

REPORT TO:		Cabinet	
DATE:		18 February 2026	
PORTFOLIO:		Councillor Clare Pritchard – Transformation and Town Centres	
REPORT AUTHOR:		Steve Riley, Executive Director (Environment)	
TITLE OF REPORT:		Market Trader Rent/Licence Fee Concessions	
EXEMPT REPORT (Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A)	No	Not applicable	
KEY DECISION:	No	If yes, date of publication:	

1. **Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 For Cabinet to consider continuing the support for market traders decanted into the temporary cabins on the market square through licence fee concessions and continuing the support provided to the Official Accrington Stanley Supporters Trust.

2. **Recommendations**

- 2.1 Cabinet approves the extension of the current 100% reduction of the rent and licence fees payable by market traders in the temporary market cabins on the town square until the cabins are removed from the town square for the Market Hall reopening, as detailed in paragraph 3.2 of the report.
- 2.2 Cabinet approves the extension to the current storage unit rents and service charges for the temporary storage units until the cabins are removed from the town square for the Market Hall reopening, as detailed in paragraph 3.2 of the report.
- 2.3 Cabinet notes the proposed rent and service charge concessions will reduce income levels for the market budget in the next financial year by circa £2,930 per month and it is unlikely any efficiency or other cost savings within the market service budget will offset this.
- 2.4 Cabinet approve the extension of financial support to the Official Accrington Stanley Supporters Trust, (OASST) as detailed in paragraph 3.4 of the report, in respect of their temporary unit within the Arndal Centre, to continue until the Market Hall reopening.

3. **Background**

- 3.1 The Council agreed to support those market traders temporarily relocated on the town square whilst the Market Hall redevelopment works were undertaken. A report presented in March 2025, saw Cabinet give approval to provide rent and licence fees concessions for 12 months from 1st April 2025 or until the temporary cabins are removed whichever comes first.

3.2 This 12-month agreement is coming to an end and this report proposes the Council maintains its zero-rent lease/fee charge for the temporary cabins with all other charges remaining as per the current concession levels. If approved by Cabinet, this would maintain the following charges until the cabins are removed from the town square for the Market Hall reopening:

- £0.00 (zero charge) per calendar month for market cabin rent/licence fee
- £9.00 per sqft per calendar month for service charges.
- £25 per calendar month for trader storage units located under the rear pavilion at the Market Hall (no services provided to these storage units).
- £120.00 per calendar month as a combined rent and service charge for the trader who has a dedicated cold room and prep room.

Continuing with these concessions would result in loss of income to the Council of circa £2,930 per month and assumes traders continue to pay the service charge and where applicable, storage unit rent, cold/prep room rent.

3.3 If approved, the extension will be given on the same terms as the 2024/25 concession through new leases, and traders will be required to continue to pay all service charges and, where applicable, storage unit rents and any other payments via direct debit.

3.4 The Council also agreed to assist the OASST by meeting the cost of the monthly rent for their unit in the Arndale Centre, which is currently £275.41 (£3,301.68 in total for the financial year 2024/25). The approval for this arrangement is also coming to an end and this report proposes the Council agrees to continue meeting the cost of OASST's rental payments. If approved this financial support would be in line with the other market traders in the temporary cabins on the town square and the support would continue until the cabins are removed from the town square for the Market Hall reopening. OASST has confirmed its lease with the Arndale is on a 'rolling' 3-month agreement.

4.0 State Aid/Subsidy Control

4.1 The Subsidy Control Act 2022 will apply, although the individual subsidies are likely to be exempt subsidies on the basis that they represent minimal financial assistance ("MFA") for the purpose of the Subsidy Control Act 2022. MFA subsidy can be given without the need to assess whether the subsidy complies with the subsidy control principles provided the amount of subsidy in the current financial year and the two preceding financial years does not exceed £315k per recipient. In this regard, the Council will be required to serve a pre-award notice on each of the traders before the leases/licences are completed to confirm the amount of the subsidy and seeking confirmation from the traders that the MFA threshold will not be exceeded. The leases/licences / rental subsidy can only be granted once the traders / OASST have responded and the Council will be required to serve a post award confirmation notice after completion to confirm the amount of subsidy provided by the Council, the date it was given and that it was minimal financial assistance for the purpose of the Subsidy Control Act 2022.

5. Alternative Options considered and Reasons for Rejection

5.1 The Council could let the current rent/licence fee concessions expire and revert back to the previous levels. This is not recommended because the Market Hall is anticipated to reopen for the Christmas light switch-on event in 2026 and whilst there is no guarantee all traders will wish to return, these traders could remain until the cabins are removed from the town square and decanted back into the Market Hall.

6. Consultations

6.1 The Portfolio Holders for Resources and Council Operations, Portfolio Holder for Town Centre and Markets, the Council's Chief Executive, Section 151 officer and Executive Director (Legal and Democratic Services) have all been consulted about these proposals.

7. Implications

Financial implications (including any future financial commitments for the Council)	Based on the current number of market traders, continuing the rent concession will reduce the market budget income by circa £2,930 per month and supporting OASST will increase costs by £275 per month. Provision for this has been made when setting the Council's annual revenue budget.
Legal and human rights implications	The subsidy control implications are considered in paragraph 4 of this report. In summary, the rent concessions represent a subsidy for the purpose of the Subsidy Control Act 2022 but the subsidy can be given lawfully if the requirements relating to minimal financial assistance are met. Notwithstanding that the concession will not be best consideration, there is no need to obtain the consent of the secretary of state pursuant to s123 Local Government Act 1972 as the lease/licence arrangement will not fall within the definition of "disposal" for the purposes of this Act. Traders will be provided with new lease/agreements for 9 months from 1 April 2026, until the cabins are removed from the town square for the Market Hall reopening.
Assessment of risk	The Council could maintain the existing level of rent or let them expire and return to the previous level of rents but there is a risk that some traders would give notice to leave. However, as highlighted in earlier reports, the

	Council cannot support every market trader business and there may be some that are simply no longer economically viable, no matter what the level of rents/service charges the Council made.
Equality and diversity implications <i>A Customer First Analysis should be completed in relation to policy decisions and should be attached as an appendix to the report.</i>	N/A

**8. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985:
List of Background Papers**

- 8.1 Cabinet report 26 March 2025 – Market Trader Rent/Licence Fee Concessions
<https://democracy.hyndburnbc.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=133&MId=2900&Ver=4>
- Cabinet Report of the 19 October 2022 – Market Hall Rent Concessions
<https://democracy.hyndburnbc.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=133&MId=2697&Ver=4>
- Cabinet Report of the 8 December 2021 – Rent Concession for the Indoor Market Hall Traders
<https://democracy.hyndburnbc.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=133&MId=2614&Ver=4>
- Cabinet Report of the 14 July 2021 - Temporary Rent Concession for the Indoor Market
<https://democracy.hyndburnbc.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=133&MId=2610&Ver=4>
- Cabinet Report of the 21 October 2020 – Temporary Rent Concession for the Indoor Market Hall Traders due to Coronavirus
<https://democracy.hyndburnbc.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=133&MId=2573&Ver=4>
- Cabinet Report of the 13 November 2019 – Accrington Markets – Review of Rents and Charges
<https://democracy.hyndburnbc.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=133&MId=2465&Ver=4>
- Cabinet report 29 August 2018: Accrington Market – Review of Charges
<https://democracy.hyndburnbc.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=133&MId=2368&Ver=4>
- Cabinet Report of the 14th of February 2018: - Market Hall Rents and Charges Review
<https://democracy.hyndburnbc.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=133&MId=2192&Ver=4>