

# Uppingham Town Council

**Report to:** Full Council

**Date:** 7<sup>th</sup> December 2017

**Subject:** Annual Lent Fair

**Agenda Item:** 13

**Report Objective(s):** To consider a response to previous correspondence earlier this year to request a potential new location for the annual fair away from Market Place, Uppingham from March 2018 onwards.

**Background:** In response to a letter from a member of the community and a representative of the business community council resolved to seek wider views on the location of the fair and to explore any other possible solutions. Consultation took place during July and August and the Clerk has explored a number of options by discussing the matter with landowners and other organisations with land that could accommodate the fair vehicles either on hard or soft services. These investigations have not resulted in any clear alternative options worthy of further investigation.

- Risks & Issues:**
1. A change in location reduces the attendance or ease of access to the fair and eventually it is lost to the town. (This could be mitigated by the Council and or fair promoting the change in location to enable it to succeed somewhere outside of the Market Place – this would incur cost which would have to be met either by the Council or the Fair owners).
  2. The move to a soft ground location may result in additional cost to the council, landowner or fair operators (all of these can be mitigated by money being spent on solutions such as sheet metal surfaces, extensive repair work by specialists or compensation):
    - a. in precautionary measures to avoid the ground becoming damaged
    - b. repair after the fair has been in the location
    - c. loss of income if farmland for a period of time
    - d. loss of the fair if the ground is unsuitable due to the prevailing weather conditions
  3. The move to another location will result in a loss of £575 per annum to the Council in rent. (This could be mitigated by saving costs elsewhere).
  4. Reputational damage to the council given the views shared in the consultation during July and August 2016. (This could be mitigated by communication from council sharing the rationale for supporting a move to an alternative location).
  5. A move to Tod's Piece impacts unreasonably on the football season for Uppingham Town FC leaving the pitch unplayable in the final third of their season. (This could be mitigated by using specialists to repair the pitch and UTFCC would need to rearrange fixtures each year).

**Consultation & Feedback:** Wider views were sought during July and August 2016 with 269 residents taking the time to respond to the questions posed. Just over 64% of respondents indicated they wish to see the fair remain in the Market Place.

- Options:**
1. Do nothing with the fair remaining in the same location.
  2. Explore opportunities for another location not yet identified
  3. Move to Tod's Piece and the Clerk to plan and cost the impact

**Finance Required:** None for option 1, Clerk time and resource to investigate further Option 2. Unknown for Option 3 – part of work would be to identify all potential costs.

**Timeline:** First impact would be relocation of fair no earlier than Feb/Mar 2018.

**Powers Required:** None.

**Recommendation(s)** Do nothing with the fair remaining in the same location.

**/ Resolution in draft:**

**Next Steps and  
Actions for the  
Town Clerk:**

1. Clerk to advise all parties engaged of the outcome following 7<sup>th</sup> December 2016