



Creation of Yeovil Market Review Group

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Purpose of the Report

To seek approval for the creation of a working group focused on markets in Yeovil. This will explore possible types of markets, review current approach and agree an approach to operating and delivering markets in future years.

Public Interest

The report seeks to set up a small focused working group of members supported by officers to review the approach to delivery of markets in Yeovil. It will review the existing situation, explore possible new types of market and establish an approach for delivery of markets over the next 3 to 5 years.

Recommendation

Area South Committee agree to the creation of the group and nominate individuals to form the group membership.

Background

South Somerset District Council holds the historic market charter for Yeovil. This allows markets to operate on specific days and means that the council as the local authority controls the granting of licenses for this activity. In the past few years the general market in the town centre has been operated by MSD following the award of a contract by the council.

In addition to this activity a Christmas market has been delivered in partnership with Yeovil town council.

There are also other ad hoc events such as Eat Yeovil who have been able to use the market charter.

This report seeks to set up a working group to review the situation and agree a new approach to delivery of markets in Yeovil.

Current situation

The license granted to MSD by the District Council expired on 30th April. Due to the pandemic MSD have been unable to make the best use of the last 18 months of the agreement. On that basis it has been informally agreed that we will continue with MSD on a temporary basis.

The triangle area, which was used pre-pandemic as a market space, will be unavailable from the autumn due to planned construction of the new public square. So this will affect the location of markets in the coming year. The transformation of the streets will also affect Middle Street in late 2021/22 although the exact dates are subject to contracting agreements. MSD will use the spaces available during this period but this will require compromise with the existing traders across that time to enable the continuation of the market.

As the council and its partners progress the transformation of the public realm it is important to plan for activities in the town to support the town centre. The future approach to markets is a part of this approach.

Subject to the approval of members we intend to set up a working group that will review type of markets, frequency of them and how the market charter is used to support them. Whilst this is currently focused on the town centre due to the reach of historic charters it also could impact the wider town. The group could therefore look at all of these issues and consider the way forwards.

Whilst markets are a component of the town centre offer, it is important that they add value to the town. Therefore the link to existing business and how they complement those will be an important consideration in any future plan.

At this stage doing nothing has been discounted as an option as this will not create positive activity. So setting up a small focused working group to take the approach forwards is considered appropriate.

Financial Implications

None known at this time. The group will review the activity and advise the committee on next steps. Any financial implications will be a consideration in that review.

Council Plan Implications

The review will contribute to the overall goals of the Refresh which is a council priority.

Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications



South Somerset
District Council

At this stage there are no identified implication but this will be considered by the working group.

Equality and Diversity Implications

No specific implications at this stage.

Background Papers

None attached