Consultation Response from KC Markets
2023/90629 Holmfirth Methodist Church, School Street, Holmfirth, HD9 7EQ
Use of land and garage for temporary retail market, storage of market equipment and bin waste storage (within a Conservation Area)
Date Responded: **Responding Officer: Karen Roche, Kirklees Market Manager** **Responding Ref:**

The decision was taken to close Holmfirth Market Hall in 2018. It was also decided that the Council would no longer run a market offer in the town but would instead offer a license to an independent operator.

The Market Service was asked to continue operating Holmfirth Market Hall until a decision was taken as to who the future operator may be. The Market Hall is still trading on Thursdays and Saturdays as well as hosting specialist markets when there are festivals and events in the town centre. There are currently three traders that continue to trade from the top floor of Holmfirth Market Hall, all three traders bring their produce with them on the day and then close and leave once everything is sold which is usually around lunchtime. The remaining traders sell Fruit & Veg, Cheese, and Bread.

Consultation regarding the future of the market took place in conjunction with the public consultation for the proposals for the new road scheme in Holmfirth. The consultation was held at the Civic Hall on Saturday 9th, Thursday 14th and Tuesday 19th March 2019. The consultation was well attended and the response from the residents of Holmfirth has been one of support for a market offer in the town. The residents identify Holmfirth as a market town and wish this to continue for future generations.

The opportunity to run the market was publicly advertised asking for expressions of interest from any parties wishing to take on the licence to run the market.

All bids were scrutinised in relation to operational knowledge and availability of necessary resources such as:

- Infrastructure availability - Market stalls, covers, boards, generators, lighting
- Storage of infrastructure and transportation if required.
- Manpower to assemble demountable stalls.
- Trader availability and business knowledge to attract and maintain traders.
- Knowledge of Holmfirth and existing businesses
- Retail knowledge of locality and gaps
- Growth intention and relationship with existing businesses
- Reinvestment of profits into the market

Interviews were held with interested parties to gain insights into knowledge of the above and aspirations for the market going forward.

From the bids received the community organisation ‘Holmfirth Forward’ was chosen to take the market forward.

The Council will issue Holmfirth Forward a licence to run the market whilst the Council will retain its market rights. However, before a licence can be issued Holmfirth forward need to achieve two things:

1. Holmfirth Forward need to identify and gain approval to use an alternative temporary location for the market to trade from during the period that the road scheme is being delivered, once complete the market can return to its current location albeit outside.
2. Holmfirth Forward need to obtain planning permission for the temporary location.

Holmfirth Forward have identified the lower section of School Street as shown in the planning application. Approval has been given by the joint landowners Kirklees Council and Holmfirth Methodist Church to use this site on both Thursday's and Saturdays for the market. This approval has enabled the submission by Holmfirth Forward of this planning application.

The existing Market Hall is to be demolished in June 2023 and the last trading day for the market is 15th May 2023.

There are time implications for Holmfirth market should this application be rejected. Holmfirth Forward would need to identify another alternative location, gain approval from the landowner and submit a further planning application. If this isn't achieved before 15th May 2023 the current market will be demolished in June and there will be a period of time without a market. The market traders may seek alternative trading on other markets to keep their business trading and through lack of continuity the market in Holmfirth could fail to recover.

The market service is in full support of this application as we would like to see a smooth transition for the existing traders from their current location to the new temporary market on School Street.