary 4% increase across all functions. However, Members felt that a percentage increase did not reflect the commercial value of these operations and therefore proposed the separate increases to each fee which appear at **Appendix A**.

The Deputy Town Clerk reminded Members that service users are more accustomed to a percentage increase to fees and charges and that the proposal would likely cause confusion and attract criticism. However, Members felt that their suggestions would make accounting easier and put the Guildhall on a more commercial footing in line with other venues in the City.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL:

That for the purposes of the draft 2026/27 budget to be put before Council for formal consideration in January 2026:

- a) The increase in Rent/Pitch Fees as per Appendix A be applied to the General Markets and all Commercial and Private Hire of the Market Square and Pool Walk.***
- b) The increase as per Appendix A be applied to the Guildhall room hire charges and Special Event package.***

33. ANTIQUES MARKET

The Markets Officer confirmed that a company providing Antiques Markets had been contacted but that the current pricing structure had proved confusing and cost prohibitive. It is hoped that the proposed changes to fees and charges will resolve this and an antiques market can be provided in the future.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

34. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 13 January 2026 at 6.00pm in the Moulton Room, Guildhall.

35. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Officers informed Members that they would be meeting with an events company on 18 November who provided specialist themed markets.

Members were asked if they wished to send a delegate to the NABMA Conference on 5 February 2026 concerning markets and devolution of Councils. Members felt this was unnecessary to attend.

Councillor J Blackman put forward a proposal that the Guildroom be repurposed as a Tourist Information centre, café, and temporary museum. Members and Officers raised several issues and it was agreed that this would be an Agenda item for further discussion at the next meeting.

The Markets Officer informed Members that when measuring, some traders were extending their stalls beyond the agreed pitch sizes and asked if an additional charge could be levied to discourage traders for using extra space.

Members agreed that an additional £10 *Promotional Fee* be charged for traders extending beyond their agreed pitch size.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL:

That a £10 'Promotional Fee' be charged to traders extending beyond their agreed pitch size.

Councillor H Ashton noted that the number of cigarette ends being disposed of on the cobbles of St Mary's was unacceptable. The Markets Officer stated that he would remind all market traders to use the bins provided.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS

THE CHAIR DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 8.10pm.

COMMERCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE 10 November 2025 APPENDIX A

Current Fees And Charges – Market Square/Pool Walk - **Proposed for 26/27 (£ and %)**

1. Market Square Rents/Pitch Fees – General Markets

Market	Pitch Fee 10' x 10' (£)	Increase (%)	Service Charge inc VAT (£)	Total Charge (£)	Increase (%)
Tuesday	21.00 (22.00)	4	2.00	23.00 (24.00)	4
Friday	21.00 (22.00)	4	5.00	26.00 (27.00)	4
Saturday	21.00 (22.00)	4	5.00	26.00 (27.00)	4
Casual Traders –Tuesday	23.00 (24.00)	4	2.00	25.00 (26.00)	4
Casual Traders - Friday	23.00 (25.00)	9	5.00	28.00 (30.00)	7
Casual Traders - Saturday	23.00 (25.00)	9	5.00	28.00 (30.00)	7

- **Additional Charges: Electricity** (per appliance): £3.93 (inc VAT).[No increase]
- **Large events are charged based on usage.**
- **Parking:** £2.50 (£3.00) (20%)

2. Market Square – Commercial Hire

Type of Hire	Cost (£)	Increase (%)
Private/commercial whole square (plus £500 per day surety) **	242.55 (300.00)	23
Private/commercial half square (plus £250.00 per day surety)	181.90 (remove)	-
Private/Commercial promoting public services	66.41 (70.00)	5
Voluntary/charitable organisations for fundraising events	12.13 (15.00)	24
Large Commercial Event (plus £500/day surety)**	497.83 (remove)	-
Private/Commercial daily pitch fee per Vehicle	30.32 (35.00)	14

- **Additional charge of £20 per stall when part or all of the square is 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 layout)

Type of Hire	Cost (£)	Increase (%)
Hire of the whole open space per 10'x10' (or approximate equivalent) pitch, <u>subject to a minimum of £100.00</u>	12.13 (15.00)	24
Hire of an individual 10'x10' (or approximate equivalent) pitch within the open space - Commercial	18.20 (20.00)	10
Hire of an individual 10'x10' (or approximate equivalent) pitch within the open space - Charities	12.13 (15.00)	24

4. Gazebo Hire

Type of Hire	Cost (£)
Gazebo and Weights - Rent per occasion	5.00 (No Increase)
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

Current Guildhall Hire Charges - **Proposed for 26/27 (£ and %)**

All charges shown exclude VAT unless otherwise stated

<u>VOLUNTARY/CHARITABLE*</u>		<u>Mon - Thurs</u>	<u>Fri - Sun</u>
Main Hall (1st floor)	Per hour	£17.37	£28.94
Kitchen (1st floor)	Per occasion	£17.37	£28.94
Guildroom (ground floor)	Per hour	£11.11	£20.32
Kitchen (ground floor)	Per occasion	£11.11	£20.32
The Ashmole Room	Per hour	£9.21	£18.34
The Whytmore Room	Per hour	£7.76	£16.03
Whole Building	Per hour	£33.93	£62.63

***Proposal - abolish from 2026/27 and combine with 'Standard' rates as detailed below**

<u>PRIVATE Change to</u> <u>"STANDARD"</u>		<u>Mon - Thurs</u>	<u>%Inc</u>	<u>Fri - Sun</u>	<u>%Inc</u>
Main Hall (1 st floor)	Per hour	£21.59 (£25.00)	16	£33.95 (£40.00)	18
Kitchen (1 st floor)	Per occasion	£21.59 (£25.00)	16	£33.95 (£40.00)	18
Guildroom (ground floor)	Per hour	£13.69 (£20.00)	46	£23.65 (£30.00)	27
Kitchen (ground floor)	Per occasion	£13.69 (£20.00)	46	£23.65 (£30.00)	27
The Ashmole Room	Per hour	£11.27 (£15.00)	33	£21.87 (£25.00)	14
The Whytmore Room	Per hour	£9.59 (£15.00)	56	£19.47 (£25.00)	28
Whole Building	Per hour	£41.25 (£50.00)	21	£73.24 (£80.00)	9

<u>WEDDINGS/CIVIL CEREMONIES/COMMERCIAL</u>		<u>Mon - Thurs</u>	<u>%Inc</u>	<u>Fri - Sun</u>	<u>%Inc</u>
Main Hall (1st floor)	Per hour	£34.26 (£40.00)	17	£65.14 (£70.00)	7
Kitchen (1st floor)	Per occasion	£34.26 (£40.00)	17	£65.14 (£70.00)	7
Guildroom (ground floor)	Per hour	£32.84 (£35.00)	7	£62.39 (£65.00)	4
Kitchen (ground floor)	Per occasion	£32.84 (£35.00)	7	£62.39 (£65.00)	4
The Ashmole Room	Per hour	£21.64 (£25.00)	16	£29.10 (£35.00)	20
The Whytmore Room	Per hour	£18.60 (£25.00)	34	£24.96 (£35.00)	40
Whole Building	Per hour	£79.72 (£90.00)	13	£141.35 (£150.00)	6
Civil Ceremony Fee	Per occasion	£139.00 (£150.00)	8		

ADDITIONAL CHARGES WHERE ALCOHOL IS SERVED

£396 minimum charge – includes 4-hour security provision, additional hours charged at £99/hour up to a maximum of six hours. Discretion applied by officers in certain circumstances e.g. alcohol served for 'toast' only.

SPECIAL EVENT BOOKING –

A charge of (**currently**) **£1,750 inc VAT (£2,000 inc VAT, 14% increase)** to hire the whole building for 1 day (10.00am until 01.00am), applicable for Weddings etc and to include additional charges where alcohol is served as set out above.

VOLUNTARY/CHARITABLE RATE

Members agreed to delete this category and move these bookings to the Private rate (re-named **Standard Rate**), noting that the current voluntary/charitable rate does not cover the salary of Premises Attendants' or heating/lighting of the Guild Hall.

PRIVATE RATE

As per the above to now include charity/voluntary bookings and change the name to **Standard Rate**