

Review of Newcastle Market

1) Overview

At its meeting in November 2018 Cabinet authorised a review of Newcastle market in co-operation with local interested parties. This note provides an update on the review process.

2) The Review Process

Following consideration of the challenges faced by the market, officers have proposed that there are two main elements of work that need to take place:

a) Customer facing

The customer facing review is intended to gather and analyse local opinions about the market. This will include questions on what elements of the market are valued by local people; why people choose not to shop on the market and also whether a different type of market offer (such as occasional themed or specialist markets) would be valued more highly by local people. To this end officers are preparing a questionnaire for local people to respond to. By the time of the Scrutiny meeting it is anticipated that the questionnaire will have been put onto the 'have your say' page of the Council's website and can also be accessed directly through this link: <https://www.snapsurveys.com/wh/s.asp?k=154296875920>. The questionnaire will be promoted by the Council and also by Newcastle -under-Lyme Business Improvement District. Member support in promoting the questionnaire to local residents will be welcome in order to encourage a good range of responses to the questionnaire. The questionnaire will be open for responses until the end of January.

b) Management review

As the current working practices of the market have not been reviewed for a significant number of years it is appropriate to consider how these might be changed and updated. The baseline for this review will be work previously undertaken by both officers and members, such as the 2017 review of the market completed by the Economic Development and Enterprise Scrutiny Committee. Consultation with market traders, staff, the current market licensee and Newcastle -under-Lyme Business Improvement District will inform this element of the review. An external independent opinion will also be sought from NABMA (National Association of British Market Authorities) as the body that promotes excellence in markets and holds a repository of best practice examples.

3) Timescales

It is anticipated that formative ideas on the future of the market will be developed in February 2019. These will be offered for consideration by the Portfolio Holder and the Executive Management Team with a view to progressing any agreed actions after this time through appropriate decision-making channels.