

**Overview and Scrutiny Recommendations Tracker**  
**Market Recommendations**

**Redditch Market Review**  
*(considered by Executive Committee on 12/3/13)*  
*(Seventeen recommendations)*

**All of the recommendations were all APPROVED subject to the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Regeneration, Economic Development and Transport taking the lead on working on the detail of proposals and on the adoption of a bold and radical approach to recommendations 1 and 2 in particular, including a full assessment of the options for delivering a vibrant and viable market.**

The following update has already been provided for Members' consideration on the remaining recommendations: In addition to arrangements being in hand to form the working group to develop the five year strategy and as part of the "full assessment of the options for delivering a vibrant and viable market", the North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration (NWedr) Service's Client Management Group has instructed Officers to explore various options with a view to potentially externalising the markets function.

<b><u>RECOMMENDATION</u></b>	<b><u>UPDATE ON ACTION TAKEN</u></b>
<p><u>Recommendation 1</u>: a new strategy for the market be developed which clearly sets out how the market can be revitalised over the next five year period.</p>	<p>North Worcestershire Economic Development Unit's Client Management Group has approved the appointment of the consultancy arm of the National Association of British Market Authorities, to advise on what type of market(s) could realistically be attracted to Bromsgrove, Kidderminster and Redditch Markets, income generating potential and possible delivery arrangements that could be put into place to operate future markets – including the potential to outsource the</p>

	<p>management of the markets to an external operator or operators.</p> <p>More specifically for Redditch, the consultancy will advise as to the other types of markets that could realistically be attracted to Redditch and provide an assessment of the consequence of the reduction of trading days from five to three.</p> <p>The report is due to be received on 12th December 2014 following which it will be considered by the Client Management Group and acted upon accordingly. Any changes to the existing management arrangements of the Redditch Market will be brought to full Council for consideration.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 2:</u> A small core working group consisting of local stakeholders should be created to help develop and implement the new strategy.</p>	<p>The group has considered the various recommendations. With the agreement of the Portfolio Holder, the group will meet again as and when it is deemed necessary.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 3:</u> the number of general retail market operating days should be reduced to no more than three days a week. The working group to consult with existing regular traders about which particular days should be retained.</p>	<p>Members are reminded that the initial feedback from traders was that they generally would not want a reduction from five to three days.</p> <p>Notwithstanding this and whatever the advice contained within the impending consultancy report, consideration has been given as to which days to not hold a market. As Mondays and Thursdays bring in the lowest income these are perhaps the obvious days. Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays bring in the most income which would be the most obvious reason for them to remain.</p>

	<p>However, reducing the trading days would have operational and financial implications.</p> <p>The closure of the two lowest income generating days (Monday and Thursday) would see a reduction in income of approximately £35,000 per annum. Whilst some operational expenditure (in the region of £10,000 per annum) could potentially be saved by reducing the days, Monday and Thursday trading days still make a surplus and the £25,000 (approximate) annual net income that the Council currently receive, would be lost.</p> <p>This recommendation will be considered further following the receipt of the above referred to Consultancy report.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 4</u>: consideration is given to holding more speciality markets to take place on non general retail market operating days on a regular basis to help create a niche for the Redditch market. The working group to consider how such markets would be managed within the available resources.</p>	<p>There are numerous types of “speciality market” that could potentially be invited. These include:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Farmers/Local produce market</li> <li>• Local Product Market - eg “Made in the Midlands”</li> <li>• Antiques, and Collectables/Second hand goods/”Trash and Treasure”</li> <li>• Continental Markets</li> <li>• Seasonal Markets</li> <li>• Themed Markets – such as Books, Arts and Crafts/Flower, plants and Garden/ Homemade Crafts: Knitwear, Wooden produce, Candles, jewellery/Hobby themed - eg games, toys, model collectables etc</li> </ul> <p>It is suggested that taking forward this Recommendation relates to the previous Recommendation above and Recommendations 11 (realigning and extending the layout) and 13 (alternative stalls).</p>

If the number of regular trading days were to reduce to three days, then resources would still exist to introduce speciality markets on two alternative days. However informal discussions suggest that the number of specialist markets would not equal the number of trading days lost from the regular market and there would be a resultant loss of income to the Council.

Notwithstanding any advice within the impending consultancy report, informal discussions from other market operators is suggesting that the presence of the fixed stalls heavily restricts the opportunity to host speciality/themed markets. In particular it is apparent that Continental, Farmers and potentially other specialised markets prefer an open space, unrestricted by existing stalls and other obstacles to arrange their stalls and trading vehicles in a preferred and optimum layout.

Further challenges arise, as it has been suggested that Continental and Farmers' markets in particular, prefer to have a trading monopoly (ie not trading alongside the existing market) and Continental markets at least, prefer to trade on at least two consecutive – and mainly three – days and always at weekends.

Given the desire to reduce the number of existing trading days and bring in more “specialist” markets, plus the fact that the current fixed stalls restricts Market Place being used for other uses, it is suggested that a partial solution at least would be to permanently remove the fixed stalls to allow the space to be used more flexibly.

This would bring about the opportunity to acquire new, modern design, demountable stalls that could be put up and taken down in accordance with the numbers trading to allow the regular market to be better laid out, make it less spread out and more compact. Market Place would also look more inviting on

non market days as the distraction of old fashioned and empty stalls would not exist.

However, in addition to going to the expense of acquiring new stalls plus an associated vehicle and trailer (and any storage required), North Worcestershire Economic Development Unit would require additional staff (notwithstanding the outcome of the consultancy report) to put up and take down the stalls on the three trading days as it is not currently resourced to undertake this additional work.

Initial current estimates as to the capital cost are approximately £40,000 with revenue costs being in the region of £31,500 per annum. If the Council was minded to pursue this option, these figures would be firmed up and be subject to the usual procurement process.

The potential would then exist to invite alternative “specialist” markets to use the new flexible space and potentially make use of the new demountable stalls.

However, it is suggested that the net loss of income to the Council by trading less days when added to the potential increase in operational costs (despite some income from specialist markets) means that, on first sight at least, the benefits of introducing specialist markets and using the area as alternative events space would appear to come at a cost.

This recommendation will be considered further following the receipt of the above referred to Consultancy report.

<p><u>Recommendation 5</u>: the market working group considers the feasibility of introducing an on-site Redditch Market information point.</p>	<p>Subject to obtaining relevant permissions, the potential exists to acquire and install purpose built notice boards in the Market Place area which can be used to display and impart relevant information to the public regarding the market.</p> <p>Whilst traders already have the contact number of the market manager, the board would display North Worcestershire Economic Development Unit's generic contact number and email address for enquirers to either speak directly to a member of the team and/or leave a message. The board would also direct people to relevant market and town centre web site(s) and could also be used to promote market and town centre events and potentially promote market traders – as space permits.</p> <p>It is considered that this could be funded from existing budgets.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 6</u>: the market working group considers the feasibility of market customers being provided with an opportunity to pay the traders for goods through their mobile phone and debit and credit card payment facilities.</p>	<p>Traders have been reminded of this suggested scheme - though it cannot be enforced.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 7</u>: each trader is required to possess a returns policy which should be clearly advertised.</p>	<p>The traders have been advised and the regulations have been updated accordingly.</p>

<p><u>Recommendation 8:</u> The working group facilitates further opportunities for local people, especially students and the unemployed, to obtain business experience through operating stalls in the market place at no charge on a short-term basis, to include the introduction of a new mentoring scheme to offer help and assistance to new traders.</p>	<p>A pilot scheme is in place for local people to “test” their business idea by applying for a free stall for up to eight trading days over a four week period on Monday and Saturdays – subject to availability. The scheme allows for those people who, as a result, go on to start a business regularly trading for at least 30 hours a week, to take part in the existing mentoring support which is available through the Worcestershire’s “Enterprising Worcestershire” New Business Startup programme which also includes a small grant.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 9:</u> the working group facilitates further opportunities for local businesses to showcase their goods and services on market stalls.</p>	<p>A pilot scheme is being promoted locally, subject to stall availability.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 10:</u> the working group facilitates the allocation of free stalls on a rotating basis to local people to promote forthcoming community events and the work of local charities, subject to stall availability.</p>	<p>This opportunity is being promoted locally subject to stall availability.</p>

<p><u>Recommendation 11</u>: the market working group explores the possibility of realigning and extending the layout of the market past its current location.</p>	<p>Whilst the Council has planning permission to extend the market down Alcester Street, informal discussions with other market operators suggest that the optimum location for the market is in its existing location – not least by the fact that it is called “Market Place” in the first instance. The position of trading pitches depends very much on footfall and the current location offers a better footfall than other potentially available trading positions.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 12</u>: the market working group explores the feasibility of introducing a covered food court area.</p>	<p>It is considered that the potential does exist to introduce a covered food court area. This could be a “pop up” stall structure and would probably best be introduced as part of any proposal to realign the existing layout and potentially acquire new stalls (see Recommendation 4 above and 13 below) as no resource currently exists to be able to put up and take down (or store) the structure.</p> <p>If such a structure was to be acquired – even if it was to be part of the current layout - then it could be acquired at a relatively modest cost, though a resource would currently be needed to put it up and take it down. Either way, however, alternative operational arrangements would need to be considered as hot food and drink traders are currently kept separate.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 13</u>: the market working group explores the suitability of the design of the current market stalls and to consider whether the introduction of alternative stalls would improve the overall visual appearance of the stalls.</p>	<p>The current stalls are old fashioned, inflexible and to all intents and purposes, in need of renewal. It is suggested that the introduction of new modern design “pop up” stalls which could be branded “Redditch Market”, would vastly improve the visual appearance and bring a new vitality to the market.</p> <p>Consideration of this recommendation has been considered previously within Recommendation 4 above.</p>



<p><u>Recommendation 14:</u> the market working group ensures that any review of signage in the town centre includes adequate reference to the market.</p>	<p>A review of signage in the town centre has been carried out and a scheme is scheduled to be implemented in 2015 which will include adequate reference to the Market.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 15:</u> the market working group works with local bus operators to help further promote the market.</p>	<p>The previous response from the main bus operator was that they do not have many final destinations that say “Redditch Town Centre” in any case. The Committee is reminded that they try to be more specific about where the final destination of the bus is. All their buses are now Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant which means they have working destination blinds.</p> <p>The relevant Act stipulates that destinations should be as clear as possible and they advise the best way to do this is to have as few words as possible on the blind. They suggest that adding “Redditch Town Centre and Market” or “Town Centre Market” would be difficult to read and, with certain types of blind, would be too many characters to display. Their position continues to be that this is something they would not be particularly keen to do.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 16:</u> the Council should engage with the Public Fundraising Regulatory Association with a view to reaching an agreement to regulate the working days and areas of charity street fundraisers in Redditch Town Centre.</p>	<p>The Site Management Agreement (SMA) between the Council and the Public Fundraising Regulatory Association (PFRA) has been finalised and reported to the Licensing Committee at its meeting on 3rd November 2014.</p>

Recommendation 17: Redditch Borough Council should join the National Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA) and participate in the *Love Your Local Market 2013* event to publicise the changes and new opportunities that would have been introduced at the market.

Redditch Borough Council has joined the National Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA), has participated in the Love Your Local Market 2013 and 2014 fortnights.