

	Meeting (No)	Market & Town Hall Committee (4)
	Date	21 November 2023
	Document	Ref No
	Corporate Support and Facilities Officer Report	MTH4/

Halloween & Festive Markets

The Halloween market was a great success and was delivered under the allocated £650 budget, for £534.63 which included advertising. Over 75 children took part in the Pumpkin Trail and traders reported an increase in takings and footfall.

Plans for the festive market on 22nd December are progressing well and a press release will be issued shortly.

As in previous years there will be no market on 29th December or 5th January 2024.

Room hire

I have also been contacted by an independent audiology service who are looking for a venue in Neston for one day per week to hold a clinic. I will report back on any progress with this at the Next meeting.

Room hire in general has continued to increase and we now have another regular group that has moved to the Town Hall on a Friday morning.

Free room hire (Minute 10b M&TH 27.6.23)

As agreed, and in consultation with the Committee Chair and Deputy Chair, Free room hire has been provided to PANDAS (Post Natal Depression Awareness and Support) every other Friday from 2.00pm to 4.00pm starting from 3rd November.

And to Little Actors for fundraising event on 29.10.23 for 1.5 hours

Market Mobile

The market mobile bill for September was £16.93 not the agreed £11.07, this was due to SMS picture messages that we were not aware incurred an additional charge. The pictures were regarding Town Hall Maintenance issues for which an alternative way to share these has now been agreed, and I have arranged a spend cap of zero to prevent this happening again. The contract has also now been reviewed and has brought the monthly payment down to £9 for the next 2 years.

Gazebos (Minute 26 – M&TH 26.9.23)

Officers have arranged a meeting to assess the insurance implications of retaining ownership of any Neston Town Council gazebos bought back from any trader who leaves the market, to hire to new traders, as detailed in the Market Traders Licence Terms and Conditions, or for repairs to existing gazebos. A report will be taken to the next scheduled meeting.

Britian's favourite market

As of W/C 14.11.23 Neston Outdoor Market is showing in the top 25 voting list of the NABMA Britian's Favourite Market Award. I am delighted with this result and will keep the Committee updated with any further progress.

Waste Collection

The collection of dry mixed recycling has now been reduced to every other week as we have found that there is no longer enough waste to warrant a weekly collection. This is a saving of approximately £247 per year.

Roof work

The Gutter/Gulley clear and repairs to the guttering have now taken place.

GRA & FRA

The GRA & FRA with Terrain Health & Safety will take place on 28th November.

Equals card expenditure

The total expenditure for the Equals card from 1.9.23 to 31.10.23 was £263.41.

Exception – Asset Management Agreement (Minute 153 R&P 05.04.22)

The Locum Chief Officer, along with the outgoing Mayor Cllr P. Kynaston and Deputy Mayor Cllr S. Jones, facilitated a meeting and site visit of the Town Hall premises and Friday Market with Cheshire West & Chester Council officers on 21st April 2023. The current expired leasehold agreement was discussed, along with the annual associated costs associated with running both the Town Hall and the weekly Market. Neston Town Council is in regular contact with CW&C officers with regards to progressing this item.

14.9.23 – a meeting was held with CWaC on 12.9.23 where it was agreed that further updates would be given in the Autumn.

Exception – Repairs to stage curtain (Minute 35 M&TH 27.9.22)

As reported on 21.2.23 we are awaiting further information from the RFO once a response from the internal auditor has been received.

14.9.23 the RFO has reported that there has been no further response from the IA.

9.11.23 The internal auditor has advised:

The adopted FRs prohibit members incurring expenditure/liabilities individually due to section 10.4. 'A member may not issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the council.' Therefore, the proposed £200 purchasing threshold for members conflicts with the adopted model FRs, which contain proper practice as prescribed by NALC.

Also please see within the FRs:

6.19. Any corporate credit card or trade card account opened by the council will be specifically restricted to use by the Council Manger and RFO and shall be subject to automatic payment in full at each month-end. Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff shall not be used under any circumstances.

**Delegated Authority - PAT testing equipment
(minute 27 M&TH 26.9.23)**

The PAT testing equipment was purchased at a cost of £439 +VAT, this included training. The C&MO has now completed the training and is in the process of PAT testing equipment.

Nicky McMahon
Corporate Support and Facilities Officer