9.3. Expression of Interest – Market Licenses

C352/10/26

Moved Cr Michael Scott seconded Cr Sue Miller

That Council:

1. **Receive and note the contents of the report titled *Expression of Interest - Market Licenses.***
2. **Undertake an Expression of Interest process via Council's My Say platform in accordance with the community engagement plan provided at *Attachment 1* contained in the meeting agenda, to seek proposals by commercial or community third parties, to operate markets at any Council owned location within the Alexandrina Council district.**
3. **Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to make any minor amendments to the community engagement arrangements.**
4. **Receive a further report on close of the Expression of Interest, with all submissions received.**

CARRIED

9.3. Expression of Interest – Market Licenses

Decision Report

Responsible Officer: Tash Hunt (General Manager Corporate)

Report Author: Lisa Hoyle (Manager Property and Procurement Services)

Previous Decisions:

- Rotary Club of Encounter Bay: ACM18185 - May 2018, ACM1542 - February 2015, ACM13433 & ACM13434 - December 2013, ACF10236 - June 2010, ACS06138 & ACS06137 - July 2006
- Cittaslow: ACM21967 - April 2021, ACM19170 - June 2019, ACM18186 - May 2018, ACM17231 - June 2017, ACM16310 - September 2016.

Report Purpose

To consider undertaking an Expression of Interest (EOI) process, to gauge commercial and community interest in operating public markets across the Alexandrina Council district.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. **Receive and note the contents of the report titled *Expression of Interest - Market Licenses.***
2. **Undertake an Expression of Interest process via Council's My Say platform in accordance with the community engagement plan provided at *Attachment 1* of this meeting report, to seek proposals by commercial or community third parties, to operate markets at any Council owned location within the Alexandrina Council district.**
3. **Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to make any minor amendments to the community engagement arrangements.**
4. **Receive a further report on close of the Expression of Interest, with all submissions received.**

Background

At the 21 September 2026 Council Meeting, a deputation was received from the Goolwa Community Association seeking an opportunity to apply to hold the community markets on Jaralde Park Goolwa Wharf, which are currently operated by the Rotary Club of Encounter Bay and Cittaslow Goolwa on alternative Sundays, as below:

- The Rotary Club of Encounter Bay Inc operate the Rotary Markets from Lakala Reserve Port Elliot on some Saturdays and Jaralde Park Goolwa Wharf every second Sunday. The Goolwa markets commenced in 1998 and were originally operated by South Coast Dune Care and assigned to the Rotary Club of Encounter Bay on request from South Coast Dune Care at the 16 December 2013 Council Meeting. The Rotary Club of Goolwa was approached at this time, to gauge their interest in taking on the markets; however, they advised that they did not have the resources required to manage the markets at that time.
- Cittaslow Goolwa markets commenced in 2016 as Farmers Markets on Jaralde Park Goolwa Wharf, on those Sundays that the Rotary Club markets did not trade. In 2021, the market model widened from a Farmers Market to a Produce and Artisans Market, to meet demand for a broader range of products for sale.

Council has also previously provided market licenses in Mount Compass and Strathalbyn for use of open space for public markets, however, these markets are no longer operating.

Discussion

Community markets, whether community-led or commercially-led, provide significant community benefits, such as supporting local businesses and producers, creating opportunities for social connection, attracting visitors, stimulating local economic activity and activating public spaces. It is recognised that markets attract significant numbers of residents and visitors to the region. It is also acknowledged that the ongoing operation of a market requires substantial resourcing, coordination and long-term commitment and, that the revenue generated by community-led Market Operators is generally reinvested into community projects.

With the two existing, four-year market licenses, are due to expire on the 30 June 2027. Noting previous interest in operating markets in this location and other townships, it is proposed that Council seek expressions of interest (EOI) from the broader community to operate markets across the Council district (including Goolwa Wharf) and any other locations where the applicant considers a public market could be achieved.

An EOI would gauge interest from community organisations (incorporated) and commercial operators (with an ABN) to hold markets, with the locations proposed remaining at the discretion of the applicants to put forward. When selecting a location, consideration to whether the site has or needs purpose built, specific infrastructure in place to hold markets forms a consideration.

What an EOI will do is:

- provide equal opportunity for community groups and commercial operators;
- test broader interest in operating markets;
- explore activation beyond current weekend arrangements;
- generate a range of locations and market models that activate the wider district that have not previously been considered;
- identify preferred days, locations and weekday trading gaps;
- resolve concerns regarding a lack of opportunity to operate markets in high profile public spaces;
- secure future market licenses with adequate notice prior to 30 June 2027; and
- resolve future market licenses prior to the 2027 Council Election caretaker period.

The EOI is proposed to be undertaken via Council's My Say platform for a period of four (4) weeks, as provided within the *Community Engagement Plan* at ***Attachment 1*** of this meeting report. Following close of the EOI, a public report would be presented to the December 2026 or January 2027 Council meeting, to consider the submissions received. In those instances, where the outcomes of the EOI identify competing interests for a market in the same location at the same time, the decision is intended to be resolved at this Council meeting.

Market licenses would come into effect from the 1 July 2027 onwards, or earlier, subject to location and decision of Council. Any existing market licenses would remain unaffected during the current term of that licence.

Financial Implications

In accordance with the Alexandrina Council's Adopted Budget / Long Term Financial Plan, the financial implications of adopting this recommendation are considered Low.

Providing an adequate opportunity for interested parties to apply to hold markets within Alexandrina Council will ensure Council has tested the broader market as part of the decision-making process.

In accordance with Council's Annual Fees and Charges, the 2026/27 market fees are $83 per community market (operated by an incorporated association or similar not-for-profit, who provide a service for the benefit of the community) and $67 per five (5) square metre per commercial market (operated by a business).

Risk Implications

In accordance with Alexandrina Council's Risk Assessment Matrix, the risk of adopting this recommendation is considered Low.

Council's Community Land Management Plan 2023-2028 (CLMP) supports community and commercial activities and the grant of licences on community land, where Council is satisfied that the granting of the agreement will deliver a social or economic community and / or commercial benefit. The intention would be to offer market licence terms up to a maximum term of five (5) years (with less being preferrable for any new, untested market operator), to ensure consistency with the CLMP for those submissions that may be lodged for use of community land.

With an intent to restrict future licences to terms no greater than five (5) years, community engagement would not be required, however this would remain at the discretion of Council following review of the submissions received from the EOI process.

It is intended that the submissions received from the EOI process will be the formal applications on which the decision-making process will be made by Council. A further 'tender' procurement process is not proposed to seek further information from applicants. The My Say Expression of Interest Platform will seek and provide opportunity for applicants to lodge all the information required for Council to make an informed decision.

Attachments

Attachment 1 - Community Engagement Plan EOI for Market Licences