

**SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL**  
**COMMUNITIES AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**  
**Wednesday 1st April 2026**

**Officer:** Ian Thorpe – Commercial, Markets and Events Manager

**GENERAL MARKETS UPDATE**

---

**Purpose of Report**

To update the Council on the current situation within the Indoor and Outdoor Markets

**INDOOR MARKET UPDATE**

This report covers the first trading period of the year which is traditionally the most challenging as footfall and customer spend inevitably drops off after the Christmas and New Year mayhem. From speaking to traders, there have undoubtedly been some quiet operating days, particularly when the weather was particularly poor. However, it was reassuring to note that the market has got busier week on week, especially on Friday and Saturday, with the most recent weekends being especially vibrant.

Once again, the entire market has continued to operate at 100% occupancy, including The Town Council's canopied section of regular traders where there are no rental arrears to report. Demand for trading space remains extremely high with speculative enquiries received on a regular basis and strong interest shown whenever any units or stalls become available. A double town council unit has recently changed hands due to the much-loved existing trader having to sell their business on health grounds. The new owner is excited to be able to build on the existing solid customer base and introduce some new product lines which will broaden the offer. They should prove to be a real asset to the market for many years to come. The interest shown in these units was considerable with only limited publicity proving to be necessary.

There are two Shropshire Council traders who will also be retiring in the next month or so and their units will undoubtedly be filled very quickly. As ever the tenancy change process will continue to be managed collaboratively between both management teams with the overriding aim being to make decisions which have the best interests of the market at the forefront. The plan at the moment is for an existing tenant to have the deserved opportunity to expand and a new trader to be brought in to further enhance the overall mix.

Since the last report the market has won another accolade at the annual NABMA awards in Birmingham. This time taking the title of Britain's favourite Community market for 2026 which is another testament to everyone's hard work and further vindication of the approach we are continuing to adopt in relation to all aspects of the market operation.

There has been some debate in recent weeks about whether to continue with the late-night events at the market either in the existing format or through a new approach. Over recent years these nights have predominantly involved the food and beverage operators within the market with very limited uptake from the retail traders. The events have very much been led by the traders themselves and coordinated through their market hall development group with the management team then helping facilitate the operation. The traders reported mixed results over 2025 with some dates proving much more successful than others. As a result, many of those traders who had previously taken part have decided to focus on other areas of their business and consequently there were insufficient numbers to make the late night's a viable proposition this year. An alternative approach was put forward to finish at 8 o'clock once a month on a Saturday but

again, it failed to gain enough support from the traders to move it forward. Although this is undoubtedly a disappointment to some, there are plans in place to look at holding special events on a more sporadic basis which may well prove to be more sustainable.

The portable wooden stall which was introduced just before Christmas has been back with Shrewsbury Men's shed to make some alterations to make it easier to be brought in and out of the building. It was returned to the market in time to be used very successfully over the Mother's Day weekend by the existing Market florist. He has already indicated he will be looking to use it again in the near future and we are now in a position to promote its availability. The plan is to commission the Men's Shed to make a second stall to the new specification and also refurb the internal 'barrow' on the gallery floor.

One other development to note is that we were recently able to facilitate a visit to the market and the wider town centre by two completely full coaches from the Leicestershire area. Both coaches dropped their passengers off in Bellstone opposite the market entrance on a Tuesday morning which helped boost both footfall and spend. The feedback from the drivers and organisers was extremely positive and shows the value of having a coach drop-off point in this area, which we are looking arrange on a more permanent basis.

#### **SUNDAY MARKET UPDATE**

Awaiting report from current operators.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That the report is noted.