



Welshpool Town Council

Y Porth i Gymru | The Gateway to Wales

PRESS RELEASE

TOWN HALL MARKETS SET TO REMAIN

A Town Council Committee met last night to consider a report from the Town Clerk on strategy with regards the Town Hall Markets, Council Offices and other Town Centre related matters. The report can be seen attached to this press release including the results of the public consultation.

The Conclusions supported by the Committee were:

The Markets should remain in the Town Hall open 6 days a week.

The Market Halls to be refurbished with a scheme considered in April 2018

No funds are to be made available from the Town Council to aid a reduction in car parking charges.

A Business Improvement District is to be discussed with the Town Traders with the aim of reducing car park charges – Powys County Council would need to be involved.

The Council is to receive a report in April 2018 on options for its Council Offices.

A recommendation will now go forward to the Full Council to be held on Wednesday 28th March at 7pm.

The Town Clerk Robert Robinson said 'The Council were made aware of the survey results, public comments and traders views which along with economic and practical issues led the Committee to support the report.'

The Mayor Cllr Steve Kaye said 'I wanted the decision on the markets to be discussed as soon as possible so I asked the Town Clerk to bring forward a plan with all speed. We have listened to the public and traders and considered the costs and practicalities of each option open to us. We will now progress to completing what refurbishment should be taken forward.



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REPORT ON STRATEGY

(Town Centre, Markets, Town Hall and Town Council Offices)



1. Introduction

This report has been prepared to address issues with regards to the following:

- a) Markets – in need of regeneration
- b) Council Offices – the need for more space
- c) Car Parking in the Town Centre – the issue of car park charges

The report has taken into account the following factors:

- a) The cost of each option considered.
- b) The practical aspects of each part of the proposals.
- c) The deliverability of any scheme put forward.
- d) The difficulty of dealing with the County Council in a timely manner.

2. A summary of the conclusions

The following forms the basis of this reports finding:

Move of market to Church Street Car Park

The funding of any move of the market is expensive with funding to come from the Councils own resources with a burden of around £80,000 investment for building the units.

For this reason this option has been **rejected**.



Market Halls and the consultation

Retention of the markets in the Town Hall is preferred taking into account the following:

- a) The public supports the markets in this location.
- b) The public are willing to see the Council fund the market to a limited extent on an annual basis.
- c) The cost benefit of the market remaining is clear.
- d) The funding of a refurbishment can be met in the most part by grant aid from the Burgesses Land Trust.

The proposal to refurbish the market halls in the Town Hall is **recommended**.

Car Parking

From discussions at Council Committee Meetings it is clear that the Council is not willing (nor should it) fund reductions in car parking charges.

However, it is suggested that a Business Improvement District is considered again with the proceeds used to 'buy' some free parking. This would then be funded by the Traders in the Town.

It is suggested that funding from a BID is **taken forward** but that the Council **rejects** any funding for the reduction of car park charges.

Offices for the Town Clerk

The issue then remains that further office space is needed with a number of options considered including providing them in the town Hall if the market were to move.

The cost and issue of levels rule out the Town Hall as a viable option.

The Powysland Club occupy the upper floor of Triangle House and are settled there.

The Town Hall option has been **rejected**.

Remaining at Triangle House has been **rejected**.

A move to new offices is **recommended**.

A separate report will be issued on this aspect.



3. The Town and Community Plan 2017-2022

3.1 The Town Plan proposals reflect the economic base of Welshpool of which the elements were considered when assessing the best way forward:

- i) Element no 1**
Local residents from Welshpool and the surrounding villages using the shopping centre for their shopping needs. (approx. 25%)
- ii) Element no 2**
Caravan Parks and visitors staying in the local bed and breakfast providers who use Welshpool for their needs. (approx. 20%)
- iii) Element no 3**
Visitors stopping off at Welshpool on their way to another destination (i.e. the Coast). (approx. 45%)
- iv) Element no 4**
Visitors staying at hotels or bed & breakfast within the boundaries of Welshpool.
(approx. 10%)

3.2 The other factors which are important when considering the Plan proposals are:

- i) A large number of residents in the town do not have a car (32% overall) and from the Oldford side of the Town Centre those who do not have access to a car or van total 34.33% from the 2011 census.
- ii) Many of the residents from the Oldford side of the Town Centre are elderly and many have disabilities restricting distances of walking.
- iii) The registered persons with a long term illness extend to 24%.
- iv) The number of under 18 year olds also comprises 24%.
- v) Approximately 33% of the population is over 60 years of age.
- vi) 91% of the population have little or no knowledge of Welsh.
- vii) Employment - 27% are employed in retail, wholesale and transport while 14% are carers and 22% work in Tourism related industries.
- viii) Unemployment is substantially below the national average. However much employment is part time.
- ix) The effect of the traffic management system on pedestrian movement throughout the Town Centre.
- x) The improved rail services implemented in May 2015.
- xi) A copy of the census 2011 is attached at appendix B.



3.3 There is also a need to help increase the **Town's economic base** and the proposal is to achieve this by:

- i) Attracting more people to stop and visit the Town.
- ii) Keeping existing clientele who visit the Town.
- iii) Ensuring that residents from outlying areas use the Town.
- iv) Making the best of the new Cambrian Line rail services.
- v) Encouraging the development of more new homes including affordable housing.
- vi) Encouraging industry to consider Welshpool as a location for business.
- vii) *Promotion of the town and its benefits.***
- viii) Continue with events to attract people to the town.

3.4 Policies for the Market in the Town and Community Plan 2017-2022

The following are the policies adopted in the current plan.

D6 Markets

The adopted Policies for markets are:

Policy D4.1

The Town Council supports the Towns Market and will work with the Market Traders to improve and sustain the markets longer term.

Policy D4.2

The Town Council will continue to support a Monday street market and will do what is can to improve and sustain these markets working with the Market Traders.

Policy D4.3

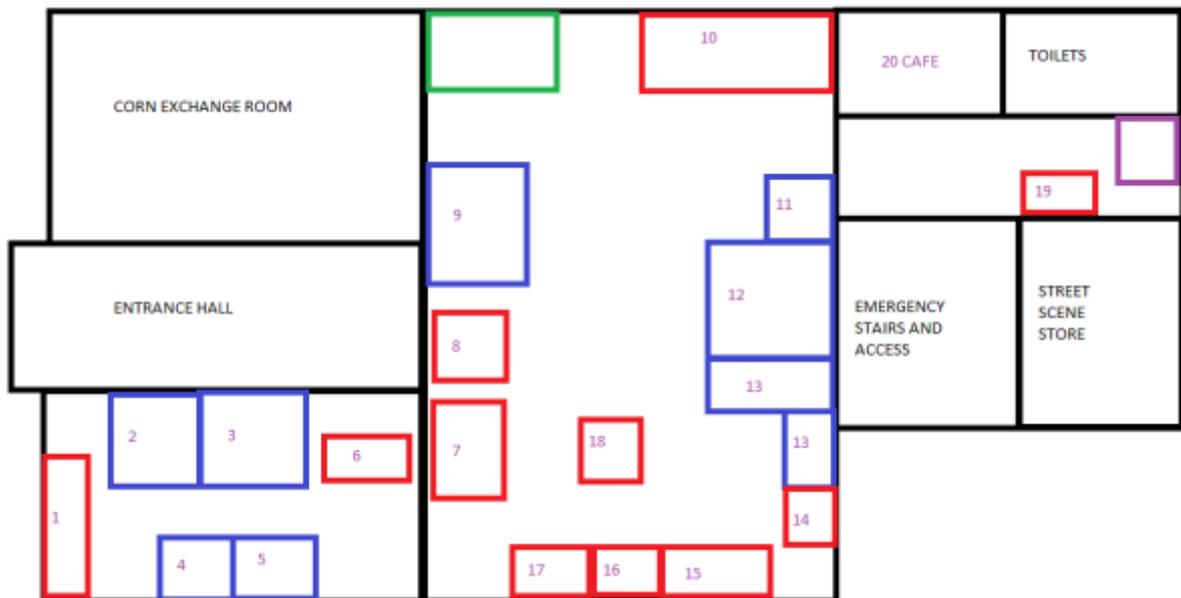
The Town Council will support continental street markets and the Winter Festival Markets held in Broad Street.

3.5 What is the Council doing to help the town?

The County Council has a responsibly to support business but this is not happening to any great extent. The Town Council is doing what it can and the actions being taken are set out at appendix E.



3.5 Layout of market (Town Hall)



Outline view of market halls
Blue are market units
Red are stalls with awnings





APPENDIX A

WELSHPOOL TOWN COUNCIL SURVEY RESULTS FOR MARKET DISCUSSION

PUBLIC SURVEY RESULTS TO DATE

Returns 450

1	Do you live in Welshpool?	Yes (92%)	No (8%)
2	Survey taken as	resident 94%	business 6%
3	Where is the market?	T H 99%	Other 1%
4	How often do you visit the market?	Never 12%	Rarely 54%
		Monthly 16%	Weekly 16%
		Daily 2%	
5	How do you rate the market?	Poor 55%	Average 25%
		Fair 12%	Good 4%
		Very Good 4%	
6	How do you rate the idea of moving the market to the Church Street Car Park?	Poor 40%	Average 9%
		Fair 13%	Good 20%
		Very Good 18%	
7	How do you rate the idea of a café in a new market in the Church Street Car Park?	Poor 38%	Average 13%
		Fair 12%	Good 22%
		Very Good 15%	
8	How do you rate the idea of refurbishing and revitalising the existing Town Hall Market?	Poor 30%	Average 10%
		Fair 14%	Good 24%



Very Good 22%

9	Do you think the indoor market attracts tourists to the Town Centre?	YES	20%
		NO	60%
		NOT SURE	20%
10	Do you think the market would attract more tourists if it were relocated?	YES	30%
		NO	45%
		NOT SURE	25%
11	Do you think keeping the market in the Town Hall is better than moving it?	YES	47%
		NO	38%
		NOT SURE	15%
12	Currently the market runs at a cost to the council - Do you think the Council should subsidise the market?	YES	20%
		NO	30%
		LIMITED	40%
		NOT SURE	10%

To date 28.2.2018



APPENDIX B

No	Heading	What we are doing	Rating
1	Promotion of the Town and Tourism The Town has many visitors who are often stopping on their way to another destination along with the caravan parks and local residents.	The Town Council has a Tourist Information Centre, Toilets, tourism booklets, tourism web site, provides signage and puts bunting up each year.	4
2	Keeping the town clean	The Town Council took over the street scene in November 2016 and improvements have been made since.	4
3	Range of shops The range of shops is quite good for a town of the size of Welshpool. As in many centres traditional shops are no longer represented.	All the Town Council can do is support the introduction of new traders when the opportunity arises.	3
4	Opening Hours Most shops are 9am to 5pm with few open on Sundays.	The Town Council has tried to get shops to stay open a little later during events with limited success.	2
5	Environment Street furniture, pavements and facilities kept in good order. There is a need for the bollards in the Seven Stars Car Park to be tidied up. Pavements and potholes are beginning to become an issue.	The Town Council is refurbishing benches and has provided bins in many locations. The Town Council Town Plan seeks for the County Council to refurbish the main street.	3
6	Events in Town There are a range of events which take place in and around the Town during the year.	The Town Council hosts the Carnival, Transport Festival, Christmas Lights, Winter Festival, Shop Window Competitions, Dragon Hunt and Easter Egg Hunt.	4
7	Roads/Parking There is an issue, not with the amount of parking but with the unfair playing field of the out of town centre shops having access to free parking whilst the town centre has parking charges.	The Town Council has a policy of at least 1 hours free parking in the Town Centre. The Town Council is working with PCC and Welsh Government to seek changes to the road system around the Town Centre.	2
8	Public transport Rail services have improved. There is a Town Bu service in place.	The Town Council is working with the authorities to gain more trains, a bus station and improved rail station.	4
9	Markets The Town has a limited street market on a Monday and An indoor market open 6 days a week.	Consideration as to the best way to take the markets forward is currently under review.	2
10	Working together with business Working together is important for any town centre	The Town Council supports some local initiatives and meets with the businesses on a regular basis.	4

