

**Bassetlaw District Council**

**Cabinet**

**08<sup>th</sup> February 2024**

**Report of the Director of Corporate Resources**

**Town Centre Regeneration Proposals – Retford Market**

Cabinet Members: Identity & Place  
Contact: Natalie Cockrell

**1. Public Interest Test**

- 1.1 The author of this report Natalie Cockrell has determined that the report is not confidential.

**2. Purpose of the Report**

- 2.1 To provide members with an update on the results of the Retford Market consultation and to seek approval on the next steps.

**3. Background and Discussion**

- 3.1 In September 2023 Members received a report, seeking approval for the commencement of consultation for a reconfiguration of the market held in Retford.
- 3.2 The Council then asked the public, market traders, local businesses and stakeholders for their views on two proposals that could create a semi-permanent market, and provide additional trading opportunities through the historic Buttermarket, located in Retford Town Hall.
- 3.3 A six week consultation period took place, between Friday 17th November and Tuesday 2nd January 2024, this consultation was delivered and supported by Bassetlaw District Council Officers and an existing Service Level agreement with Harworth and Bircotes Town Council.
- 3.4 There were 4 face to face sessions held on Retford Market on the following dates;
- 26th November
  - 7th December
  - 8th December
  - 21st December

A letter summarising the proposals was hand delivered to 81 Market Traders across Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Craft and Farmers markets. The letter invited Traders to attend the drop in sessions to speak with a representative of the Council and learn more about the proposal and the consultation.

**4 Consultation Responses**

- 4.1 In total there were 571 responses to the online consultation document, these are summarised below;

<b>Demographic</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Retford Resident	450	79%
Member of the public (non-Retford Resident)	83	14%
Councillor	5	1%
Organisation	3	1%
Retford Market Trader	11	2%
Retford Business	19	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>571</b>	

4.2 Proposal 1 – Do you support the proposal to install bespoke, semi-permanent, multi-purpose market stalls on the Market Square in Retford Town Centre?

66.38% of online respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed, 31.7% of online respondents either agreed or strongly agreed, and 1.93% did not know.

<b>Response</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly disagree	290	50.79%
Strongly agree	100	17.51%
Disagree	89	15.59%
Agree	81	14.19%
Don't know	11	1.93%
<b>Total</b>	<b>571</b>	

4.3 Proposal 2 - . Do you support the proposal to repurpose the Buttermarket to provide an additional indoor trading space?

64.10% of online respondents either agreed or strongly agreed, 20.67% of online respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed, and 15.24% did not know.

<b>Response</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Agree	206	36.08%
Strongly agree	160	28.02%
Don't know	87	15.24%
Disagree	63	11.03%
Strongly disagree	55	9.63%
<b>Total</b>	<b>571</b>	

4.4 Responses were also received from both the Retford Business Forum and Retford Civic Society. These responses can be viewed in full in appendix 1.

4.5 Other responses;

A petition objecting to the outdoor proposal was received on 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2024 by the Council.

The petition opposed the semi-permanent stalls stating that;

- It is believed that the proposal will reduce the number of stalls and reduce effectiveness for traders.
- Concerns over lack of lighting and safety from the semi-permeant stalls
- In the illustrations provided the Cenotaph is missing and assurance should be given that the War Memorial is safe from impact.

The petition requests that alternative proposals are considered and put to the community.

It should be noted that the petition made no reference to the Butter Market being re-purposed.

At the consultation closing date and petition submission there were;

1. Paper copy – 838 signatures
2. Change.org – 331 signatures
3. Total 1169 signatures

In accordance with the Council's Petition Scheme and Constitution, while this petition did not obtain enough signatures to be debated at a full council meeting, as a key decision it will be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Council welcomes residents sharing their views via the petition, which is ancillary to the online consultation.

The Council is unable to identify if residents have completed both the online consultation and petition, and therefore the petition numbers are not included as additional responses in the figures, to prevent over stating the consultation results.

## **5. Implications**

- a) For service users

Traditionally held on a Thursday, Friday and Saturday, the markets have been a significant part of Retford's heritage since King Henry III granted its first charter in 1246. The Council is now proposing to take action in order to safeguard this legacy and ensure that the market retains this tradition, and is financially viable for many years to come, while installing and maintaining pride in place.

- b) Strategic & Policy

The Council's 2040 Vision makes reference to the historic Market Town of Retford, and seeks to provide facilities for all, a strong sense of identity, while making Bassetlaw a great place to do business.

This investment seeks to make the markets more sustainable and financially viable for years to come.

- c) Financial - Ref: 24/390

None directly arising from this report

- d) Legal – Ref: 159/02/203  
None directly arising from this report
- e) Human Resources  
Any Human Resource implications will be in accordance with the Council's adopted policies and procedures.  
  
There are no HR implications arising directly from this report. Staff have been kept abreast at all stages via the HR department.
- f) Climate change, Environmental  
None directly arising from this report
- g) Community Safety, Equality and Diversity  
None directly arising from this report
- h) GDPR  
None directly arising from this report
- i) Whether this is a key decision, and if so the reference number.  
  
Key decision no. **1010**

## **6. Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations**

- 6.1 Members could choose to progress with the original proposals despite the clear public opposition to semi-permanent stalls on Retford market square.
- 6.2 Members could choose to make no changes to the market and repurpose the funding into the rest of the UKSPF capital programme

## **7. Recommendations**

- 7.1 That members note the strong objection to semi-permanent stalls and do not progress with Proposal 1.
- 7.2 That new proposals for the outdoor market are drawn up by Officers in collaboration with Market Traders and stakeholders with a full business case, and presented back to Cabinet for consideration at a future meeting.
- 7.3 That in line with the consultation results, Members approve Proposal 2 to repurpose the Buttermarket, and give Officers approval to continue to develop the project.

## **Background Papers**

1. Appendix 1 – Consultation Stakeholder Responses
2. Town Centre Regeneration Proposals (Key Decision No. 1010) September 2023 Cabinet papers
3. Equality Impact Assessment