

**TO: All members of the Council**

**Our reference** CS  
**Your reference** N/A  
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30 March 2023

Dear Councillor

**Council - Tuesday 21 March 2023**

Attached are the written responses to questions raised at the above meeting, as referred to in the minutes.

Yours sincerely

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**West Suffolk**  
Council

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## **Council: 21 March 2023 - written responses to questions**

### **Item 5: Leader's Statement: Questions from Councillor Ian Shipp to Councillor Jo Rayner:**

**Question 1:** Following the successes of the pilot Makers Markets and their return to Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill, and Newmarket, Councillor Shipp asked whether there were any plans for these to be rolled out to the rural markets in Mildenhall, Brandon and Clare.

#### **Response from Councillor Joanna Rayner, Deputy Leader of the Council:**

We are working with Brandon Town Council to provide some monthly markets on Saturday which will include general market traders, craft stall and community groups. Dates are still to be agreed but there will be at least one during the spring/summer period of 2023.

Clare market is a monthly market and has a good selection of both food and craft stalls. There are several craft markets already being organised by independent market operators and community groups, so we have decided to concentrate on making the monthly market sustainable.

Mildenhall regular market is on a Friday and for the last two years we have organised an additional Christmas market on a Sunday. Although this has been popular with both traders and visitors, we have had problems with securing the car park and balancing the needs of the local retailers with the market. We are currently looking at organising seasonal markets as a compromise or a Friday evening food-based market which could continue after the regular market has finished.

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**Question 2:** Following the Markets Review undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 2022 and the subsequent approval of the recommendations by Cabinet in July 2022, Councillor Shipp asked what the current position was in respect of the actions identified to be taken forward as a result of the review.

Continued....

## **Response from Councillor Joanna Rayner, Deputy Leader of the Council:**

I am pleased to be able to report that despite being two employees down, significant progress has been made with regard to the actions included in the plan as follows:

1. We now have a dedicated communications officer in post and a new communications plan is progressing.
2. There are streamlined social media platforms including changing Newmarket and Mildenhall market pages to the group. In addition, the website has been updated with new images and events including the 2023 events schedule.
3. There is a new trader package and advert ready to be promoted through social media channels once the new rates have been finalised. Initial discussions have been held with NMTF (National Market Traders Federation) for them to assist us with trader deals.
4. We are also working with NABMA (National Association of British Markets) and NMTF on benchmarking pitch fees. We attend regular Zoom meetings with NMTF and other market operators.
5. We are working on the market rates, terms and conditions and market opening times. Once these are agreed, development plans will be drafted, and partners will be consulted.
6. Makers Markets for 2023 have been organised in Haverhill, Bury and Newmarket from March 2023 until December 2023. These are promoted on our website.
7. Young Trader competition dates have been set for Bury and Haverhill.
8. West Suffolk College are taking part with a 'market takeover' event in April. Our Market Development Officer will be talking to business study students to promote market trading.
9. We are developing possible additional event markets for the Bury Wednesday market - depending on space, rates, and operational support. Ideas include Eco markets, craft markets and farmers' market. The intention is to increase footfall and widen offer to users.
10. Customer and trader feedback forms are being designed by West Suffolk College students who will be conducting market research in April.
11. The review of "permanent" and "casual" traders' classification is underway and aims to be complete by the Autumn.
12. Different trading patterns and promotional deals currently being looked at to offer flexibility between markets.
13. Work has started regarding the Market Licence Regulations (MLR), which is an extensive task and needs to be completed in two parts: (1) Review of MLR; and (2) Produce MLR in plain English.
14. Permanent Traders can apply for subsidised parking permits for WSC car parks. All vehicles, unless traded out of are not to be kept on any market. An audit will be undertaken to look at the parking permits already issued.
15. The market liaison meeting that takes place in Bury St Edmunds will be opened to all WS traders and attendance can be either in person or via MS Teams. We will also ask traders how they wish to engage.

16. A contact list of the WS responsible market officers will be created and circulated to all permanent traders and will also be uploaded onto the market's website.
17. We are making progress with establishing electronic payments rather than manual cash handling and this will include a review of:
  - Pitch fees
  - Waste collection needs
  - Casual v Permanent fees
  - Electricity usage
  - Licence changes
  - Fines
18. We are setting up new start-up deals for Newmarket, Brandon, Mildenhall, Haverhill and Bury Wednesday markets. In addition, we are investigating offering permanent trader incentives during the winter months subject to the review of income.
19. We have reduced the number of bins provided to the Newmarket market by 25 percent with no issues raised to date. The bin provision for other markets will be assessed during May. In addition, recycling options are being considered.
20. Regarding increasing the environmental sustainability of the markets, we are aware that there is new legislation in this area, and we will ensure all traders and all new enquiries understand this. The information will also be promoted in the communications plan and on the website.
21. We plan to encourage local recycling groups (similar to Clare and Haverhill) to provide recycling points for hard to recycle items on our markets.
22. During the summer we will work with organisations such as "*Still Good Food*" and "*BSE Eco Carriers*" to encourage traders to donate waste food and offer delivery service using the cargo bike.

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