

Report of the Chief Executive

RECRUITING A MARKETS OFFICER.1. Purpose of report

To propose the appointment of a Markets Officer to organise markets in the borough.

2. Background

Following the recommencement of markets following government advice, the previous operator took the decision to stop managing the weekly (Monday and Wednesday) markets in Beeston and Kimberley. Regular markets were introduced in Beeston to improve footfall on quieter days, allow opportunities for start-up retailers and establish a more vibrant town centre. In Beeston and other areas such as Kimberley at Christmas time an increase in footfall has been evidenced which benefits local businesses. Further to this since the easing of lockdown rules outdoor retail is often the preferred and safer option for visitors.

The recruitment of a market officer will enable the Council to hold regular and seasonal markets across the borough. In addition, the role will allow for place specific promotion alongside the markets, increasing visits, generating additional income and enabling engagement with local groups and schools. Please see additional details in the appendix.

The Jobs and Economy Committee considered the proposition of a permanent Markets Officer role and made a recommendation to the Personnel committee that the business case for doing this be explored.

4. Financial implications

The role has been subject to a job evaluation at Grade 5 (Top of Grade 5 is £27,500 with on costs). This cost will be offset by anticipated income from markets estimated to be between £15k and £20k+VAT per year. Further details of this can be found within the appendix.

Recommendation:

The Committee is asked to RESOLVE that the recruitment of a Markets Officer, be approved.

Background Papers

Nil

APPENDIX

The proposal here is to create a full time Markets Officer post that will initially re – establish the regular Markets in Beeston. The existing Market in Beeston was highly successful and generated increased footfall within the town, and this created a ‘multiplier effect’ with other Beeston Businesses benefitting. The Beeston Town Centre, is no different to others nationally, having been hit hard by the recent COVID-19 pandemic, therefore it is imperative this is back up and running soon. Furthermore, the regular running of a market will strengthen the Council’s position when trying to attract future tenants for the Beeston Phase 2 development. The role outlined needs to be permanent as the Beeston market would stop if no resource were available to run it, and this would cause economic damage to Beeston and the opportunity to explore markets in others towns would be lost. At the moment the running of the market is not a commercial proposition (hence the previous provider ceased to be able to operate the service). Other alternatives were explored including the potential for other commercial providers to take over the running (including providers of the service in other local authorities), and the potential for temporary staffing to undertake the role. Unfortunately, none of these avenues proved to be successful. Furthermore, the making of a permanent appointment will ensure the successful post holder can grow relationships to establish a strong regular income for Broxtowe Borough Council which can grow and expand in future. The role should really not just be assessed in terms of its financial return, but also in terms of the wider benefits increased footfall brings to other businesses within the Town Centre. These benefits are often very hard to quantify.

The previous market generated no net income to the Council, and all income from market stalls went directly to the market operator.

Currently the charge for stalls is £20 per week, with an average of 8 stalls per market thus generating £320 a week (currently two markets Monday and Wednesday markets). Based on a 40-week year (ignoring bank holidays, Christmas and other season breaks/ holidays) we would expect to receive £12,800 annually, if a two-day market with existing occupancy levels was maintained.

A separate strand relates to promotional stalls elsewhere along Beeston High Road. These operators include, Shell, Talk Talk, Virgin, British Telecom etc. These promotional stalls are charged at £400 per week. So with a 40 week booking you could expect to return £16,000 per year. We could maximise this income by using similar public realm in the other town centres (Stapleford and Kimberley), charging approx. £200, taking into account these areas are not as well frequented an estimate of £10,400 income could be generated by leasing the space 26 weeks a year in comparison to 40 in Beeston. Obviously this impact won’t be instant but a with a designated focus this area should see strong growth over time.

In terms of legalities and the ‘Market Charters’ the Business Growth Manager investigated the legalities of market operation when the Beeston markets were

established several years ago. Local market charters only cover the specific days and cross working between authorities has meant there are largely (with

exception of Thursday) no restrictions currently in place when Broxtowe Borough Council can hold markets. Recent updated planning laws may result in Market Charters becoming obsolete in the future, though this needs to be clarified.