



Report to: Development Committee

Subject: St George's Market Stall Allocation Process

Date: 19 August 2014

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1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	At its meeting on the 18 February Committee heard a presentation from Deloitte about their review of St George's Market. Deloitte discussed their research and conclusions before making a range of proposals and recommendations. Following the presentation, committee agreed in principle to Deloitte's recommendations subject to further detailed proposals from officers.
1.2	One of the recommendations concerned the way that vacant stalls are allocated to traders who wish to become 'permanent' in the market. Deloitte proposed that officers should be given more discretion in the allocation of stalls to improve the variety and quality of stalls and hence overall appeal of the St George's to visitors and shoppers.

2	Key Issues
2.1	The current approach in St George's is to award permanent stalls based on a waiting list system. Traders complete an application and, subject to meeting the criteria, they are added to a waiting list in whichever categories best matches the goods they intend to sell (hot food, cold food, jewellery, etc). As stalls become available in different sections of the market, they are offered to whoever is at the top of the waiting list in the appropriate category.
2.2	This approach can cause problems when there is no one on the waiting list, or when people on the list drop out at the last minute. In these cases market staff advertise for expressions of interest to be received by a fixed closing date. The new applications will then all arrive in the same time period and there are usually more applications than stalls available. There is no formal process for deciding who gets priority in this case.
2.3	The other major problem occurs when the next people on the waiting list are

	selling a product that is already over represented in the market (for example, too much fried food in the hot food category or too many cupcakes in the baked food category). The current system means that we continue to add to the problem of over representation of a particular type of product.
2.4	Deloitte recommended that the approach “should be refined to allow some discretionary allocation by Council”. The report said we should be allowed to use a discretionary sub-category in circumstances where there is a reasonable rationale for doing so. Deloitte gave the example of hot food where certain food types would add breadth to the offering (e.g. gluten free, local pies, oriental etc). Deloitte said that this would increase the appeal of the market to regular shoppers and visitors by increasing variety, quality and choice.
2.5	To ensure that any discretionary allocation is properly managed, it is proposed that a panel is convened in cases where it is appropriate. The panel would consist of two market officers plus another suitable officer from within the department. Where necessary an expert may be called in to provide additional advice, for example the catering manager to advise on food products.
2.6	This approach would be used as required such as in the cases mentioned previously; where staff have to choose from multiple applications at once, or where there is overrepresentation of a particular type of product.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	Some minimal staff time to review applications.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	No equality implications have been identified however, there is the potential to have a positive impact as it may encourage more unusual culturally varied products to be represented in the market.

5	Recommendations
5.1	Members are asked to approve the use of a panel to increase the discretionary allocation of stalls as outlined in section 2.

6	Decision Tracking
Timeline: September 2014	Reporting Officer: John McGrillen