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## Market Sub Committee

Date: 19 May 2022

Title: Managing Seasonal Traders

Purpose of the Report: To confirm management of seasonal traders

Contact Officer: Adrian Harrison, Market Manager

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| Corporate Objective/s               | LLTC Five Year Plan – Aim 2. Objective 19 |                                |
|-------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| <b>Implications:</b>                |   |                                |
| <b>Financial</b>                    | Yes                                       | Within existing budget         |
| <b>Human Resources</b>              |   |                                |
| <b>Operational/Service delivery</b> | Yes                                       | Management of seasonal traders |
| <b>Procedural/Legal</b>             |   |                                |
| <b>Risk/Health and Safety</b>       |   |                                |
| <b>Environmental Aims</b>           |   |                                |

### 1 RECOMMENDATION/S

Should members be minded, the recommendations are:

1.1 To note the report.

1.2 To maintain the present management activities for seasonal traders .

### 2 BACKGROUND

2.1 The request of officers was to consider the concerns raised about seasonal traders and consider ways of managing the situation with consideration given to charging practices.

2.2 The current Rules and Regulations state that:

*Allocation of stalls is managed at the sole discretion of the Market Manager or representative and must be adhered to.*

2.2 Whilst there has been previous discussion at Committee meetings over the years and more recently on the subject of seasonal traders, i.e., 24/02/22, (72/MK) Committee has not made a specific formal endorsement on the management of these traders. Officers have responded to concerns and adjusted management practices as part of the day-to-day operation of the market.

2.3 Traditionally there are traders that go from market to market at different times of the year selling goods that are seasonal or relate to a given date like Mother's Day for example. Many of these traders concentrate on the larger shows during the summer months and then travel around different markets in the quieter months to generate an income.

2.4 The Leighton Buzzard Market has casual traders on the trading list that attend on a regular basis outside of the festival season including at Christmas. The advantage of seasonal traders is that they provide additional vitality to the existing market, bringing a wider product base to the market as well as an increase of choice to the customer. Some traders may only visit the market once; some may trade for several weeks. This is no different to casual traders throughout the year although there are perceived pros and cons to their attendance.

2.5 There is a minimum amount of known seasonal traders that have remained on the trader list over several years, e.g., Christmas Wreaths.

### **3 CURRENT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES**

3.1 To date, the market manager has taken a pragmatic approach to new/casual traders leading up to these dates across the year and reviews each trader and the offer submitted on merit.

3.2 Following earlier concerns raised by traders, specifically around the Christmas season, the practice of not signing-up new traders onto the market with a permanent licence in the run-up to Christmas has been in place for approximately four years. This means that traders do not benefit from the privileges provided through the permanent licence, i.e., fee trading days, regular pitch location and the reduced pitch fees. If a trader wished to remain with the market post the Christmas season, their application would then be considered.

3.3 The above practices have been undertaken using good practice operational management of the market. Committee may wish to consider formalising the above or leave things to be managed as part of the regular operational decision-making process which allows judgement and flexibility in decision-making.

### **4 CHARGES**

4.1 Current situation:

- a) The current charging structure allows permanent traders to trade at £19 per pitch (3m x 3m) with casual traders charged at £23 per pitch.

b) Seasonal traders are permitted to attend as a casual trader; therefore, they already pay the additional £4 that a casual trader pays. Casual traders are accepted as not wanting to attend on a regular basis throughout the year.

4.3 To increase this charge to all casual traders in the lead up to Christmas specifically could be damaging in securing casual traders in the longer term as many businesses opt to start trading during busy seasons.

4.4 It is recommended to continue the current approach to managing seasonal traders.

## **5 CONCLUSIONS**

5.1 Seasonal traders are a regular aspect of any market. Some permanent traders feel that seasonal traders are 'invading' their market. There is no evidence to date to suggest this is the case to such a degree that it is detrimental to the overall market.

5.2 It remains that officer priority is to safeguard the future of the market at a time when volatility brought about by economic uncertainty is high. Current practice appears to manage seasonal workers satisfactorily.

End