



REPORT TO:	ENVIRONMENT AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE
DATE:	22 NOVEMBER 2022
SUBJECT:	BOSTON MARKET
KEY DECISION:	N/A
PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR TRACEY ABBOTT
REPORT AUTHOR:	Ian Dunn – Markets Manager
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL
EXEMPT REPORT?	No

SUMMARY

This report seeks to provide an overview on how Boston's regular Wednesday and Saturday markets are performing and operating since the appointment of a dedicated Market Manager on 25th July 2022. Although there has and continues to be a Markets Officer in post whose role is to facilitate the market, prior to the appointment of the Market Manager there was a period of almost a year when there was no direct management of the markets following the former Town Centre Services Manager taking on a new role.

Markets were one of many industries that suffered at the hands of the COVID pandemic with only essential stalls allowed to stand. Since then markets across the country have adapted and tried to recover following the lifting of national restrictions

RECOMMENDATIONS

That members review, comment, and challenge the information presented within the report. That the committee makes any recommendations to cabinet that it feels appropriate and the Market Manager regularly reports to cabinet with updates and news about the market.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To enable members to review, comment, and challenge the information presented.

So members are regularly informed of any changes and updates regarding the market.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

None

REPORT

The new dedicated Market Manager has been in post since Monday 25th July 2022, just over 3 months. This time has been used to allow them to grow into the role, establish positive relationships with traders and pick up existing, ongoing projects, identify new ones and gradually conduct a full service review.

Work with partner agencies, such as LCC, is ongoing to improve the visual and safety aspects of the market. As an example, broken cobble stones have been temporarily filled to make them safer, prior to a more permanent solution being found. Additionally, work commenced to replace the bollard at the bottom of Bank Street to allow a proper road closure to be implemented on Market days. Unfortunately, work had to stop when contractors discovered utility cables in the ground, so until these can be determined this work cannot progress. A solution has now been found and two bollards will be installed shortly so bank Street can be properly closed on market days.

The Markets Team is working with the Events Team to try and maximise footfall in the Market Place. A Christmas market is scheduled for Thursday 24th November and there has been a good take up from traders, with over 30 due to attend. There is also a Santa fun run arranged for Sunday 11th December with a festive market planned to run alongside it.

Officers believe a more cohesive approach is required in respect of events being held on market days, with a view to increasing footfall to both the market and the events themselves. This approach already happens successfully in South Holland and is something the team will be working on and assessing into the New Year.

Occupancy figures from Q3 2021/22 to the present day are below, but unfortunately with COVID and staff illness there is a period prior to that where the information is not readily available.

Q3 – October 21 – December 21

Wednesday Bargate Green - **70.83%**

Wednesday Market Place - **78.37%**

Saturday Market Place - **68.03%**

Q4 – January 22 – March 22

Wednesday Bargate Green - **66.66%**

Wednesday Market Place - **67.18%**

Saturday Market Place - **57.81%**

Q1 – April 22 – June 22

Wednesday Bargate Green - **51.38%**

Wednesday Market Place - **70.18%**

Saturday Market Place - **62.64%**

N.B. During this period the May Fair was held (Saturday 30th April to 7th May). The first day of trading (11th May) was dreadful weather and in addition some traders take leave whilst the May Fair is on and were still on leave.

During this period the Auctioneer and the Caterer decided to cease trading on The Green. A new Auctioneer commenced on 25th May, but a regular trader on The Green also retired.

Q2 July 22 – September 22

Wednesday Bargate Green - **44.87%**

Wednesday Market Place - **73.80%**

Saturday Market Place - **59.73%**

During this period 3 traders had family weddings on the same Saturday in August, so they and a number of other traders (wedding guests) did not stand. This has affected the average for this quarter.

Occupancy in the Market Place on a Wednesday is consistently higher than Saturdays. Possible contributing factors may be:

- The addition of the Bargate Green on Wednesday's attracts additional footfall to the Market generally.
- A number of traders stand on other markets on Saturdays.

The Green has 3 permanent traders. A new auctioneer, catering van and a fruit and vegetable stall. All have a regular customer base, but because there are currently only 3 traders on this site, attracting new traders to this area is proving challenging (because they are aware that there are many more traders and a higher footfall in the market place). A number of new traders have trialled the area in recent months, but unfortunately we haven't been to secure them permanently.

The Market Facebook page is received positively and is used to promote the market on a regular basis. It has also resulted in a number of businesses contacting the team to book a pitch on market days to promote their business. Companies such as Lightspeed Broadband, Phil Haines Coaches,

local factories, agencies and Lincolnshire Housing Partnership have all used the market to promote their business. Regular requests are also received from charities wishing to use the market to promote their organisations and raise funds.

In the current economic climate encouraging people to spend money is becoming more difficult and so it is likely that it will be a tough winter for the market. This issue was raised at the NABMA conference attended by officers last month.

The conference also raised the promotion of youth markets, which is important succession planning for every market, with 91% of traders over the age of 40 nationally, so it is a national issue, not just specific to Boston. Officers are working with colleagues in East Lindsey, who had had recent success with the young traders association and markets in Horncastle

During a conversation with a member of the NMTF (National Market Traders Federation) at the conference, he advised that he had visited Boston market on Wednesday 26th October, the day before the conference and commented that we have a lovely little market and compared to others across the country that he has visited in his role, we should be proud of how it is doing.

Our officers will be working with contacts such as this, to seek their support on how to promote and boost our market. There is currently a full service review being conducted by the manager. It is anticipated that this will hopefully save money, will improve the market and ensure that it becomes sustainable for the long term and becomes something that we can be proud of.

The service review will continue into the New Year and it is hoped a full report will be available either at the end of the financial year or shortly after. The aim of this review is then to implement changes that is hoped will save money, improve the service and sustain it for years to come.

CONCLUSION

Boston Market needs to be managed and managed well in order to succeed. The new manager has only been in post for 3 months and it is recognised that there is lots of work to do. It is an intended that members are provided with regular updates and the team welcomes any questions from the committee.

EXPECTED BENEFITS TO THE PARTNERSHIP

A thriving market can only be good for the town. Increased footfall and more traders' benefits other shops in the town centre and money spent in the area. Sharing best practice across the 3 districts within the partnership will ensure all markets are sustainable and enjoy thriving markets.

IMPLICATIONS

Boston Borough Council's reputation could suffer if the market fails. It is the job of the team to make sure this doesn't happen and we continue to have a thriving market.

SOUTH AND EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCILS PARTNERSHIP

The new manager works across Boston and South Holland so is working hard in both areas to improve the markets and footfall to the both areas.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

STAFFING

One manager, one officer and 8 stall erectors.

CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

N/A

DATA PROTECTION

Data Protection will be dealt with under the partnership's information sharing agreements.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This is an update report with no financial implications at this time, but future financial implications will be provided within further reports on the Markets Service as they arise.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Council's Markets are required to conform to the requirements of charters granted in 1308 for weekly Wednesday & Saturday markets, and 1545 through Boston's Charter of Incorporation.

RISK IMPLICATIONS

There may be a corporate risk if the market becomes unsustainable.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

None

EQUALITY AND SAFEGUARDING IMPLICATIONS

None

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None

CONSULTATION

No consultation undertaken

APPENDICES

(If none then insert the word 'None' and delete the below text/boxes).

Appendices are listed below and attached to the back of the report: -

APPENDIX A	<i>(Title of document)</i>
APPENDIX B	<i>(Title of document)</i>

BACKGROUND PAPERS

(If none then insert the working 'No background papers as defined in Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the production of this report.' Also delete the below text/boxes.)

Background papers used in the production of this report are listed below: -

Document title	Where the document can be viewed
Environment & Performance Committee Markets Review Final Report – 7 January 2020	
Environment & Performance Committee Markets Review Final Report - 17 July 2018.	

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF THIS REPORT

<i>(If none then insert the wording 'A report on this item has not been previously considered by a Council body'. Also delete the below text/boxes.)</i>
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Name of body	Date

REPORT APPROVAL

Report author:	Name and full contact details
Signed off by:	Name and full contact details
Approved for publication:	Name of Councillor (if required)

FINANCE PROFORMA

PROFORMA FOR APPROVAL OF THE RELEASE OF RESOURCES

(CAPITAL AND REVENUE BUDGETS)

FROM:

THIS PROFORMA PROVIDES THE FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS
IN RESPECT OF THE ATTACHED

REPORT:

REPORT DATE:

OPTION 1	£ Year 1 2020/21	£ Year 2 2021/22	£ Year 3 2022/23	£ Year 4 2023/24	£ Year 5 2024/25
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Revenue

Total Revenue Cost

Funding required:

Total capital cost £

Revenue cost £

Considered by:

Enter committee here

Enter Council or
Cabinet/Executive here

Date:

Financial Services Comments

Risk

Procurement

Value for Money Efficiency

This FP is valid for 3 months from FP date	If this FP is no longer required please advise Finance	If there are changes to the original report it may invalidate this document, it must be reviewed by Finance.