



## Cultural and Economic Services Committee

**Date:** 7 September 2020  
**Title:** Market General Update.  
**Purpose of the Report:** To provide 2019/20 end of year and current market activity.  
**Contact Officer/s:** Adrian Harrison, Market Manager

<b>Corporate Objective/s</b>	LLTC Five Year Plan – To continue to support a vibrant town through partnership working & initiatives including management of the street market, support businesses, town & community promotions & town centre enhancements.	
<b>Implications:</b>		
<b>Financial</b>	√	Annual budget
<b>Human Resources</b>		
<b>Operational/Service delivery</b>	√	Existing Market Delivery & Activity Plans – Updates Proposed Market Delivery & Activity Plans
<b>Procedural/Legal</b>		
<b>Risk/Health and Safety</b>		

### 1. RECOMMENDATION

Should members be minded the recommendation is:

#### 1.1 To note the report.

### PART A – END OF YEAR 2019/20

### 2 DELIVERY PLAN REVIEW FOR 2019/2020

2.1 The annual delivery plan is attached at **Appendix A**. Work has been interrupted by the overriding work activity prioritised to constructively respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.2 The table below provides details on Themed and Speciality Markets.

	<b>Themed Markets 2019/20</b>	<b>Comments</b>
13 <sup>th</sup> April	Easter Ride-out	Delivered
16 <sup>th</sup> April	Easter Egg Hunt	Delivered
17 <sup>th</sup> – 31 <sup>st</sup> May	Love your local Market fortnight, #LYLM	Delivered
6 <sup>th</sup> July	Independents' Day	Delivered
6 <sup>th</sup> August	National Children's Play Day	Delivered
22 <sup>nd</sup> October	Children's Halloween Letter Hunt	Delivered
24 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas Eve Market	Delivered

Visiting Market 2019/2020		
26 <sup>th</sup> April, 31 <sup>st</sup> May, 28 <sup>th</sup> June, 26 <sup>th</sup> July, 30 <sup>th</sup> August, 27 <sup>th</sup> (Last Friday of the month)	Street Food Heroes (Friday evenings)	Delivered
Fri 25 <sup>th</sup> – Sat 26 <sup>th</sup> October	France at Home Market	Delivered
Speciality Markets 2019/2020		
29 <sup>th</sup> June	Vintage, Retro and Collectables Market	Delivered
18 <sup>th</sup> June, 16 <sup>th</sup> July, 13 <sup>th</sup> August	Tasty Tuesday	Delivered
30 <sup>th</sup> Nov	Christmas Market	Delivered
TBC 2020	Community Fair	Deferred to 2020

## 2.3 Market trader recruitment updates for Qu.4 2019/20.

2.3.1. The table below presents the pitch usage figures for Qu. 4.

Qu. 1	Pitches Used	Qu. 2	Pitches Used	Qu.3	Pitches Used	Qu.4	Pitches Used
Apr-19	332	Jul-19	393	Oct-19	376	Jan-20	291
May-19	344	Aug-19	342	Nov-19	390	Feb-20	300
June-19	395	Sep-19	299	Dec-19	382	Mar-20	246*

\* Note: 2 days lost due to lockdown. 1 other day had food traders only.

2.3.2 The table below presents the trader joined / left, figures for Qu.4:

Trader type	Qu. 1 Joined	Qu.1 Left	Qu.2 Joined	Qu.2 Left	Qu. 3 Joined	Qu.3 Left	QU.4 Joined	Qu.4 Left
Permanent	3	2	1	1	2	1	2	2
Casual	20	-	7	-	17	-	2	-
Farmers	-	-	1	-	2	-	-	-
Craft	-	-	6	-	2	-	-	-
Charities, Comm Groups	12	-	9	-	10	-	-	-
Pop Up	4	-	-	-	3	-	1	-

### 2.3.3 Farmers market

No new traders, Qu. 4.

### 2.3.4 Pop-Up market (supporting start-up businesses)

1 new start-up trader, Qu.4

### 2.3.5 Handmade and Craft market (HM&C) (runs March to December)

No new traders, Qu.4

### 2.3.6 Charity Pitch

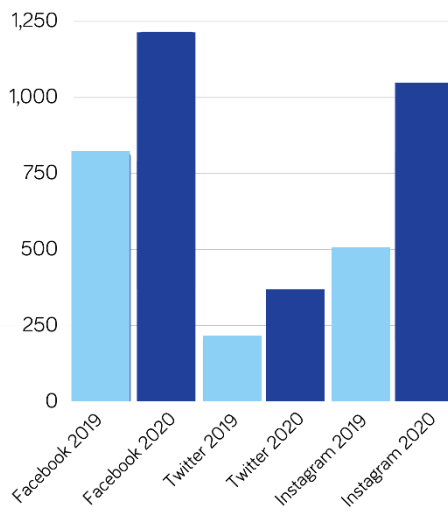
2 groups utilised this pitch in the 4th quarter.

### 3. DIGITAL PLATFORMS

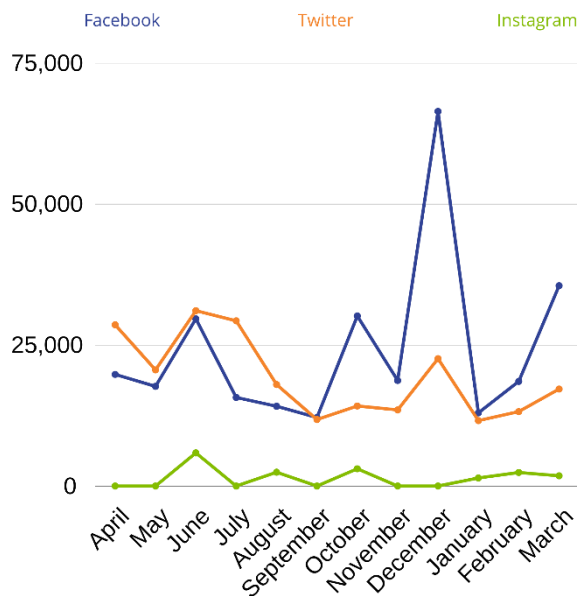
#### 3.1 Social Media

3.1.2 There has been a gradual increase of followers/likes each month across Leighton Buzzard Market social media platforms. This graph compares our following (likes/follows) for 2018/2019 v 2019/2020

2018/2019 finished the year with a total following of 1532, 2019/2020 finished the year with 2626 which is an increase of 71%



3.1.3 The graph below displays the post reach/impressions for the three social media platforms\*



### 3.1.4 Annual total impressions for each platform below:

Facebook	291,559
Twitter	231,700
Instagram	141,120**
<b>Annual total</b>	<b>664,379</b>

\* Please note, some months for Instagram are at 0 – this is not a true reflection due to not having accurate data for these months. This is due to Instagram reporting limitations.

\*\* This figure is based on average of the seven records for Instagram for 2019/2020 and an average calculated for 52 weeks.

N.B. Impressions represent the total amount of times that the post (text/image/video) has been seen.

### 3.2 Google Analytics (website)

3.2.1. The following table shows the performance of the market website, 2019/20. Leighton Buzzard has a 4.1-star rating (out of 5) on Google My Business with a total of 162 reviews.

Google Analytics	Qu.1			Qu.2			Qu.3			Qu.4		
	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
No of people who found site	4,942	5,635	n/a	4,858	5,199	5,585	10,922	n/a	7,356	9,331	n/a	n/a
Visited the Website	76	71	n/a	69	90	63	89	n/a	68	80	n/a	n/a
Asked for directions	41	38	n/a	49	59	49	37	n/a	72	18	n/a	n/a

## **PART B – DELIVERY OF WORK FOR 2020/21**

### **4. DELIVERY PLAN FOR 2020/21**

4.1 The Themed, Visiting, and additional Speciality market plan for 2020/21 financial year is presented below. This plan was drafted pre-pandemic and is subject to change.

	Themed Markets 2020/2021	Comments
11 <sup>th</sup> April*	Easter Egg Hunt	Market Closed
TBC*	Easter Ride Out	Market Closed

	<i>Collaboration with LB Scooter Club</i>	
16 <sup>th</sup> - 30 <sup>th</sup> May*	International Love your local Market fortnight, #LYLM	Not delivered
4 <sup>th</sup> July	Independents' Day <i>Collaboration with LB First</i>	Delivered – via social media platform
4 <sup>th</sup> August	National Children's Play Day	Not delivered
27 <sup>th</sup> October	Children's Halloween Letter Hunt	TBC
5 <sup>th</sup> December <sup>^</sup>	Small Business Saturday	
22 <sup>nd</sup> December	Christmas Eve Market	
<b>Visiting Markets 2020/2021</b>		
<i>Dates cancelled during lockdown, revised restart date - 9<sup>th</sup> Aug, 13 Sep.</i>	Street Food Heroes (usually attend on a Friday eve – now attending on a Sunday)	9 <sup>th</sup> Aug – delivered
Sun 20 <sup>th</sup> September (revised date)	Vegan Market	In progress
Fri 2 <sup>nd</sup> October (revised date)	France at Home Market	TBC

\* Charter market closed in High Street due to Coronavirus lockdown/social distancing.

<sup>^</sup> Our social media contractor has secured a visit of the promotional Small Business Saturday touring bus. Our contractor successfully secured their logo on the side of the touring bus identifying them as a small business of some success. Details are to be confirmed in September.

#### 4.2 Market trader recruitment updates for Qu.4 2019/20.

4.2.1 During Qu.1, no confirmed trader changes to report. Information on start-ups, etc. for Qu.2 will reported to the next Market Sub Committee.

### 5. GENERAL UPDATES

5.1 While in lockdown, the market manager maintained contact with traders by phone to find out how they were coping financially, mentally, etc. The market manager then posted a summary of his findings on the National Association of British Markets Authorities forum. During lockdown, our peer network has been very active, and officers have benefited from shared data as well as helping others with our updates. This resulted in a response from the Chief Executive, David Preston:

*“Thanks for sharing this Adrian. It really is good practice and I know that other operators are doing similar. ... having such conversations and providing this verbal support for traders in these dark days will help build strong relationships that can only be of great mutual benefit when full trading can restart.”*

## **6 MARKET PROMOTION (PRINTED)**

- 6.1 Local promotion is undertaken via Bee Local Magazine, Leighton Buzzard Observer and the Town Council's About Town newsletter. Officers Took out an advert in Market Trader News, during Love Your Local market fortnight. This is a monthly produced paper that is free and distributed across the country to traders and operators alike.

In December Leighton-Linslade Town Council and Central Bedfordshire Council were praised for keeping Leighton Buzzard shoppers safe from counterfeits at Leighton Buzzard Market, as part of the celebration of Real Deal's 10-year anniversary.

Listings on the National Market Traders Federation website have been updated to individually reference speciality markets and enable a more focused search for specialised traders, i.e. Handmade and Craft, etc.

- 6.2 Officers initiated a new promotional activity that recognises the interaction between traders and customers: Trader of the Month, launched in February 2020. Trader of The Month for February was R Harris Fruit and Vegetables. This has now been suspended due to the pandemic.

## **7. SPECIALITY MARKETS PLANNING AND DELIVERY**

- 7.1 The return of Street Food Heroes (SFH) who usually attend on a Friday evening once a month between March and September was initially cancelled due to the enforced lockdown. With the easing of lockdown rules, officers proactively contacted SFH to secure their return. This is an independently managed business and the Council facilitates their attendance utilising its Market Charter. They attended on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> August and wish to return on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> September.
- 7.2 The French Market originally booked for 3rd April 2020 was postponed, a new date has been provisionally booked for 2nd October 2020. Attendance will of course depend on the status of the pandemic in both the UK and France and whether there are enforced periods of quarantine that the traders are able to manage.
- 7.3 The Vegan Market planned for 19<sup>th</sup> April 2020 was postponed, a new date has been booked for 20<sup>th</sup> September 2020 subject to Covid rules in place.

## **PART C - RETURN TO MARKET ACTIVITIES**

### **8. General Updates 2020/21**

- 8.1 The market returned as a food only market in Hockliffe Street Car Park. As many as eight traders took advantage to trade at this market. The market took place between 16/5/2020 and 15/6/2020 with all non-food traders offered the

opportunity to trade in the last two weeks before returning to the High Street. The market observed the Government guidelines on 2m distancing with all traders completing a Covid-19 based risk assessment.

- 8.2 On 20/6/2020 the market returned to the High Street with a new layout reflecting the new guidelines concerning 2m distancing. To ensure all traders were accommodated, gazebos were placed together with partitioning sheets to create a barrier and to keep traders safe. The new layout was designed to allow both shops and market queues to form without crossing each other keeping customers safe to walk freely.
- 8.3 To facilitate traders return, each trader was asked to submit their own Covid-19 risk assessment to inform the Council how they would alter their operations to facilitate safe working practices and manage their own serving of customers and queues.
- 8.4 Addition support in managing the distancing requirements of the market has been given by the TACTIC staff and a few volunteer. More latterly, their time is focused on the end of the market day assisting in keeping the High St. free from non-market related vehicles. Market staff have been grateful for the assistance provide.
- 8.4 Whilst the 2m guidelines are in place, it has not been possible to accommodate all casual, Handmade and Craft, and Farmers market traders. With these traders in mind, officers liaised with Central Bedfordshire Council to secure use of High Street space for an extra market day to facilitate the opportunity to trade. This day is once a month, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday, and promoted as the Thursday eXtra market, open from 9.00-2.00pm.
- 8.5 Any changes to Government regulations will be reflected in market operations when known.
- 8.6 A market update was given at full Council meeting dated 27 July 2020 which is attached as an aid memoir at **Appendix B**.

## **9. MARKET TRADER RECRUITMENT UPDATES.**

- 9.1 Trader numbers since returning to the high Street remain good. Three traders have left the market. One retired, one returned to full-time employment with another going out of business (including his shop within the town).
- 9.2 One Saturday trader has joined the Tuesday market.
- 9.3 One Tuesday trader has now joined the Saturday market so has left his regular pitch on another town's market.
- 9.4 With all traders returning, casual pitches have become available since 14/07/2020 and take up has started to increase.

9.5 The table below presents the pitch usage figures for Qu. 1, April to June 2020/21. Figures for May and part of June indicate pitch usage for Hockliffe Street car park. A total of 109 pitches were used over the period of when the market was held in Hockliffe Street car park.

Qu. 1	Pitches Used	Qu. 2	Pitches Used
Apr-20	-	Jul-20	394**
May-20	109	Aug-20	-
June-20	150*	Sep-20	-

\* 4 days in High Street.      \*\* including 1 Thursday eXtra market.

Note: High Street pitch usage figures for July 20 are similar to July 19 (393).

9.6 The table below presents the trader joined / left, figures for Qu.1:

Trader type	Qu. 1 Joined	Qu.1 Left	Qu.2 Joined	Qu.2 Left
Permanent	0	3	2*	0
Casual	0	n/a	2	n/a
Farmers	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Craft	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Charities, Comm Groups	n/a	n/a	1	n/a
Start-Up	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

\* 1 joined from Saturday market. 1 joined form Tuesday market.

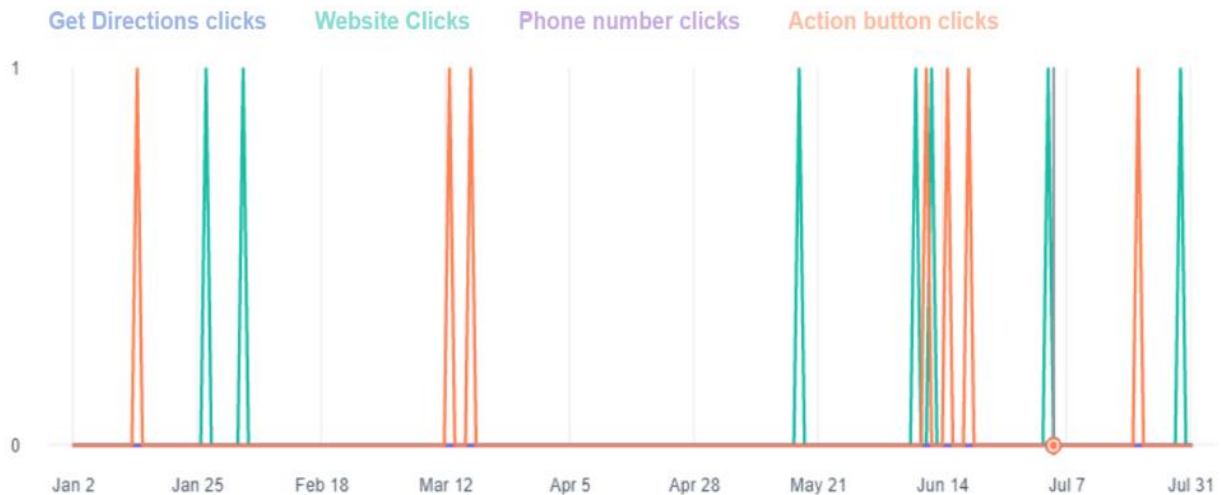
## 10. DIGITAL PLATFORMS

### 10.1 Social Media

10.1.1 There has been an increase of followers/likes each month across Leighton Buzzard Market social media platforms. There was a spike in new followers throughout May & June. As of the end of July the three platforms combined had a following of 2955.

10.1.2 The graph below displays the total actions taken on our Facebook page. You can see the spike in actions taken throughout May and June suggesting that the social media was used as an information/interest source during the peak of Covid-19.





10.1.3 The organic posts reach hit its peak in June, with over 60,000 impressions across the platforms. Taking Facebook as an example, there was an increase of 457% for June vs. April for organic posts followed by a 60% drop in July. This suggests that our social media was used as an information/interest source during the peak of Covid-19.

10.1.4 It is also worth noting that we had no active social media support during April.

April - July total impressions for each platform below:

Facebook	96,094
Twitter	52,005
Instagram	167,895**
<b>Annual total</b>	<b>315,994</b>

\*\*This figure is based on average of the four records for Instagram for Apr – Jul and an average calculated for 52 weeks.

N.B. Impressions represent the total amount of times that the post (text/image/video) has been seen.

## 10.2 Google Analytics (website)

For Qu.1 there were 11,197 total searches.

- **Direct:** Customers who find your listing searching for your business name or address 4,480 = 40%
- **Discovery:** Customers who find your listing searching for a category, product, or service 6,588 = 58%
- **Branded:** Customers who find your listing searching for a brand related to your business 129 = 1.2%

Leighton Buzzard Market maintains a 4.1\* (out of 5\*) rating with 172 reviews taken place. One reviewer left a 1\* score due to the market being closed under lockdown.

## **11. SUMMARY**

- 11.1 It has been a very difficult and unprecedented start to the 2020/21 financial year. Council continues to support market traders and customers alike, ensuring the market remains a safe place to shop and is well promoted.
- 11.2 The assistance provided by TACTIC staff and volunteers has been beneficial and gratefully received.

**END.**