

COMMUNITY AND ENTERPRISE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Wednesday 14 th March 2018
Report Subject	Flintshire Street Markets Review
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Economic Development
Report Author	Chief Officer Community and Enterprise
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Street markets in Flintshire, in line with those across the UK, have declined in scale over the years. With the exception of Mold market, which remains successful, the remaining street markets in Flintshire only attract small numbers of market traders and limited customer numbers which threatens their sustainability.

A review has been undertaken of the smaller street markets in Flintshire. Their sustainability has been reviewed and consultation undertaken with the Town Councils in Connah's Quay, Flint and Holywell. Consultation meetings have also been held with market traders in Flint and Holywell.

The report summarises the outcomes of the review and recommends next steps.

RECOMMENDATIONS

	That Scrutiny Committee considers and supports recommendations to:-
1	Close Flint street market;
2	Provisionally agree to the transfer of the operation of the Connah's Quay street market to Connah's Quay Town Council, subject to confirmation from the Town Council and agreement of terms;
3	Continue the operation of the Holywell street market on an interim basis but continue discussion with Holywell Town Council on future cost saving options.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	BACKGROUND																				
1.01	<p>Across the UK street markets have declined in scale and vitality. This has been down to competition from large multi-national retail chains, supermarkets and on-line shopping. Only markets in larger retail centres have thrived.</p>																				
1.02	<p>Flintshire currently operates four, weekly street markets and one indoor market:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mold market – Wednesdays and Saturdays, 43 stalls • Mold indoor market – daily, 16 stalls • Holywell market – Thursdays, 12 stalls • Connah’s Quay market – Thursdays, 2 stalls • Flint market – Fridays, 6 stalls 																				
1.03	<p>There are numerous benefits to operating street markets. For the shopper there is the advantage of value for money; the charm of exploring and social interaction within a vibrant town centre.</p> <p>Markets generally contribute to the economic and social vitality of towns and can bring increased footfall to benefit the wider businesses and services. Whilst this remains true for Mold, the markets in Holywell, Flint and Connah’s Quay have reduced in scale considerably over the years and have shown continued decline in the last four years despite intervention such as promotion and growth initiatives across all market towns.</p>																				
1.04	<p>The three smaller street markets in Flintshire are of a size where their sustainability and function need to be reviewed in terms of their viability for traders, their benefits to the town centres hosting them and their operating cost to the Council.</p> <p>A review has therefore been undertaken of these three markets and the results are summarised below. The review has been informed by consultation with key stakeholders in each town.</p>																				
1.05	<p>The majority of the costs of operating the street markets are staffing costs. The current markets service team comprises a full time Senior Markets Officer, one full time and two part time Markets Officers.</p>																				
1.06	<p>The table below shows the income generated by each market for the Council compared to its running costs during 2016 – 2017.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="320 1778 1383 2089"> <thead> <tr> <th>Market</th> <th>Income</th> <th>Expenditure</th> <th>Net income</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Mold – Saturday</td> <td>£65,760</td> <td>£27,160</td> <td>£38,600</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mold – Wednesday</td> <td>£67,590</td> <td>£27,940</td> <td>£39,650</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mold – Indoor</td> <td>£74,456</td> <td>£28,840</td> <td>£45,616</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Holywell</td> <td>£3,652</td> <td>£10,547</td> <td>-£6,895</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Market	Income	Expenditure	Net income	Mold – Saturday	£65,760	£27,160	£38,600	Mold – Wednesday	£67,590	£27,940	£39,650	Mold – Indoor	£74,456	£28,840	£45,616	Holywell	£3,652	£10,547	-£6,895
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	Flint	£3,365	£13,344	-£9,979
	Connah's Quay	£545	£924	-£379
Review findings and conclusions				
1.07	<p>Flint</p> <p>The street market, when it was relaunched following a move from its traditional location on Market Square, increased in scale from one to over thirty stalls. However, after the initial customer enthusiasm, traders have struggled to sustain reasonable levels of trade and numbers have dwindled. There have been a number of promotional campaigns to increase awareness of the market but these have not generated sustainable improvements.</p> <p>Flint Town Council, whilst recognising the value of the market when it was a greater size, felt that the road closure every Friday causes disruption to traffic around the town centre, disadvantages retailers in Church Street, removes short stay free parking in Church Street one day a week and the small number of traders and stalls do not add sufficiently to the vitality or vibrancy of the town.</p> <p>Flint market traders were understandably, in favour of keeping the market open as they feel that it offers a reasonable level of trade for them. Some of them also trade in other Flintshire markets including Mold and Holywell.</p> <p>Flint residents have submitted a petition of 252 signatures in favour of keeping the market operational.</p> <p>Officers and traders consider that moving the market to another location would take it away from its customer base on Church Street and would not be a viable option.</p> <p>It is therefore recommended that, due to the disparity between the scale of the market and the disruption to the town inherent in its operation, the Flint street market is closed.</p>			
1.08	<p>Connah's Quay</p> <p>Connah's Quay market was one of the biggest street markets in the County at one time but has virtually ceased to operate and has attracted only two traders for many years.</p> <p>Connah's Quay Town Council have expressed interest in taking on the operation of the street market. Further work is needed to confirm this and to agree the terms of the licence agreement.</p>			
1.09	<p>Holywell</p> <p>Holywell market is held on the pedestrianised High Street each Thursday. The operation of the market therefore does not disrupt trade in the town centre and, anecdotally, businesses have fed back that footfall is higher on</p>			

	<p>market days than otherwise.</p> <p>The market tends to attract only 12 stalls each week in the summer but has sustained this level for many years. A number of promotional campaigns have been undertaken but none have brought a sustainable increase in scale.</p> <p>Holywell market traders were understandably, of the view that the market should continue to operate. Traders find that they are able to sustain a reasonable level of trade with a small and loyal customer base.</p> <p>Holywell Town Council was strongly of the view that the market should continue to operate and that it plays an important role in sustaining the vitality of the town centre as a whole. The Town Council did not express interest in operating the street market but did suggest that further work could be done on reducing the costs of operating the market.</p> <p>It is recommended that Holywell street market continues to operate in the interim as part of a package of measures to sustain the town centre. Further work will be undertaken with Holywell Town Council to identify whether cost savings in operating the market can be made.</p>
1.10	The recommended changes, if approved, will change the requirement for the staff team operating the street markets in Flintshire. Reconfiguring the staffing complement would enable the release of one part time position with an estimated reduction in the operating deficit for the markets overall of £21,000 each year.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	Implementing the recommendations in this report would reduce the operating deficit for markets by £21,000 each year.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	In undertaking this review, the Council has consulted market traders in Flint and Holywell and Connah's Quay Town Council, Flint Town Council and Holywell Town Council.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	None arising directly from this report.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	None.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	<p>None.</p> <p>Contact Officer: Niall Waller Service Manager Enterprise & Regeneration Telephone: 01352 702137 E-mail: niall.waller@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	<p>Market Town - is a legal term for a settlement that has the right to host markets. A town may be correctly described as a "market town" or as having "market rights".</p>