



Subject:	Request for External Markets Licences
Date:	9 April 2025
Reporting Officer:	Keith Forster, Director of Economic Development
Contact Officer:	Clodagh Cassin, Markets Development Manager

Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted?

Yes

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No

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If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?

After Committee Decision

After Council Decision

Sometime in the future

Never

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Call-in

Is the decision eligible for Call-in?

Yes

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No

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1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to update members on two requests for market licences; one to operate a new market on a temporary basis in the former Europa bus station building and the other to operate a one-off market as part of the Cathedral Quarter festival in mid-May 2025.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	Members are asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approve a licence for an external market to take place in Europa Bus Station on a monthly basis over the course of the coming months• Approve a licence for a one-off market as part of Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival in May 2025.

3.0	Main Report
3.1	Belfast City Council has exclusive rights to hold markets in Belfast. Anyone wishing to operate a market or car boot sale within Belfast must apply to Council for permission. The Markets Unit has now received two applications for external markets.
3.2	<p><u>Halt Market/Bus Stop Bazaar</u></p> <p>The first request relates to a proposed market in collaboration with the upcoming “Halt” space opening in the former Europa Bus Centre, as part of the Weaver’s Cross rejuvenation.</p>
3.3	The market will be a curated blend of craft, art, music, and food, involving 20-30 traders on a monthly basis. Their aim is to transform the former bus station into a dynamic urban destination that appeals to both tourists and locals alike. By redesigning the area, they hope to create a space where people can eat, socialise, and purchase unique gifts from Northern Ireland’s finest makers and designers. The organisers see this market as an opportunity to collaborate closely with the Halt project to help make it a trendy, in-demand space even before it fully opens.
3.4	The organisers have been working with MRP Investment & Development Ltd, who are leading the redesign of the space due to open in July (this date has to be confirmed), and also working with Translink to ensure this market is in line with the wider regeneration of this area of the city.
3.5	The market will run from 11.30am – 3.30pm, on the last Saturday of month. Organisers are happy to revisit these times so they don’t conflict with St George’s Saturday market. The market will provide an opportunity for local vendors to promote and sell their products to tourists and create an exciting new offering to the local people in the area. They will work with the MRP, Translink, and the local community in the area to ensure the market adds vibrancy and is in line with the aims of the wider Weaver’s Cross project.
3.6	The proposed market has all the necessary approvals in place and they will ensure all food providers have the relevant documentation. They will also ensure any second-hand goods are checked and we will take responsibility to make sure that counterfeit or stolen goods are not sold at the market. There is a tight application process that ensures the right products are sold at each event. The market will be operated under permitted development rights as the market will be operated for less than 14 days in a calendar year. This means that planning permission is not required for the market. An application to use the site on a temporary (5 year) basis for hospitality use to include retail, food and beverage market and outdoor seating and entertainment space has recently been submitted to the Council for determination.

3.7	<p><u>Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival (CQAF) Market</u></p> <p>As part of the 25th Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival (CQAF), event organisers are planning to hold a market within the area on 5 May 2025 from 12-4pm. The market will complement the wider programme of activities over the course of the festival. Organisers currently anticipate that the market will attract around 40 stall holders selling a range of local products.</p>
3.8	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>Both markets will bring a potential income of around £2750 to Belfast City Council.</p>
3.9	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>No specific equality/good relations implications. No negative impact on rural areas.</p>
4.0	Appendices - Documents Attached
	None.