



**Minutes of the Market Committee held in the Council Chambers, Market Hall
on Wednesday 11th June 2025 at 5pm.**

Present: Cllrs: J. Hutchings, H. Parker, D. De ste Croix, P. Brown & I. Edwards.

In Attendance: Town Clerk (TC) & Market Manager (MM), Town Ranger (TR) TDC Cllr. P. Shepherd.

Absentees: No Absentees.

1213. Apologies for Absence

No apologies were made.

1214. Declaration of Interests – To received declarations of personal and prejudicial interests in respect of items on this Agenda.

Councillor N. Kenneally asked Councillors to declare any relevant interests as they arise.

The Chairman Suspended Standing Orders.

1215. Public Open Question Time – To receive questions from the Public.

TDC Councillor Pete Shepherd thanked the Chair for the opportunity to speak and raised a number of concerns regarding the current situation with the market. He asked whether a new agreement had been reached between HTC and TDC, given that the previous lease had now expired, and queried how far negotiations had progressed. He expressed concern that changes had already been made during confidential (Part 2) discussions over the past six weeks, without wider involvement or transparency.

He stated that such matters should be discussed more openly, ideally at Full Council, to allow for broader input. While he acknowledged that Wednesdays are often the most difficult trading day for local shopkeepers due to the market, he affirmed his support for its continuation. As a shopkeeper himself, he recognised the challenges but stressed that the market remains an important part of the town's identity.

He added that although the market is no longer what it once was, it would be a great loss for the town to see it disappear, and that the closure would negatively impact professional traders who rely on it to operate.

Due to the old lease between Holsworthy Town Council and Torridge District Council expiring, has a new lease with torridge been agreed? It is after all their market, they could well turn round and sign the lease with another party making this whole matter moot.

How far along are the negotiations with TDC? Any decisions made today will obviously have to be agreed with them, have they been made aware of the decisions that are being made today?

He concluded by wishing the Committee well with its decision-making.

The Chairman resumed Standing Orders

1216. Minutes of the Last Meeting – To sign Minutes of the Market Committee Meeting held on the 26th March 2025.

**Councillor I. Edwards proposed that the Minutes of the Meeting held on the 26th March 2025 be approved. This was seconded by Councillor P. Brown and agreed.
(3 For, 2 Abstention, 0 Against)**

1217. Action Items – To consider Matters arising from the minutes of the 26th February 2025, not already covered by the Agenda. For Information Only. (*Appendix 1*)

There were no items discussed regarding the Action List there were not already covered by the Agenda.

1218. To receive an update from the Market Manager

We have had a few resignations from the market:

5 resignations due to various reasons including decline in footfall, community negativity, moving to larger premises, health and weather.

Traders have expressed concerns over the discussions on the proposed increase in stall pricing structure of the market in addition to the proposal to become seasonal.

We have had 1 trader enquire regarding renting a stall to sell home-baked produce and handcrafted items.

Holsworthy Rural Community Transport have booked and will be paying for a stall to advertise their services and would like to know if they can bring a bus with them for their pitch.

I am advertising the Market on the Website and Instagram which is being received positively.

Recently, we have struggled to cover Market Assistants to help set up and take down the market, which has resulted in the market being cancelled. We have trained several assistants up but unfortunately both were ill and unable to assist.

We also held an Extraordinary Meeting on 23rd April 2025 to discuss the future of the market, of which the outcomes will be discussed in part 2 of this meeting.

1219. Market Accounts- To discuss the Income and Expenditure breakdown for Holsworthy Market (*Appendix 2*)

Cllr I. Edwards provided the committee with financial figures which show the estimated profit/loss if the stall prices were increased yearly. Increasing the gradually indicates that the Market would be breaking even. The figures also excluded staff costs and miscellaneous costs relating to the market. Discussion ensued. It was noted that this financial year is the first year without paying for storage as HTC now have containers in Manor Park Car Park. Further discussions ensued. The TC queried how the losses per month could be justified. Further discussions were made regarding the scale of any potential price increase. Concerns were

raised that a 5% annual increase may be too high, and that appropriate notice would need to be given to stallholders in the event of any change. It was also suggested that, while the current pricing may deter higher-quality traders, increasing fees may not necessarily improve stall quality. Members noted the need to consider what other markets charge to ensure fees remain competitive and realistic.

Councillor J. Hutchings proposed that in view of the special or confidential nature of the following business to be transacted, it is advisable, in the public interest, that the public and press temporarily be excluded and they will be instructed to withdraw. This was seconded by Councillor I. Edwards and agreed (Unanimous)

1220. Town Clerk’s Report.

The Town Clerk gave a brief report updating the committee on the MTR Role and feedback of the market.

1221. To discuss the agreed option to “run the market seasonally” from Full Council Extraordinary meeting on 23rd April 2025, and agree on the dates and times of operation.

The Committee discussed the current status of the market and decided to seek professional advice.

Councillor J. Hutchings proposed that the Council will seek advice from a professional Market Consultant to advise on the future of the market and to revisit Items 10 & 11 in September. This was seconded by Councillor I. Edwards and approved. (Unanimous)

Councillor D. De ste Croix proposed that a press release is drafted and published to inform traders and the public of the Market Committee’s current position and progress. This was seconded by Councillor J. Hutchings and approved. (Unanimous)

1222. To discuss the agreed option to “continue running the market but increase pricing to cover all costs” from Full Council Extraordinary Meeting on 23rd April 2025, and agree on the new rates.

Councillors did not feel prepared to further discuss this Agenda Item and as agreed in Minute Number 1221, will be sourcing professional consultation to assist with the Market’s Future. Therefore, this decision has been deferred.

1223. To discuss and agree on the option of running an election for a new Market Trader Representative.

Councillors did not feel prepared to further discuss this Agenda Item and as agreed in Minute Number 1221, will be sourcing professional consultation to assist with the Market’s Future. Therefore, this decision has been deferred.

1224. Close.

Councillor I. Edwards closed the meeting at 18:12

Signed

Dated

