



**Prosperous Communities
Committee**

Tuesday 16 March, 2021

**Subject: Re-introduction of rents on Gainsborough Market and
Discretionary Business Grant funding to support traders**

Report by:

Assistant Director of Operational and Commercial
Services

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Purpose / Summary:

For Members to consider the options for the re-introduction of rental charges for traders onto Gainsborough Market and the potential to use Discretionary Business Grants to support traders across the District.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That Members

- 1. Approve the re-introduction of rental charges on Gainsborough Market from June 1, 2021.**
- 2. In recognising that further Covid Restrictions may impact on the June 1 implementation date, Grant delegated Authority to the Assistant Director of Operational and Commercial Services, in consultation with the Chairman of this Committee to vary the proposed implementation date in such circumstances. (All Members to be notified if the delegation is enacted)**
- 3. Approve the proposal to utilise Discretionary Business Grants to support regular and new traders on Gainsborough General Market, Gainsborough Farmers Market, Market Rasen Market and Caistor Market.**

- 4. Approve that the Discretionary Business Grants Policy to support regular and new traders be agreed under the urgent delegated decision provision afforded to the Head of Paid Service, in consultation with the two Policy Committee Chairmen and the Leader of the Opposition, in line with other decisions made around Business Grants during the Pandemic.**

IMPLICATIONS

Legal: None at this time, any future proposals will be subject to legal scrutiny if necessary

(N.B.) Where there are legal implications the report **MUST** be seen by the MO

Financial : FIN/148/21/B/TJB

The usual annual income from Market Traders is circa £36,300.

The loss of income for the period 1st April 2021 to 31st May 2021 is estimated at £6k and will be funded from the Commercial Contingency Budget.

The proposals to utilise the Discretionary Business Grants by amending the policy would help to support Market Traders throughout the district.

Staffing : Should any future proposals around the operation of the Market mean changes to staff terms and conditions, an appropriate consultation process will be undertaken.

(N.B.) Where there are staffing implications the report **MUST** have a HR Ref

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights : Future proposals will include an assessment of equality and diversity issues in line with the policies of the Council.

Data Protection Implications : None at this time, any future data implications will be assessed by the Data Protection Officer.

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities: Climate related risks and opportunities will be assessed as part of any future proposals.

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations: A more successful Market could result in a livelier, more vibrant town centre and a consequent reduction in crime.

Health Implications: A more successful Market and events programme could result in a livelier, more vibrant town centre and a consequent improvement in resident's feelings of wellbeing.

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report :

Wherever possible please provide a hyperlink to the background paper/s
If a document is confidential and not for public viewing it should not be listed.

Risk Assessment :

Failure to implement charges could result in loss of income for the Council /
Timely decision required.

Call in and Urgency:

Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)

Yes

No

Key Decision:

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

Yes

No

Executive Summary

Street markets are a feature of community life in West Lindsey, it is recognised that the street markets have an important role to play in the regeneration of our Town Centre's and the recovery of the High Street following the Covid crisis. As well as the twice-weekly General Market and a monthly Farmers Market in Gainsborough, there are also regular markets in Market Rasen and Caistor.

This report follows a paper considered by Prosperous Communities Committee in January 2021. At that meeting, Members resolved to welcome strategic work being undertaken by officers in order to understand options for the future delivery of street markets in the District. Members also resolved to defer a decision to re-introduce rental charges for traders on Gainsborough Market to the next meeting of this Committee.

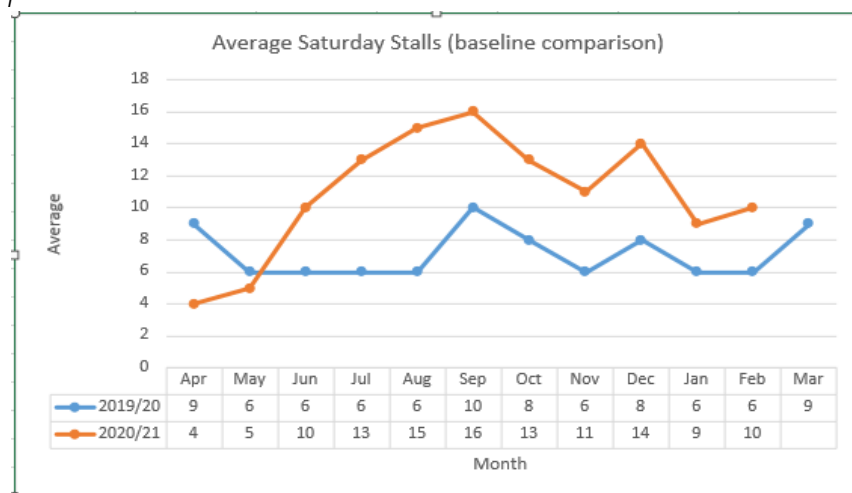
There are two differences between this report and the one considered by Members in January. Firstly, the initial recommendation to reintroduce rents onto the Market was scheduled for April 1st 2021. Officers recognise that in order to still communicate the change effectively to stakeholders, it is now recommended that, should Members choose to re-introduce rental charges, they should be re-introduced from June 1st 2021.

Secondly, an option to utilise Discretionary Business Grant funding to support regular and new traders on all Markets in West Lindsey has been introduced.

1. Options for re-introduction of rental charges on Gainsborough Market

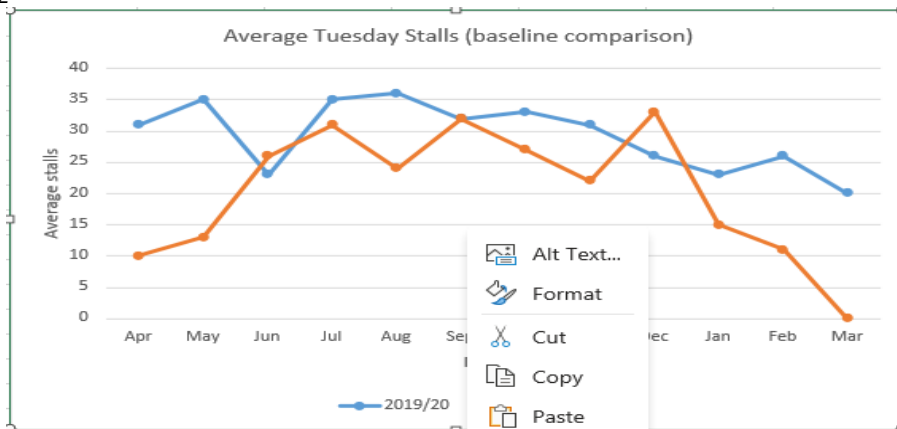
- 1.1 On 29th May 2020, an urgent delegated decision was made to allow traders who attend Gainsborough Market to trade free of charge until the end of March 2021. This was as a result of the challenging conditions in town centres and the Government directive to re-open the High Street wherever possible.
- 1.2 On 17th September 2020, Corporate Policy and Resources Committee resolved to extend the free rental period for traders on the monthly Farmers Market, also to the end of March 2021.
- 1.3 A decision is now required regarding rental charges for stalls both on the General Market and the Farmers Market.
- 1.4 During the first lockdown in March 2020, the Market remained open for traders selling essential goods, such as food and pet supplies. As restrictions eased, other traders were permitted onto the Market in line with national guidelines.
- 1.5 Figure 1 below shows stall numbers on the Saturday market as compared to the last financial year. It can be seen that the number of stalls is above pre-Covid levels.

Figure 1



1.6 Figure 2 below shows the number of stalls on the Tuesday Market as compared to the last financial year. Attendance on this Market is more dynamic, but with a general trend below the 2019/20 data.

Figure 2



1.7 Income from stall rental was forecast to be £36.3k for 2020/21, to date there has been no income from stall rentals in this financial year. Table 1 below shows current rental charges.

Table 1

	Tuesday Casual	Tuesday Registered	Saturday Casual	Saturday Registered
1 stall	£17.50	£16	£16.50	£10
2 stalls	£35	£27	£33	£20
3 stalls	£52.50	£35	£49.50	£25
4 stalls	£70	£43	£66	£30
5 stalls	£87.50	£51	£82.50	£35

1.8 As an incentive to new traders and to support the Saturday Market, new traders are offered stalls at £7.50 each for six months.

1.9 Some evidence has been gathered regarding reductions in rental charges for Markets in surrounding towns. Officers believe Retford has offered discounted rents during Covid, when non-essentials returned after the first lockdown rents were £5 a stall, however this has now increased to half rents being paid. It is understood no discounts have been offered at Brigg. Horncastle & Louth have confirmed after the first lockdown stalls were discounted to £10 a stall for June & July, thereafter full rents have been charged. Finally, Newark have indicated discounted rents were offered for a short period after the initial lockdown, however full rents are now in place again.

1.10 Taking all this into account, alongside the recently announced Roadmap out of lockdown which should see Markets able to operate normally soon, it is recommended that rents should be re-introduced onto the Market at the earliest opportunity. Allowing for adequate communications to be undertaken and some logistical issues, it is recommended that rents are re-introduced from June 1, 2021.

2. Discretionary Business Grants

- 2.1 Most businesses within the District have managed to secure an element of support throughout the Covid crisis through the various Business Grants schemes announced by the Government.
- 2.2 Most recently, a discretionary element to Business Grants has been introduced giving Local Authorities a certain element of choice about which cohort of businesses should be able to apply for funding, based on local circumstances.
- 2.3 Within the guidance for the scheme, there is recognition that Market Traders may have been a sector which has suffered particularly badly throughout the crisis, but have been unable to enjoy the same access to funding as other businesses.
- 2.4 It is therefore proposed that one element of the Discretionary Business Grant Scheme for West Lindsey be developed specifically to support traders who have regularly attended the Markets across the District throughout the crisis, this should include Gainsborough General Market, Gainsborough Farmers Market, Caistor Market and Market Rasen Market.
- 2.5 This approach would not only support those traders who have regularly attended Markets throughout the crisis, but also encourage growth – especially at a time when our residents may be looking for new ways to generate income.
- 2.6 As conditions around Business Grant funding are constantly being announced and updated, it is proposed that the Terms and Conditions for this element of the scheme be developed and signed off as a delegated decision, this protocol is in line with other decisions made around Business Grants

3. RECOMMENDATION(S):

That Members

- 1. Approve the re-introduction of rental charges on Gainsborough Market from June 1, 2021.**
- 2. In recognising that further Covid Restrictions may impact on the June 1st implementation date, grant delegated Authority to the Assistant Director of Operational and Commercial Services, in consultation with the Chairman of this Committee to vary the proposed implementation date in such circumstances. (All Members to be notified if the delegation is enacted).**
- 3. Approve the proposal to utilise Discretionary Business Grants to support regular and new traders on Gainsborough General Market, Gainsborough Farmers Market, Market Rasen Market and Caistor Market.**
- 4. Approve that the Discretionary Business Grants Policy to support regular and new traders be agreed under the urgent delegated decision provision afforded to the Head of Paid Service, in consultation with the two Policy Committee Chairmen and the Leader**

of the Opposition, in line with other decisions made around Business Grants during the Pandemic.