

Executive response to a recommendation from Overview and Scrutiny Committee relating to item 9 on the agenda for the 13 December 2023
Executive meeting: Review of Weekly Markets

Recommendation arising from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 6 December 2023.

Context

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the alternative options set out in the report. The Committee felt that where town councils are willing, they should be encouraged to take on responsibility for running markets and the priority of the Council should be to support thriving market towns rather than generating a small amount of income. The Committee heard from Members that Witney Town Council was likely to be open to taking on responsibility for the operational control of the market in Witney. The Committee considered that Chipping Norton Town Council was unlikely to be in the same position currently but that it may be possible work in partnership with them and reach a similar position. To this end the Committee felt that a commercial operator should be sought for an initial period of one year rather than two.

Recommendation	Agree (Y / N)	Comment	Responsible Executive Member	Lead Officer
<p>Recommendation 1 – That the local ward members are added as consultees to the first recommendation and the initial period in recommendation 2 is set at one year rather than two years.</p>	<p>In part</p>	<p>The Executive was grateful for the Overview and Scrutiny committee’s consideration and feedback on the Review of Weekly Markets. The Executive discussed both recommended changes and agreed to the following approach:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support the existing traders and include them in the preparation of the Expression of Interest (EOI) for a commercial operator to ensure that their views and concerns are taken account of. 2. There was concern that the town partnerships would be overwhelmed if all interested members were invited. The Deputy Leader committed to sharing a draft of the EOI for a commercial market operator with all members for comment. 3. A one year contract is not attractive to commercial operators and we need to allow time for the markets to reach their potential. Progress will be reported to O&S after one year of the contract before being reported to Executive. 	<p>Councillor Duncan Enright, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Economic Development</p>	<p>Will Barton, Business Development Officer</p>