

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to the Executive Member for Leisure and Community for Decision

Portfolio:	Leisure and Community
Subject:	Open Market Review
Report of:	Planning and Regulation
Strategy/Policy:	Corporate Strategy
Corporate Objective:	Maintain and extent prosperity

Purpose: To consider and approve a change to the way the open markets in Portchester and Fareham are managed, to move from managing them internally within the Council to engaging a Market Management Company. To approve the cessation of the Monthly Farmers market at the end of the current calendar year.

Executive Summary: The open street markets in Portchester (Wednesdays) and Fareham (Mondays) have been managed in-house by the Council for a number of years. The responsibility for them currently sits within the Environmental Health section. These markets are well attended although generally markets appear to be on the decline. It is however proving difficult to attract new traders and fill spaces when traders go elsewhere. It is believed that moving to a Market Management Company by way of a management contract arrangement, would give both markets the potential to become a greater asset to the centres and improve the potential and vibrancy of the town centre. Currently there is a staffing vacancy so there would be no redundancy implications with such a move. A number of other local markets are operated by management companies and benefit from the trader databases that they hold. Officers have contacted the main local Market Management Companies and met with them to discuss their terms and conditions. Bray Associates are one such company and offer the best value and would introduce the least disruption for existing traders, in effect it would be business as usual, with a greater potential for future growth. The Street trading consents would still be issued by the Council and the Council would remain responsible for; setting fees, issuing consents, resolving disputes.

In respect of the monthly Farmers Markets, numbers of traders have been declining over the last couple of years and currently despite inviting some 30 traders on each occasion, usually between 4 and 8 are attending. We have received complaints from

members of the public that we advertise a farmers market and it is so poorly attended and not worth their while. The current programme of farmers markets run up until December, it is proposed that next year the Farmers Markets are discontinued. Any Farmers stalls that wished to trade in Fareham would be welcome to continue to do so as part of the general Monday market.

Recommendation:

To approve: -

- a) Entering into a Management Contract with Bray Associates for the day to day operation of the Monday and Wednesday open markets in Fareham and Portchester.
- b) To discontinue the Farmers Markets after the current commitment ends in December 2017.

Reason: For the reasons detailed above. Essentially in respect of the Monday and Wednesday Markets, there is greater potential for growth with an external operator. As regards the Farmers Markets, these have become so poorly attended that they are no longer viable.

Cost of Proposals: There are no additional cost implications as the above changes would result in a small saving of approximately £10,000 compared to the cost of employing someone in-house to operate the markets.

Risk Assessment: There are no identified risks associated with this report.