

<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Head of Economic Prosperity</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Debbie Harris</b>
<b>Telephone No:</b>	<b>01543 464490</b>
<b>Portfolio Leader:</b>	<b>Town Centre Regeneration</b>
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Report Track:</b>	<b>Cabinet: 19/09/19</b>

**CABINET**  
**19 SEPTEMBER 2019**  
**CANNOCK INDOOR MARKET CONSULTATION**

**1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To update Cabinet on implications associated with bringing forward redevelopment proposals in Cannock Town Centre (CTC) and potential changes to delivery of the current indoor market provision.
- 1.2 To seek authority to carry out a public consultation associated with the current indoor market facility.
- 1.3 To consider the Council's options with regards to the continued provision of a market within CTC.
- 1.4 To inform Cabinet of confidential matters associated with the operation of the current markets in the **CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX 3**.

**2 Reason(s) for Appendices being 'Not for Publication'**

- 2.1 In accordance with the provisions of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the report is considered 'not for publication' under the following categories of exemption:
  - Exempt Paragraph 3 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council).

**3 Recommendations**

- 3.1 That Cabinet delegate authority to the Head of Economic Prosperity in consultation with the Town Centre Regeneration Portfolio Leader to take all necessary steps to undertake a consultation process linked to determining the future of the indoor market provision in CTC.

- 3.2 To launch a public consultation process linked to the indoor market in CTC with a view to officers presenting options for future delivery. Further reporting back to Cabinet on the outcome of the consultation process will follow in late 2019.
- 3.3 That Cabinet notes the information contained within the **CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX 3**.

#### **4 Key Issues and Reasons for Recommendations**

- 4.1 The indoor market as it stands is unviable in the long term and will require financial investment in order to continue to be fit for purpose. Therefore, the Council needs to decide on the future market provision for CTC; the Council also needs to decide in taking forward any CTC re-development scheme whether this should include the footprint of the Indoor Market Hall.
- 4.2 There are various commercial and legal issues that could arise should the Council seek to alter or extinguish the market provision currently enjoyed in any redevelopment of Cannock Town Centre. This report proposes options that meet the Council's legal market obligations and look to maintain some market presence all be it potentially in a different manner.
- 4.3 The Council needs to run a public consultation process including with current indoor market stall holders before making any decisions on the future of the market. The Council will properly consider the views particularly those directly affected by any proposed changes. A report back to Cabinet following the outcome to the consultation process will follow before any final decisions are taken.
- 4.4 As part of the consultation a series of options will be presented regarding possible future delivery arrangements in order to gauge the public reaction along with affected stall holders. Potential options are set out in Appendix 1.

#### **5 Relationship to Corporate Priorities**

- 5.1 This report supports the Council's Corporate Priorities as follows:
- (i) Promoting Prosperity – Creating strong and diverse town centres links to the procurement strategy for a potential development partner for CTC.

#### **6 Report Detail**

##### **Current Arrangements**

- 6.1 The CTC indoor market is operated by the Council and held four times a week in the Indoor Market Hall on Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday (9am – 5pm) and in the Prince of Wales Market Hall on Tuesday, Friday and Saturday (9am – 4.30pm). The number of trading days increased for the market in the Indoor Market Hall in April 2017 as part of the Financial Recovery Plan for the Council (excluded Prince of Wales Market Hall). This change has not revitalised the indoor market and as a consequence a number of traders have already ceased

trading and at present there are 17 traders and 40 vacant stalls. The immediate result of the changes was that 24% of existing traders left the Market Hall at the end of March 2017 which resulted in a 29% drop in the number of open stalls. However some of the stallholders that left were already contemplating retirement prior to the implementation of the Council's decision.

- 6.2 Notwithstanding officers' commitment to marketing and promotion of the indoor Market (both within the Indoor Market Hall and Prince of Wales Market Hall) there has been very little interest from prospective new traders. Where potential new traders have expressed an interest the reasons given for not taking a stall include the number of vacant stalls within the Market Hall and lack of vibrancy / footfall. The proportion of vacant stalls has consistently been greater on a Thursday (the additional trading day) as a number of existing traders declined to attend the Market Hall on the additional day. The additional trading day did not apply to the Prince of Wales Market Hall.
- 6.3 In addition to the indoor market a weekly street market now operates on Tuesdays (on a trial basis) and Fridays. The street market is viewed as being a complementary and valuable addition to the vibrancy of CTC.
- 6.4 The contract to operate a weekly street market in CTC was awarded in October 2015 to the current operator E G Skett & Co (Sketts). Cabinet resolved at its meeting in April 2019 to extend Sketts contract to run a weekly Friday street market until 31<sup>st</sup> October 2020 and also for Sketts to operate a trial weekly Tuesday street market during the summer of 2019 with the possibility of including this additional day within the contract specification when it is re-tendered in November 2020.
- 6.5 CTC footfall figures for 2018 indicate that footfall is higher on a Friday by 27% more than the next highest day of the week (Saturdays).

The existing street market operator Sketts has advised that they consider Cannock's Friday Street Market to be unique in that it has regular repeat customers who are coming specifically to buy rather than just browse the market. The regular traders that attend Cannock Friday street market are higher in number than at any other street market operated by the current operator Sketts.

- 6.6 A trial Tuesday street market has also been in operation in CTC since 11<sup>th</sup> June 2019. It should be noted that the weather has been particularly inclement with heavy rain on a number of Tuesdays. Even so, the traders who did attend have reported a steady build up in trade. The operator has also advised that, from their experience, creating a new weekly 'Market Day' in a town, takes time. They are confident that the Tuesday Market will grow in both stall numbers and footfall.

### **Redevelopment plans**

- 6.7 Cabinet in April 2019 took the decision to focus on bringing forward redevelopment plans in CTC. In making this decision they agreed to the in principle use of the MSCP and the space underneath including the Indoor Market Hall being part of any redevelopment scheme (but subject to further

reporting). The area occupied by the Prince of Wales Market hall is excluded from the footprint of the proposed re-development plans.

- 6.8 Consultation with the public, affected Indoor market stall holders and Prince of Wales market stall holders is considered an appropriate next step to determine how best to continue to provide the CTC market going forward.

### **Consultation proposals**

- 6.9 It is proposed that the public consultation will last up to 4 weeks. It will include contact with directly affected parties (19 stall holders from the Indoor Market and Prince of Wales Market) and will take the form of issuing correspondence to market stall holders as drafted in Appendix 1 with a follow up meeting/discussion if required. A further public exercise will take place in the form of a street survey on market days as drafted in Appendix 2 alongside publicity on the website etc. All consultation actions will be carried out from existing budgets by Council Officers.
- 6.10 As part of the consultation the Council will put forward options to stall holders and the public regarding the future operation of a market offer in CTC; the options include:
- (a) moving the Tuesday and Friday market (operated within the Indoor Market Hall) to a street market (and to stop holding any market on Thursday and Saturday);
  - (b) moving the [Tuesday, Friday and Saturday] market (operated within the Indoor Market Hall) to the Prince of Wales Market Hall (and to stop holding any market on Thursday).
- 6.11 The outcome of the consultation process will be reported back to Cabinet upon conclusion.

## **7 Implications**

### **7.1 Financial**

In 2018/19 the Stall Income achieved was £146,310 against a budget of £172,000 giving a shortfall of £25,690. There was a net loss of £52,050 in 2018-19 compared to a budgeted net loss of £24,720 for controllable costs/income. A shortfall in income has been evidenced year on year since 2015/16. The number of occupied trading stalls is 17 and vacant stalls is 40.

As referred to in paragraph 6.10 above, the Head of Economic Prosperity has advised that any costs associated with the Consultation Exercise can be contained within existing budgets.

Once the results of the consultation exercise have been established further reports will be presented to Members which will include detailed financial implications. These may include estimates of costs such as security services, mothballing costs and any staff severance costs depending on the recommendations made for Market provision moving forward.

## 7.2 Legal

The Council has legal obligations in relation to holding a market in CTC and Counsel advice has been sought on this matter – please refer to **CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX 3**.

The legal implications are set out in the report.

## 7.3 Human Resources

Please refer to **CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX 3**.

## 7.4 Section 17 (Crime Prevention)

None.

## 7.5 Human Rights Act

None.

## 7.6 Data Protection

The **CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX 3** contains information that could identify an individual and therefore is not published.

## 7.7 Risk Management

The carrying out of a Consultation Exercise could result in a financial risk for the authority which is not quantifiable.

Please refer to **CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX 3**.

## 7.8 Equality & Diversity

None.

## 7.9 Best Value

None.

## 8 Appendices to the Report

Appendix 1	Market Stall Holder Consultation Letter
Appendix 2	Public Consultation Survey
<b>Appendix 3 (Exempt)</b>	<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>

**Previous Consideration**

Cannock Town Centre Development Prospectus	Cabinet	11 July 2019
Cannock & Rugeley Town Centre Redevelopment	Cabinet	18 April 2019
Briefing note of working group to review Cannock Street Market	Promoting Prosperity Scrutiny Committee	13 March 2019
Cannock Indoor Market Hall	Cabinet	14 December 2017
Cannock Town Centre Redevelopment – Markets	Cabinet	18 September 2008

Dear XXXXXX,

**Cannock Town Centre Indoor Market Public Consultation.**

The Council is writing to all indoor Market stall holders about *potential* changes to future delivery arrangements for the operation of a market in Cannock Town Centre.

The Council recognises that the indoor market in particular isn't operating successfully and hasn't been for some time now. This is despite efforts to address both its trading format (number of days) and its appearance (investment in improving the market entrance). The indoor market hall building is becoming expensive to maintain and is reaching the end of its economic life.

The Council needs to consider the long term future of the building in the context of any future redevelopment proposals for Cannock, given its connection to the currently closed Multi – Storey Car Park which is also in Council ownership.

We are keen to maintain a Market offer especially given its history in Cannock Town Centre but the format potentially needs to change to make it successful and this is the basis of the consultation.

Please indicate below whether or not you would be interested in continuing to trade if the market was operated on any of the following basis. (Please circle any that would be of interest).

- A Underneath the Prince of Wales Theatre in a reconfigured space (operating on [Tuesday, Friday and Saturday] (and to stop holding an indoor market on Thursday).
- B Street Markets (operating on Tuesdays and Fridays potentially in Littleton Square, but not on Thursdays and Saturdays).
- C Any change to current arrangements would result in you deciding to no longer trade in Cannock.

Do you have any other suggestions for future market provision in Cannock Town Centre?

If so please state below.

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Would you be interested if there was another commercial operator able to offer you accommodation, not Council owned but on similar terms, except you would need to trade 6 days per week?

Yes No

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me on 01543 464490.

This consultation will run from 3<sup>rd</sup> October to 31<sup>st</sup> October

Any views expressed after this date may not be taken into consideration.

The Council will report back to Cabinet the outcome of this Consultation exercise. If you would like to be kept informed of the outcome to this process then please provide contact information below:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this survey in the pre-paid envelope provided or ensure its return to :

Economic Development Service  
Cannock Chase Council  
Beecroft Road  
WS11 1BG.

Closing date 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019

SAMPLE

At Cannock Chase Council we take your privacy seriously and we are the data controller. We will only use your personal information to communicate with you directly on a specific issue or project (this includes any administration in connection with any meetings or discussions held) and only where you have agreed for us to do so. We will not share your details without prior consent being sort to any third parties. You can find more information about how we handle your personal information by visiting [www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/privacynotices](http://www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/privacynotices)

**Cannock Town Centre Indoor Market Public Consultation.**

The Council are conducting this survey with members of the public who maybe potentially affected by changes to future market facilities in Cannock Town Centre.

The Council recognises that the indoor market in particular isn't operating successfully and hasn't been for some time now. This is despite efforts to address both its trading format (number of days) and its appearance (investment in improving the market entrance). The indoor market hall building is becoming expensive to maintain and is reaching the end of its economic life.

The Council needs to consider the long term future of the building in the context of any future redevelopment proposals for Cannock, given its connection to the currently closed Multi – Storey Car Park which is also in Council ownership.

We are keen to maintain a Market offer especially given its history in Cannock Town Centre but the format potentially needs to change to make it successful and this is the basis of the consultation.

Do you use Cannock indoor market?

Yes            No

If not, why not?

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How do you think the future market provision should be delivered? (Please circle)

- A    Street Markets (operating on Tuesdays and Fridays potentially in Littleton Square) but not on Thursdays and Saturdays.
- B    Underneath the Prince of Wales Theatre in a reconfigured space operating on [Tuesday, Friday and Saturday and to stop holding a market on Thursday]
- C    Any change to current arrangements would result in you no longer shopping at Cannock market.

Do you have any other suggestions for future market provision in Cannock Town Centre?

If so please state below.

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