

## Witham Town Council : External Suppliers Policy

*A guide to the principles and criteria used by Witham Town Council when selecting traders and businesses to participate in Council-run events, ensuring fair and transparent decision-making processes.*

### **Policy Overview**

This policy outlines the framework used by Witham Town Council to select traders, vendors, and other businesses to trade at Council events, markets, and similar activities. The policy aims to ensure a diverse, high-quality offering that enhances the event experience for residents and visitors whilst maintaining standards of safety, hygiene, and professionalism.

Selection decisions will be made in accordance with the Council's commitment to fairness, transparency, and the best interests of the community.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all traders, vendors, stallholders, and service providers selected to participate in any event organised or co-organised by Witham Town Council, including but not limited to:

- Markets and fairs
- Community events and festivals
- Charity events
- Health and wellbeing events
- Promotional events
- Pop-up trading opportunities

### **Selection Criteria**

The Council will assess applications and select traders based on the following criteria:

#### 1. Health and Safety Compliance

- Current and valid food hygiene rating (where applicable) from the local Environmental Health Authority
- Compliance with food safety regulations and standards
- Appropriate insurance and public liability coverage
- Health and safety risk assessment where required
- Adherence to event-specific safety and operational requirements

#### 2. Previous Trading Experience with Witham Town Council

- Previous successful participation at Council events
- Performance record, including punctuality and adherence to terms and conditions
- Customer feedback and community reputation
- Reliability and professionalism demonstrated at past events
- Positive relationships with Council staff

#### 3. Hygiene and Standards

- General cleanliness and presentation of stall/equipment
- Compliance with environmental and waste management requirements

- Adherence to trading standards and consumer protection regulations
- Professional conduct and appearance

#### 4. Event Compatibility

- Alignment with the event theme and objectives
- Diversity of offering (avoiding excessive duplication of similar traders)
- Appropriateness of goods/services for the anticipated audience
- Flexibility to meet specific event requirements and timings

#### 5. Expected Attendance and Demand

- The anticipated number and type of event attendees
- Market demand for the proposed goods or services
- Relevance and appeal to the local community
- Time of year and seasonal considerations

#### 6. Stall Mix and Balance

- Variety of product types to create an attractive marketplace
- Balance between food/refreshment vendors and retail traders
- Inclusion of local businesses and community organisations
- Mix of established traders and new enterprises

#### 7. Trader Suitability and Professionalism

- Completed application with relevant contact and business information
- References from previous events or organisations
- Professional communication and responsiveness to Council requirements
- Commitment to the Council's values and community standards
- Willingness to comply with event terms and conditions

#### 8. Financial and Compliance Factors

- Ability to pay stall fees within agreed timeframes
- No history of outstanding debts to the Council
- Compliance with business registration and tax obligations
- No relevant convictions or safeguarding concerns

#### 9. Community Benefit

- Contribution to local economic development, with priority being given to Witham, Neighbouring Parishes, District and then surrounding areas
- Support for community groups and charitable causes
- Small or independent business status (where applicable)
- Local employment opportunities

#### **Fees, Cancellations and Termination**

- Stall fees and any additional charges will be set by the Council and published with the event or venue booking information.
- Traders must pay fees by the specified deadline; failure to do so may result in the booking being cancelled and the pitch offered to another trader.

- The Council reserves the right to cancel or amend bookings where necessary (for example, for operational, safety or weather-related reasons). Where the Council cancels a booking, a refund or alternative date will normally be offered where reasonably practicable.
- The council cannot guarantee footfall at any events however they will notify traders if it is a new event so as to manage their expectations.
- The Council may terminate a booking or require a trader to cease trading immediately where there is a serious breach of this Policy, licence conditions, health and safety requirements, or reasonable instructions from Council officers.

### **Licensed Bar Concessions**

Where the Council offers a bar concession at Council events or within Council-managed premises, the bar operator will normally be selected in accordance with this Trader Selection Policy.

In addition to the general criteria set out in this Policy, the following specific requirements will apply to licensed bar concessions:

- The bar operator must hold, or be able to obtain, all necessary licences and authorisations (for example a Premises Licence or Temporary Event Notice, and a Personal Licence where required).
- The bar operator must comply with all conditions attached to any licence, and with any additional requirements reasonably imposed by the Council in relation to safeguarding, public safety, prevention of nuisance, and the protection of children.
- The Council will give particular consideration to the operator's approach to responsible alcohol management, including staff training (for example Challenge 25), refusal logs, incident recording, and arrangements for dealing with intoxicated persons.
- The Council may take into account the operator's past performance at Council events or at other venues, including any complaints, licensing issues or enforcement action brought to the Council's attention.
- Failure to comply with this Policy, licence conditions, or reasonable directions from Council officers may result in the bar concession being withdrawn, either temporarily or permanently, without prejudice to any other action the Council or Licensing Authority may take.

### **Selection Process**

#### **Application and Information Gathering**

- Traders must submit a completed application form providing business details, product/service information, and any supporting documentation
- Applications should be submitted by the advertised deadline
- The Council reserves the right to request additional information or references

#### **Assessment**

- Applications will be assessed against the above criteria by the appropriate Events Manager or Town Clerk
- Decisions will be made based on merit and the suitability of the trader for the specific event
- The Council may undertake additional checks, including verification of food hygiene ratings and insurance details

#### **Communication of Decisions**

- Successful traders will be notified in writing and provided with terms and conditions
- Unsuccessful applicants will be informed of the outcome

- Feedback may be provided to unsuccessful applicants upon request

### **Terms and Conditions**

- All selected traders must agree to and sign the Council's standard terms and conditions for trading
- Terms will cover stall setup times, breakdown arrangements, behaviour expectations, and compliance requirements

### **Special Considerations**

#### **Seasonal Events**

Trader selection for seasonal or one-off events will be based on the specific requirements and nature of that event.

#### **Community and Charitable Organisations**

Community organisations and charities may be considered for free or reduced-rate stall fees as determined by the Council on a case-by-case basis.

#### **Accessibility**

Traders are expected to provide accessible stalls and services where reasonably possible. The Council will work with traders to ensure events are accessible to all members of the community.

#### **Appeals and Reviews**

- Traders who are unsuccessful in their application may request feedback on the decision
- An appeal process is available for traders who believe the selection process was not conducted fairly
- Appeals should be submitted in writing to the Town Clerk within 10 working days of notification
- If the original decision was made by the Events Manager this will be reviewed by the Town Clerk and vice versa. The outcome of this review is final, but this does not preclude the use of the Town Council's Complaints Procedure.

#### **Data Protection and Confidentiality**

- Personal and business information provided by traders will be handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- Information will be used only for event planning and trader selection purposes
- Trader details may be shared with relevant third parties (e.g., insurance providers, environmental health) where necessary for event management

#### **Monitoring and Review**

The Council will regularly review this policy to ensure it remains fit for purpose and reflects best practice in trader selection and event management.

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