

**'A Market Town Strategy for Ormskirk'**

**Interim Report of the Corporate and Environmental Overview &  
Scrutiny Committee – Work undertaken 2014/15**

## **THE REVIEW**

### **BACKGROUND**

Following the submission of topics by the public, Members and Directorate Service Heads (DSH) and the subsequent scoring exercise, the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 16 July 2014 agreed to undertake a review on the topic 'A Market Strategy for Ormskirk Town Centre'. The title of the review was subsequently revised to 'A Market Town Strategy for Ormskirk'.

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Members of the Committee agreed:

1. To undertake a review entitled 'A Market Town Strategy for Ormskirk', comprising the themed topics: 'The Market'; 'Car Parking'; 'The Environment and Special Features'; Leisure and the Night-time Economy'; 'Technology and Marketing' (including Tourism) and the contribution of Edge Hill University, as part of the work being undertaken in relation to the Ormskirk Town Strategy.
2. To make interim reports to Cabinet, if appropriate, in relation to the themed topics.
3. To present a report of the Committee's findings to Cabinet and Council, as appropriate.

### **Project Plan**

The Project Plan (Appendix 1) is reviewed at each meeting of the Committee and contains details including its Membership; Terms of Reference; Objectives (present and future), Resources, Reporting Arrangements and Support, Timescales and Information Gathered.

### **Membership of the Committee 2014/15**

**Chairman:** Councillor R Bailey

**Vice Chairman:** Councillor Mrs Blake

Councillors: Ashcroft, Mrs Baybutt, Delaney, Dereli, Devine, Mrs C Evans, Mrs R Evans, Fillis, G Hodson, J Hodson, L Hodson, Mrs Marshall, McKay Mee, Ms Melling, Wright and the late B Nolan.

### **Substitutes**

The following Members acted as substitute Members for one or more of the meetings held when considering the review:

Councillors: S Bailey, Barron, Delaney, Kay, O'Toole, Pryce-Roberts and Mrs Stephenson.

### **Work undertaken in 2014/15**

The first themed topic to be considered was 'The Market', the objectives (present) for which are appended below.

## **Objectives – The present**

### **1. 'The Market'**

- To understand the current arrangements of the market, including the existing layout of the market stalls, mix of traders and the aesthetics in relation to the style and look of the stalls.
- To understand the impact of the Moor Street improvement works on the current market layout.
- To explore the opportunities open to market traders, including those available to permanent traders / casual traders / start-up traders.
- To understand best practice from other thriving markets.

## **INFORMATION GATHERED**

### **Meeting of the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 16 July 2014 the Council Chamber, 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk**

Following consideration of the results of the scoring exercise, the Technical Services Manager, who attended the meeting, provided additional information on the topic idea that had scored the highest namely 'A Market Strategy for Ormskirk Town Centre'.

Members discussed, raised questions and comments in respect of:

- The position of a Market Strategy, for Ormskirk, as part of the work on the Economic Development Strategy.
- Proposals in relation to the development of Moor Street and its impact on current market arrangements.
- Managing Market Traders / Visitors expectations – response to current and future trends / ventures.
- Raising the profile of the Market – branding; mix of trades;
- Current arrangement and aesthetics of the market stalls;
- The market in relation to other North West markets – best practice /establishing its own profile.

Members agreed to undertake an in-depth study on 'A Market Strategy for Ormskirk Town Centre'.

### **Meeting of the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 23 October 2014 the Council Chamber, 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk**

#### **Presentation 1 – The Role of Ormskirk Town Centre Market**

Members considered information presented by the Technical Services Manager on the role of Ormskirk Town Centre Market.

In the presentation it was explained that the two days (Thursday and Saturday), on which Ormskirk market was operational, were distinctly different. Members considered the information circulated.

Reference was made to recent changes to the market layout including relocation of food traders' stalls from the Market Way car park, behind Moor Street, onto Moor Street itself that had resulted in those market traders reporting a rise in their food trade takings as well as an increased take up of food trade stalls. Other improvements over the past few years had included the provision of new stalls and covers.

The information presented (Table 1 & 2) showed that the Thursday market was currently well supported by traders, however, the number of permanent /casual stallholders trading on a Saturday was lower and the variety of commodities offered smaller. The main reasons suggested for this was the competition from other nearby local markets that also operated on Saturdays, which the Thursday traders attended, coupled with the variety of goods offered by those markets.

**Table 1: Number of stalls provided on each day and their occupancy**

	Day/Position	No. of stalls		
	THURSDAY	102		
	SATURDAY	101		
LAYOUT	MOOR STREET	55		
	AUGHTON STREET	42	(41 ON SATURDAY)	
	CHURCH STREET	5		
<b>Occupancy</b>	<b>Day</b>			
LICENSED TRADERS	THURSDAY	50	STALLS OCCUPIED	83
	SATURDAY	46	STALLS OCCUPIED	60
CASUAL TRADERS	THURSDAY	17	STALLS OCCUPIED	17
	SATURDAY	12	STALLS OCCUPIED	13

**Table 2: Commodities sold and mix of trades**

COMMODITY	STALLS THURSDAY	STALLS SATURDAY
Ladieswear	7	6
Bags	4	5
Bedding & Linen	4	4
Footwear	3	4
Menswear	7	4
Bread/Pies	3	2
Cakes	2	2
Cards	3	2
Coats & Outdoor Clothing	6	4
Fruit & Veg	4	2
Gifts	2	1
Household Goods	3	2
Jewellery & Watch Repair	1	1
Ladies Lingerie	4	2
Pet Supplies	2	2
Socks/Underwear etc.	6	6
Sweets	3	3
Towels	1	1
Blinds	1	1
Butchers	1	1
Cd's/DVD's/Games	0	1

Cheeses	1	1
Childrenswear	3	3
Cosmetics	2	1
Crockery	0	1
Dried Flowers	1	1
Flowers	0	1
Fresh Fish	1	1
Hair Accessories	1	1
Hot Food & Drinks	1	1
Material	2	0
Mobile Phone Accessories	1	1
Sportswear	2	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>68</b>

Information was also provided in relation to the ‘The National picture – all markets’, extracted from the review, undertaken by the National Association of British Market Authorities (nabma), that through a survey carried out by the National Market Traders’ with their members, measured year on year changes in the performance of retail markets – comparing performance in March 2012 with March 2011 using a series of closed questions. (Table 3)

**Table 3 National (all markets) responses – detail 2012**

	Questions	Missing Responses	Decreased	Same	Increased	Grand Total
1	Total number of stalls let	1	88	78	112	352
		0%	32%	28%	40%	100%
2	Total number of traders standing	3	86	77	113	279
		0%	31%	28%	41%	100%
3	Number of market days	2	5	251	21	279
		0%	2%	90%	8%	100%
4	Footfall	83	62	89	45	279
		30%	22%	32%	16%	100%
5	Stall income	30	81	69	99	279
		11%	29%	25%	35%	100%
6	Operational/management staff employed	0	69	179	31	279
		0%	25%	64%	11%	100%
7	Profit/Loss (bottom line)	39	69	83	88	279
		14%	25%	30%	31%	100%
8	Trader turnover (sales)	167	49	46	17	279
		60%	18%	16%	6%	100%
9	Investment in market	51	40	122	66	279
		18%	14%	44%	24%	100%

Source: 2012 Retail Market Survey Report – The Market Alliance (nabma Oct 2012)

In relation to the aesthetics of the market, the Technical Services Manager referred to the potential use of “pop-up” / gazebo-type stalls, popular in other street markets. However, the practicalities and longevity of use of these types of stalls needed to be balanced against the, often blustery, weather conditions that existed in the location.

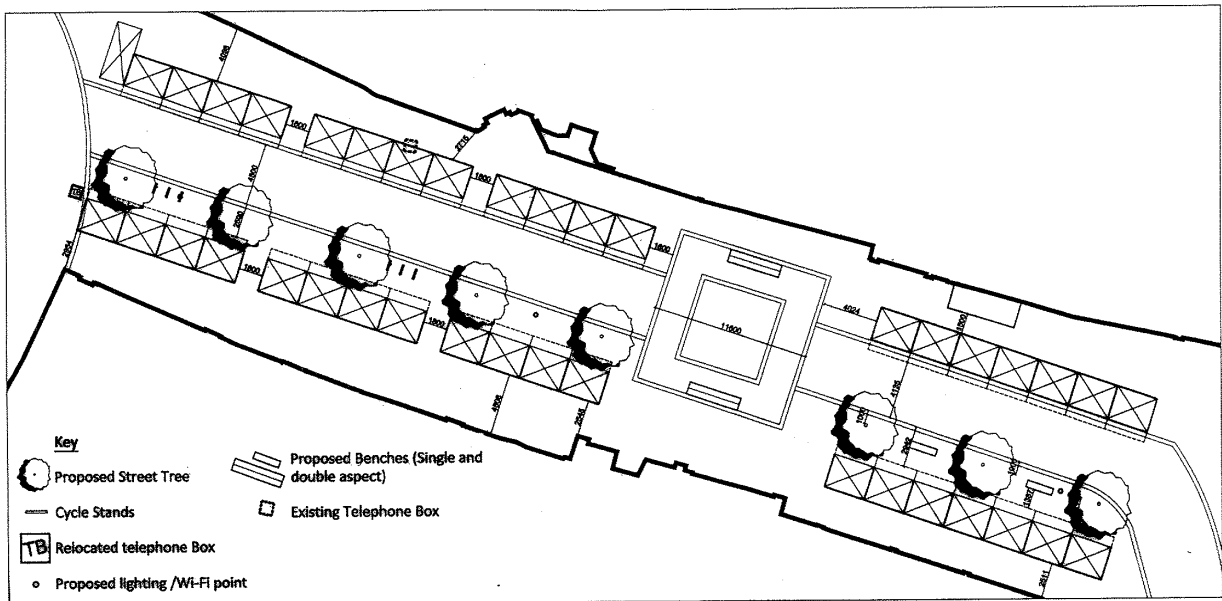
Reference was made to ‘The Environmental Improvement of Moor Street, Ormskirk’, supported by a visual example (Table 4) of how the Market stalls could be positioned on Moor Street on Market Days, that was providing an opportunity to look at:

- The impact of the Moor Street improvement works on the current market layout.

- The opportunities open to market traders, including those available to permanent traders / casual traders / start up traders.

**Table 4:**

**Proposed Layout [Market Day]**



**Summary**

- The above layout accommodates 39 stalls [4 less than existing market layout]
- No vehicles will be using the street during the time the market is on
- Stalls positioned to face inwards to maximise market atmosphere within the street
- The “pinch point” outside New Look and Clarks has been reduced, giving more space to get passed
- Seating, artwork and space for temporary events structure within “Events Space”

Additionally, it was reported that a revised Traffic Regulation Order would be sought as part of the Moor Street improvements restricting the movement of vehicles through Ormskirk Town Centre.

The review provided an opportunity to seek views in relation to:

- What type of layout should effectively be used? (back to back; one each side of street)
- Restricting vehicle access on Market Days.
- Consultation on proposals coming forward with Market Traders.
- Opportunities that could be afforded to Casual Traders.
- Attracting New Traders /commodities.
- Promoting Ormskirk Market as a destination.
- Creation of a “Events Space” in a central area of Moor Street.
- Improvements / knock-on effect on the town centre retailers.

Members discussed, raised questions and comments in relation to:

- Charges to Market Traders.
- Initiatives to attract more traders (examples included a regular “Continental Market”; “Local Produce” Market.)

- Prohibiting vehicles access through Ormskirk Town Centre (enforcement / restricted access during market operational times; provision of barriers or gates (Aughton Street); provision of clear signage.
- The changing face of the Town Centre (street scene; footfall; segregation of shared pedestrian/cycle routes; design of “safe” routes; opportunities for out-of-town shoppers (coach park; visitor parking; pick-up/drop-off points)
- Economic considerations – footfall; types of shops/retailers in the town centre; Ormskirk’s identity (“historic market town”); effect of national trends; the “shopping” experience.

**Meeting of the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 4 December 2014 in the Council Chamber, 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk**

Following an indication at the previous meeting a few Members of the Committee had met, together with the Chairman, to discuss further lines of enquiry for the Review and the following themes had been identified:

- The Market
- Car Parking
- The Environment and Special Features
- Leisure and the Night-Time Economy
- Technology and Marketing (including tourism)
- Contribution of the University (Edge Hill)

Also identified was an amendment to the title of the review to ‘A Market Town Strategy for Ormskirk’.

A discussion ensued on the merits/practicalities of undertaking a wider scoped review. Issues raised included:

- Timescales – impact on agreed timetable with Lancashire County Council (LCC) relating to the commencement of the scheduled improvement works in Moor Street and re-siting of the Market in the interim.
- Issues relating to the scope of the additional themes.
- Duplication of the scrutiny role of Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the ‘Ormskirk Town Centre Strategy’, due to go out for consultation in January 2015.

It was therefore proposed that, subject to the proposed wider scope of the Review to include additional themes, that the current priority for the review continue to be the work related to Ormskirk Market, as set down in its Project Plan, in order to bring forward recommendations on it following completion of the Moor Street improvement works.

Issues discussed as part of the Moor Street work included:

- Re-siting of the Market whilst the Moor Street improvement works were taking place.
- Layout of the Market and stalls following completion of the scheduled work.
- Vehicle restrictions in the pedestrian area of the Town Centre – Traffic Orders; management (Market Days); enforcement; physical barriers (Moor Street; Aughton Street; Burscough Street; Church Street)

- Bringing forward ideas to increase footfall in the Town Centre.

The Technical Services Manager attended the meeting, provided an overview of the current position in relation to the Moor Street improvement works, responded to questions and provided clarification on issues raised, including those related to the current and future arrangements of Ormskirk Market. A summary of proposals (Table 5) on the environmental improvement of Moor Street was circulated.





**Table 5:**

Lancashire  
County Council

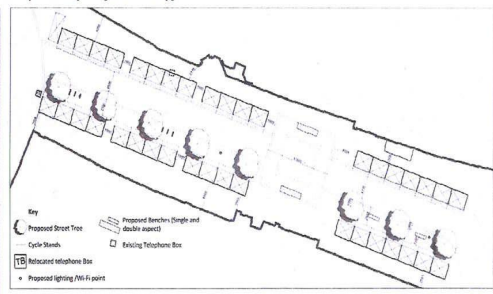
BCA Landscape

## The Environmental Improvement of Moor Street, Ormskirk

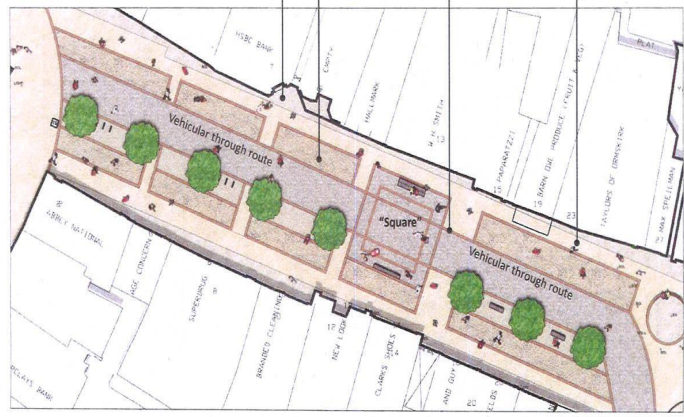
**Suggested Material Samples**

			
<b>Shop Thresholds</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yellow Rock Sandstone</li> <li>• 120x80mm deep x random lengths</li> <li>• Sawn and flame textured</li> </ul>	<b>Market Place</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Porphyry tumbled sets</li> <li>• 80x80x80mm deep</li> </ul>	<b>Channel/ Delineation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Poppy" Red Granite</li> <li>• 250x100mm deep x random lengths</li> </ul>	<b>Pedestrian "Footway"</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yellow Rock Sandstone</li> <li>• 300x80mm deep x random lengths</li> <li>• Flame textured</li> </ul>

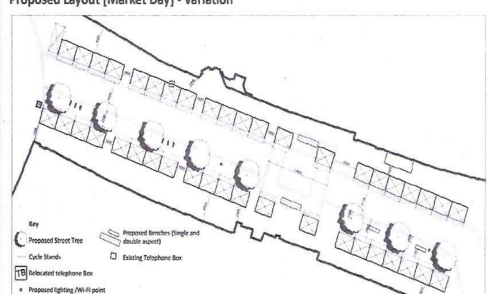
**Proposed Layout [Market Day]**



**Proposed Layout [Non Market Day]**



**Proposed Layout [Market Day] - Variation**



**Summary**

- Street trees create a green "Spine" to the street, framing views to the Clock Tower whilst bringing structure, shelter and seasonal interest
- High quality stone paving will co-ordinate with the adjacent Aughton Street whilst defining areas for seating, market stalls, vehicles etc
- Bespoke artwork will be integrated into the paving and street furniture to reinforce the character of Ormskirk
- Creation of a "Square" in the middle of the street increases the flexibility of the street for hosting events, social activities or market stalls
- Street furniture will be provided at regular intervals to maximise the comfort and convenience of the street

**The Proposals . . .**

- Agreed:**
1. Revision of the review title to 'A Market Town Strategy for Ormskirk'.
  2. 'The Market' be the priority theme going forward.
  3. Revision of the Project Plan populated to include, for future consideration, the "bite-size" themes:
    - (a) Car Parking
    - (b) The Environment and Special Features
    - (c) Leisure and Night-Time Economy
    - (d) Technology and Marketing (including tourism)
    - (e) Contribution by Edge Hill University.



## **Workshop 1: “The Market” held on 20 January 2015 in the Cabinet and Committee Room, 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk**

The workshop session provided an opportunity for Committee Members and invited Councillors to consider the future of the Market and the proposed Moor Street works to be undertaken in early 2015. The themes / questions addressed and summary of the group work are appended below:

### **Moor Street Improvement Works – siting/relocation of the Market**

The groups put forward siting options for relocation of the Market.

#### Sites identified

- Coronation Park
- Morrisons Car Park
- Retention in Town Centre (Church Street; Burscough Street)
- Rows of stalls in Aughton Street
- Council Car Park (behind Tesco)
- Council Car Park (Bus Station)
- Bus Station (with stalls on Moor Street to link)

**Conclusion:** Whilst there was no ‘perfect fit’ for an alternative site, the Bus Station Car Park was felt by the majority to be the best one.

### **The ‘Events Square’ – ideas for its use on market days.**

The introduction of an ‘Events Square’ was discussed, ideas for its use and the practicalities associated with the area that included:

- Should the space be covered? (semi-permanent, canopied) – weather dependent
- Is a dais required?
- Flexibility and management of the space?

#### Ideas consider for use included:

As a:

- ‘multi-functional’ area.
- ‘piazza’ area (night-time economy / bars?)

For:

- ‘specialists stalls’ (pop-up shop area for use on non-market days)
- ‘prestigious events’
- ‘themed’ events
- ‘musical’ festivals / events
- ‘street arts / street entertainers’ (clog dancers; university students)

Collaborative/partnership working:

- Chapel Gallery
- Edge Hill University (EHU) – utilising / linking with creative arts / media at EHU, street theatre; business school.
- Local Schools / College (West Lancashire College)
- Local Community Groups (Lions; Rugby; Football Clubs et al)
- Town Twinning Liaison
- LCC Cultural Department: Culture of Lancashire

**Conclusion:** 1. The space needs to be flexible and multifunctional in its use, be it for specialists' stalls, promotional events; entertainment (day and night), wider community use and embrace new technology.  
 2. Thought should also be given to whether the space should be semi or permanently covered.  
 3. The overall space must be well-managed.

**What are the differences between the Thursday and Saturday market? What could be done to improve the Saturday market?**

Each Market day and ideas/themes related to “improvements for change” and the look of the stalls / environment were discussed.

**Table: 6**

<b>Market Day</b>	<b>Perceptions</b>
Thursday	Shoppers attracted – women / ‘older’ visitors Judged to be Ormskirk’s ‘Market Day’
Saturday	Shoppers attracted – families / couples / younger visitors
	Number of empty stalls

Source: Group Work (Workshop Jan 2015)

**Improvements for change** (ideas / themes)

- Identify target audience
- Creation of a Unique Selling Point (USP)
- Re-branding of market day names (Thursday is ‘Gingerbread Market’)
- Setting a ‘theme’ (Marketing Lancashire: ‘Farmers Market (promoting local food / drink products); cluster stalls; specialists’ stalls (hog roast/paella)
- Re-think on stall-holder position (volume by ‘Taylors’; promotion of other positions – Saturday)

**Look of stalls / environment** (idea / themes)

- Attracting non-traditional / experimental stalls (vintage; crafts/jewellery; high quality/niche end; local sources products; ‘would be’ or ‘start up’ entrepreneurs).
- Themed – entry stall; core stalls; themed spaces/cluster stalls.
- Using ‘columns’: lighting; banner arms.
- Appearance (single coloured awnings (burgundy/red with Borough crest); striped awnings with scalloped edges; displays and management of individual stalls.
- Use of technology (lighting; light shows; screens)
- Trialling ‘pop-up’ stalls.

**Conclusion:** 1. The Moor Street improvement works were providing an opportunity to look at how the Market is identified and positioned both locally and in the wider community.  
2. Market research and publicity could assist in ascertaining information in relation to current, future use and attraction.

### **What about the aesthetics of the Market? (its overall appearance, layout/look of the stalls and accessibility)**

Improvements for change – linked to ideas already raised

- Stop passageways being blocked
- Colour code awnings by product; colour mark up for awning representatives
- Uniformity with all the stalls.
- Groups products together (cluster or similar products in designated areas – comparative shopping)
- Better seating arrangements
- Light shows
- Accommodate outside table and chairs in cafes
- More traditional layout (flexibility of spacing of stalls)

**Conclusion:** The overall opinion was that there should be uniformity in the stalls with matching canopies; clustering; better seating and landscaping.

### **Meeting of the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 19 February 2015 in the Council Chamber, 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk**

It was reported that the improvement works to Moor Street, being undertaken by Lancashire County Council, had commenced and that part of the Market had been relocated to the Bus Station Car Park for the duration.

### **Presentation 2 – Ormskirk Town Centre Strategy**

The Senior Planning Officer – Housing and Regeneration, Mr D Carr, provide an update on the consultation that was taking place on the draft Ormskirk Town Centre Strategy 2015 and copies of the questionnaire were made available at the meeting.

The presentation included reference to the:

- length of the consultation period (three months) scheduled to conclude on 14 April 2015.
- comprehensive consultation being undertaken – including a series of 6 exhibitions (at Edge Hill University, Chapel Gallery, Ormskirk Library and Morrisons); the distribution of letters to every business in the town centre and the strategy and electronic surveys available on-line; papers surveys and other promotional material; press release and the features in the economic newsletter and Lancashire Life.

- consultation with organisations including Love Ormskirk, Ormskirk Community Partnership; Key Landowners; Edge Hill University; Lancashire County Council (LCC), Parish Church, Market Traders, representatives from Business in the Community West Lancashire College, West Lancashire College.

It was stated that, although in the early part of the process, over 50 responses, electronic and paper, had been received. At the conclusion of the consultation process a report outlining the responses received with appropriate responses would be produced.

In discussion questions and comments were raised in relation to:

- Involvement with Liverpool City Port – exploring the potential of the Borough to a wider audience (for example cruise liner passengers).
- Advertising the importance of local historical connections to the wider history of England and the rich heritage of the Borough.
- Promoting Ormskirk as a tourist destination - exploring its future potential.

### **The Review 2015/16**

The Project Plan (Appendix A) gives details of proposals in relation to future meetings.

At the final meeting of the Committee for 2014/15 held on 19 February 2015 in relation to the next steps of the Review the proposals for the next meeting (Meeting 5 - 9 July 2015) were noted. These are set down below and contained in the revised Project Plan:

- To consider the updated the Project Plan
- To consider an interim report of the work undertaken in 2014/15.
- To receive a presentation from the Technical Services Manager and consider the theme 'Car Parking'.
- To identify/confirm the next steps in the review.

The Project Plan was further amended to allow consideration of 'Technology and Marketing' (including Tourism) at meeting 6 (October 2015) and Leisure and Night-time Economy at meeting 7 (December 2015).

### **Other Information**

Information that has assisted the work of the review and compilation of this interim report:

- The Environmental Improvement of Moor Street, Ormskirk – The proposals (*site diagram*)
- Ormskirk Town Centre Market – Statistical data (no. of stalls layout; licensed and casual traders (*Table 1*))
- Ormskirk Town Centre Market – Commodity data (*Table 2*)
- National picture (all markets) – Statistical data (*National Association of British Markets (nabma)(Table 3)*)

- Ormskirk Town Centre – Proposed layout (Market Day) (*Table 4*)
- The Environmental Improvement of Moor Street, Ormskirk (*Table 5*)
- Draft Ormskirk Town Centre Strategy 2015-2025 (*Consultation Questionnaire*)
- Views of Ormskirk Market and other markets (Lichfields; Wakefield; Skipton; Workingham) (*Pictorial views*)
- 2012 Retail Market Survey Report – The Market Alliance (*Nabma Oct 2012*)  
<http://www.nabma.com/>

#### Minutes:

- Minutes of the meeting of the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 16 July, 23 October, 4 December 2014 and 19 February 2015.
- Notes of the Workshop Session held on 20 January 2015

#### Web links:

<http://skiptonmarket.net/>  
<http://www.stockport.gov.uk/services/leisureculture/visitstockport/stockportmarket/>  
<http://markets.sthelens.gov.uk/markets/earlestown-market/>  
<http://www.burymarket.com/>

<http://www.westlancs.gov.uk/news/january-news-2015/time-to-give-your-views-on-an-important-strategy-for-the-future-of-ormskirk-town-centre.aspx>

### **OFFICER SUPPORT**

Lead Officer: Dave Tilleray, Assistant Director Community Services

Scrutiny Support Officer: Cathryn Jackson, Principal Overview & Scrutiny Officer

Officers Reporting: Colin Brady, Technical Services Manager (Ormskirk Market; Car Parking)  
 2014/15 Dominic Carr, Senior Planning Officer – Housing and Regeneration (Ormskirk Town Centre)

Legal Officer 2014/15: Tina Sparrow, Principal Solicitor

### **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS/COMMUNITY STRATEGY**

There are no significant sustainability impacts associated with this report. There are links to the West Lancashire Economic Strategy that promotes the West Lancashire visitor economy and particularly the draft Ormskirk town centre strategy which is being developed to help deliver growth in Ormskirk Town Centre. The strategy will aim to address a number of issues and the areas being looked at as part of this review will add to that work that includes such topics as improving the appearance of the town centre, developing a brand which can be promoted to encourage visitors developing the evening/night time economy and improving access into and out of the town centre.

Lancashire County Council (LCC), are responsible for the works in Moor Street that has necessitated the move of part of the outdoor market in Moor Street to the Council run car park adjacent to the bus station. It is expected that following completion of these works the outdoor market will be set up in a new configuration in Moor Street.

The improvements put forward in this interim report aims to assist in the reinvigoration of the market and increase the footfall adding to the experience of Ormskirk as a visitor destination and work to help the Council deliver a strong and sustainable community.

## **FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

There are financial/resource implications arising from this report. The implementations of recommendations that may come forward at the conclusion of the review would have to be met from existing budgets.

## **RISK ASSESSMENT**

Risk assessment for any proposals that may come forward will be highlighted when the final review report is prepared.

## **Background Documents**

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this report.

## **Equality Impact Assessment**

There will be a direct impact on members of the public, employees, elected members and / or stakeholders as a result of recommendations that may come forward at the conclusion of the review, if implemented. An EIA would be undertaken as part of that process.

## **Appendices**

- (1) Project Plan (as amended 19 February 2015)