

# STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL

## Cabinet Delegated Decision

6 May 2020

<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>Leek Market Hall Update</b>
<b>PORTFOLIO HOLDER:</b>	<b>Councillor Sybil Ralphs - Council Leader</b>
<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	<b>Sarah Porru - Head of Regeneration</b>
<b>WARDS INVOLVED:</b>	<b>Leek East</b>

### 1. Reason for the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval to undertake a feasibility study and business case to explore options for investment at Leek Market Hall, formally referred to as the Trestle Market, and provide details of the next steps to delivery of the improvements.

### 2. Recommendation

- 2.1 To note progress on the project to date and recommend officers commission the preparation of a fully costed feasibility study and business case for consideration.

### 3. Executive Summary

- 3.1 In 2017 a delegated decision report was presented to the Cabinet Member for Planning, Development and Property outlining recommended works to the Butter Market and Market Hall and further works to improve the indoor markets in Leek. Numerous remedial works were required to maintain the condition of the building and ensure it is wind and water tight. The scope of works included repairs to the roof and windows and replacement of the obsolete heating system. The works outlined in the report were approved and completed in 2017/18.
- 3.2 On completion of the above work Councillors visited award winning markets in Nantwich and Shrewsbury to consider examples of best practise and how these might be adopted in Leek, and a further programme of refurbishment to the Market Hall was considered with the intention to restore and refit the market offer making it fit for purpose, supporting the increasing trend towards local food offers. Suggestions included the possible addition of four or five modern food outlets to attract new customers and complement Leek's

independent shops and outdoor market and attract more visitors to the town, boosting tourism and the local economy. It is now proposed to progress this further by preparing a fully costed feasibility study and business case this year with the aim of securing funding for refurbishing the Market Hall as soon as practicably possible.

3.2 Consultants will be invited to tender for the development of a feasibility study along with a full cost breakdown and a business case for any further investment. The study will include the following items:

- Consultation with market traders operating in Market Towns in the region to understand current trading conditions, aspirations for future trading and ensure the emerging Market Hall improvement scheme is designed to meet future business needs.
- Public consultation exercises with the wider public and town centre businesses.
- Representative Demographic Opinion Surveys of the communities that Leek serves to understand what the public want to see and Market Research to inform the improvements and operation of the new market.
- Evidence of market demand for the new units and achievable rents for the units including examples of similar projects
- Identification of the impacts of the proposed development on Leek Town Centre and consideration of measures to maximise positive benefits.
- A feasibility report with commentary on options.
- Full architectural plans of specified works and visuals of the proposed internal layout of the preferred option including requirements for toilets compliant with the number of staff and customer seating required for the food units and any work required in relation to utilities, a commercial extraction system for food preparation and the fire alarm system
- A fully costed schedule of works and business case for any proposed investment

3.3 A report detailing the findings of the study and possible works will be presented at a future date to allow consideration of the business case and any investment.

#### 4. **How this report links to Corporate Priorities**

4.1 This report supports the principles of the Staffordshire Moorlands Corporate Plan: 2019 - 2023

Aim 3: To help create a strong economy by supporting further regeneration of towns and villages and meets the following objectives and priorities:

- Develop and implement plans to improve the public market operations
- Sustainable towns and rural communities
- Increased economic growth
- Increased tourism

## 5. Alternative Options

- 5.1 Option 1: Do not undertake a feasibility study to consider refurbishment options for Leek Market Hall. This risks the further decline of the Market. The current layout fails to offer a modern market environment and attractive trading conditions. Not recommended.
- 5.2 Option 2: Take forward work to prepare a fully costed feasibility study for further consideration, including analysis of trader requirements and market trends to provide a modern market environment to attract new businesses and new customers and support wider economic growth. Recommended

## 6. Implications

- 6.1 Community Safety - (Crime and Disorder Act 1998)  
None
- 6.2 Workforce  
None
- 6.3 Equality and Diversity/Equality Impact Assessment  
Equality and diversity will be considered as part of the study to ensure any proposed refurbishment is fully accessible and inclusive..
- 6.4 Financial Considerations  
The study is expected to cost in the region of £10-15,000. A tender specification has been prepared and will be issued shortly. This will allow accurate cost information to be considered before awarding a contract A report detailing the findings of the study and proposed works will be presented at a future date along with a full cost breakdown and a business case for any further investment.
- 6.5 Legal  
None
- 6.6 Climate Change  
The feasibility study will include consideration of climate change implications and mitigation measures and establish how the Market can be improved and operated to reduce its carbon footprint.
- 6.7 Consultation  
Consultation with Market Traders will form a key part of the work to consider refurbishment options ensuring any changes to stalls or lay out meets their trading needs. Opportunities for wider public consultation will also be included.
- 6.8 Risk Assessment  
Any activities undertaken during the development of the feasibility study will be subject to full risk assessment and guidance from the Chair of the Safety Advisory Group (SAG)

Neil Rodgers  
**Executive Director (Place)**

**Web Links and  
Background Papers**

**Contact details**

Sarah Porru  
Head of Regeneration  
sarah.porru@highpeak.gov.uk

**7. Detail**

7.1 The aim of the proposed Market Hall refurbishment project is to encourage footfall, attract a wider range of customers and for the improvements to complement the Butter Market and Town Centre offer. The proposals could include up to 5 fixed food and drink units around the perimeter of the Market hall along with fixed storage facilities. The proposals would also seek to improve the appearance of the market stalls, adding visual interest and encouraging creative displays.

7.2 The UK food and drink sector has seen significant growth in recent years with much of this attributed to informal 'street food' stalls. Recent statistics from Foodspark (part of the Grocer publishing group) are shown below.

- The UK street food market will reach an estimated total value of £1.2bn in 2018, increasing by 9.1% from 2017.
- The number of street food and mobile van outlets is predicted to reach 8,450 by December 2018, growing by 6.1% compared to last year.
- Street food was the most popular option with 25 to 34-year-olds, with a 26% share of visits compared to 19% of total general eating out visits, reflecting a preference for speed, convenience and value.
- While the over 50s were the least likely to be found at street food stalls, they still made up one in three visits.
- Average spend at street food vendors has been increasing since 2016, and now stands at £5.40 at lunch and £10.10 at dinner – slightly higher than the fast-food average of £9.50 during the same dayparts.
- Street food trends are credited with influencing the wider market, according to the report, with its fast-paced nature making it a 'breeding ground' for wider market trends, as seen on the menus of operators like YO! Sushi, Masala Zone and Giraffe World Kitchen.

7.3 Market Officers have visited indoor markets with street food stalls. These are traditional indoor market halls with eat in or takeaway food units that complement the market stall mix. The food stalls in these markets all report good trade and observing them they attract a different customer demographic, often town workers buying lunch or groups meeting. Typically the units are

small in size with dedicated or shared seating space. The food units create increased market visits, attract new customers, extend dwell time; leading to increased footfall in all markets.

- 7.4 This would lead to new stalls operators appealing to the new customer base; vinyl record stall, more hand made, art stalls etc. for the future of the market. With a carefully curated mix of stalls this would encourage further shopping and contribute to Leek's development as a town supporting Leek's independent retailers, food and beverage outlets and outdoor markets.
- 7.5 Consultation with stakeholders, traders and the public along with market research and demographic opinion surveys will all form a key part in shaping the improvement of the Market Hall.
- 7.6 Discussions have taken place with the assets team to understand requirements in terms of utilities and ventilation to the proposed food and drink units. Officers have also approached local builders to informally discuss options for stall size and shape. Officers now propose to commission a feasibility study to consider options for fit out, produce professional designs and provide a full cost breakdown of proposed works. Stage 1 the report will be exploring foul sewerage, ventilation and extraction systems, electric and gas utility requirements, hot water and toilets, hot water, an additional entrance/exit from the Market Hall and the technical viability of new food units.
- 7.7 The proposed refurbishment of the Market Hall is part of a wider proposal to improve public market operations. This includes a programme of additional events (Christmas, Easter, Halloween activities & the Market Heritage Event on November 23rd) and four additional twilight markets during the year.
- 7.8 The proposed seasonal events outlined above will be coordinated with retail and tourism activities in Leek and are essential to the operation of the markets in a competitive high street environment. They are fully supported by the traders who contribute with their own promotion and seasonal offers. The twilight markets are part of the increasing trend to evening markets and local food events.