

## CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL

### Officer Urgent Decision - Record

#### Closure of the city centre market

- Decision(s) taken:** To close the city centre market until further notice for public health reasons.
- Decision of:** Strategic Director, Suzanne Hemingway
- Date of decision:** 30 December  
2020
- Matter for Decision:** The reason for the closure is that there are large crowds gathering in the market to queue, and also in the market square and surrounding streets (especially Kings Parade) to eat takeaways purchased from market stalls. Officers have reviewed the matter with Public Health colleagues, and their advice is that the crowds pose a real risk of viral spread and that, in the light of the rapidly rising rate of covid infection in the city, the Council should take action to reduce the crowds.

The Council considered whether other actions are available and concluded that access cannot be limited to the market square due to the number of entrances into it, and officers do not believe there are legal powers to limit trading on the market to only certain stalls or types of goods. The market square area was extremely busy 26/27 December and action is required ahead of this weekend, which as New Year could be even busier.

The following actions are being put in place:

1. The decision will be communicated after any government changes that may be announced at 14:30, but before close of business.
2. The Market manager will liaise with market traders affected by this
3. The Council will work to identify what funding and support is available to market traders, ensure they are made aware of this, and consider if anything further should be done

4. Will review the closure every two weeks to consider epidemiology (infection rates), national guidance, Public Health advice, any other locally relevant factors
5. Whilst the market is closed the Council will investigate whether there are any other legal powers available to us, that would enable us to reopen parts of the market (eg outer stalls) and/ or limit trading to certain goods (eg fresh food / no hot food)
6. Throughout, the Council will continue to robustly engage with bricks-and-mortar takeaway businesses to ensure they are managing queues and not permitting too many people inside at any one time. The Environmental Health team are willing to use enforcement powers where needed.

The market will be open tomorrow (Thursday) as midweek trading is not so busy, and we are aware traders need some notice of closure.

**Any alternative options considered and rejected:**

See above.

**Reason(s) for the decision including any background papers considered:**

An urgent decision under paragraph 2 of section 9, Council Procedure Rules was necessary to enable traders to be advised urgently because of the timeliness and public health position. The decision making was based on the latest guidance and information resulting from the Covid-19 situation.

**Conflicts of interest and dispensations granted by the Chief Executive:**

None.

**Other Comments:**

The Executive Councillor Climate change, Environment and City Centre, was consulted prior to the decision being taken.

There will be budgetary implications of these decisions which will fall outside of the current budgetary framework and be

reported in the Council's financial planning and response to Covid-19.

**Reference:** 2020/OfficerUrgent/EnC/18

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