

Committee	Assets & Services
Month	February 2022
Report Title	Concession trading on Saffron Walden Common
Report Author	Terry Frostick, Operations Manager
Attachments	None

Purpose of Report

At the December A & S Committee meeting, the following was resolved (recorded under Min Ref A & S 128-21, extract from minutes):

“Committee noted the drafted policy and it was noted it would be effective across all SWTC owned public open space.

It was resolved that the policy should be adopted as presented as an interim document and be reviewed in 12 months’ time with a report on progress, it was further agreed that the policy should restrict concessions to three “pitches” at any one time”

Subsequent to this, it is appropriate to inform Committee on advice obtained from Uttlesford District Council regarding allowing a concession to trade on the Common; this advice impacts on the proposed course of action and a new proposal is made within this report.

Advice Received

In progressing any licence and in seeking advice from UDC (as the local planning authority) regarding any specific permissions which may be required to grant a concession, it became apparent that it was likely the sales pitch will require planning permission as the length of time would exceed 14 days in total in any calendar year; this is because it would be a static pitch allocation for a specific period of time.

Recommendation

Following a review of the bookings on The Common for 2022, it has become apparent that any concession offered would conflict with the events already planned. The advice from UDC is that any licence would probably also require planning permission.

The option of offering a licence to trade was suggested in good faith and Officers have been actively pursued by two interested parties. This pursuance perhaps inadvertently resulted in a premature report being brought before Committee, before Officers had been able to obtain all of the relevant information and guidance as needed to make a fully informed recommendation.

Given the uncertainty regarding planning permission and the number of events for The Common in 2022, Committee is requested to reconsider its position and the decision reached in December 2021 in light of new information and advice.

The revised recommendation is not to proceed with any concession offer on any land owned or managed by Saffron Walden Common until further notice and to therefore hold this matter in abeyance until specific advice is obtained and planning permission is granted (if so required).