

ARUNDEL TOWN COUNCIL

Recommendation to the Council Meeting to take place on 14th July 2022.

PART A : Recommendation

That Arundel Town Council approves funding for additional temporary resource and storage for the Farmers' Market

From: John Bradley

Date: 14.07.2022

Relevant Council Objective: 26 – Develop the Farmers Market

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Farmers' Market has a number of operational priorities that need to be completed to make the Market sustainable and fit for the future. The market therefore requires some temporary additional resource to support with these projects and also funding for additional storage as an alternative when the current extra storage in River Road garage is no longer available.

BACKGROUND:

In only two years the Arundel Farmers' Market has grown from 20 to 60 stalls and become one of the most important events of its kind in West Sussex, as well as the only Farmers' Market in the Arun District Council area.

The Market is overseen by ATC, which makes significant decisions on the direction of the market and any major spending. Day to day operations are run by an Arundel Town Council working group made up of two councillors, the town events manager, the chair of the chamber of commerce, the market manager and the former town events manager. Given the size and scale of the market, its income and its expenditure, it is chaired by a councillor – currently Michael Tu. Andy Batty, who had chaired the group for nearly two years, stepped down from the working group at the start of 2022 to focus more on other projects. Andy had given a significant amount of his personal time to grow the market, and therefore despite a lot of hard work from the current working group, there is a gap in resource, as well as insufficient capacity to focus on strategic growth.

The Market has become one of the most high-profile and visible outputs of ATC, and offers significant potential for further development, for instance with a more sustained programme of events to drive footfall to our Town Centre. However we cannot focus on this while a number of operational challenges remain outstanding. The key areas which need to be addressed are:

Road closures - finding a permanent solution that requires less resource to ensure safe closures, delivers the relevant signage, and is reliable and cost effective. This may involve agreeing new terms with our current supplier, Sunbelt, recruiting a different team or organisation to manage road closures or to invest in permanent infrastructure (e.g. removable bollards)

Storage – we currently have insufficient storage for all of our market stalls, tables and equipment in the container in Crown Yard Car Park. We have the use of a garage on River Road temporarily, but this could come to an end at short notice

Anchor points – we currently use weights to secure our market stalls, but have approached WSCC and ADC to understand if we might be able to use fixed anchor points instead. Both were open to the idea with a number of caveats, so a larger piece of work needs to be done for this to be delivered.

Legal and Compliance Requirements – we have robust procedures and full risk assessments in place, but given the scale of the market and the number of people and activities involved (e.g. manual handling), it is important to complete a review of the policies and procedures we have in place

In the future we would like to agree a third party rentals policy and make this self-sustaining with the income from the stalls paying for a stall manager who can arrange the rentals and support with set-up. We can only do this if we have delivered the immediate operational needs

All of this is in line with the objectives for the Farmers' Market, which include:

- Increase the number of traders and range of goods provided at the Farmers Market.
- Resolve the logistic issues of storage, road signs and weights.
- Locate anchors and wall plates where we control the locations or have permission to do so from WSCC/ADC.
- Develop a successful programme for hiring out gazebos, ensuring that they are insured for this purpose

The Farmers' Market urgently needs some additional temporary resource to work through the projects needs to ensure the ongoing success of the Farmers' Market. The storage situation is volatile, the need to use anchor points (or purchase more weights if this is not possible) will become more pressing in the Autumn/Winter months, and a firm plan for managing road closures that is less heavily dependent on good will and volunteers is critical if we are to avoid the risk of market cancellations. A full list of current tasks is in Appendix 1 – note that not all of these can be completed with the additional resource being requested and the priority areas are storage, anchor points, road closures and volunteer management.

The additional resource and container can be paid for out of surplus which the Farmers' Market is generating over and above budgeted levels (see Appendix 2)

PROPOSAL:

In order to deliver these operational priorities to make the Farmers' Market sustainable and fit for the future we would like to ask Councillors to approve

- 8 hours of additional paid resource a week for two months – total cost £1200
- £4000 to be spent on a second container for storage

OPTIONS:

Councillors could choose:

- not to approve funding for the additional resource or the container
- to only approve funding for the additional resource
- to only approve funding for the container

IMPLICATIONS FOR CLIMATE CHANGE:

There are no implications for climate change in the proposal

Appendix 1

Current list of tasks required to stabilise the operation of the market

Encourage attendance of Ford Prison volunteers and determine resource requirements
Training of Ford Prison volunteers
Anchor points are required to secure stalls and reduce reliance on weights
Develop long term storage solution
Determine terms of relationship with Sunbelt and sustainable plan for road closures
Audit of legal and compliance requirements
Agree future of sustainable market
Decide Third Party Rental Policy
Determine resource requirements for managing stall set-up and potential hire
Agree plan to dry stalls
Policy for what can be advertised on Causeway Roundabout sign
Create branding Strategy
Maintain better relations with Chamber of Commerce and residents around road closures
Improve range
HR policies agreed and in place for Farmers' Market team
Plan and Deliver Growth Plan for Farmers' Market

Appendix 2

**Farmers Market Income and Expenditure Report - Q1
(Apr, May, Jun)**

05/07/2022

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Q1 Variance</u>	<u>Annual Projection (Q1 x 4)</u>	<u>Annual Budget</u>
Income					
Market Income	6,353	3,750	2,603	25,410	15,000
					-
Expenditure					-
FM Licences and Annual Costs		188	-188		750
FM Marketing	524	300	224	2,098	1,200
FM Operations	2,210	1,200	1010	8,840	4,800
FM Sundry	100	188	-88	400	750
FM Sustainable Market Costs	140	-	140	560	-
FM Equipment	81	-	81	324	-
Total Expenditure	3,055	1,875	1,180	12,222	7,500
				-	-
Operational Surplus	3,297	1,875	1,422	13,188	7,500