

Question 1 relating to Item 6. Bury Indoor Market Hall – Continued Support for Traders

You are applying to have our funding withdrawn in March and state this gives us ample notice to negotiate a new lease with Millgate if we wish to do so. How can we make such a decision and it's a big one when we don't know the future of the indoor market? How can we negotiate when we don't know what's happening? Leaving us until December is not enough time for us.

Sofia Constantinou

The Market Hall feasibility study is almost completed, which identifies and reviews the 6 proposed options. The report will be brought to a future Cabinet for review. The report includes input from multiple stakeholders, including traders, and this will support the next steps for the Market Hall.

The Council have a real commitment to Bury Market as we acknowledge that it is an economic driver for the Town Centre, however the Indoor Market structure and offer needs a careful business planning examination. As stated when we launched, any option for the Market Hall, is likely to take 2-3 + years to develop and deliver, however, we do understand the need for progress given the disruption this unfortunate development of discovering RAAC has caused for both traders and the market team.

Question 2. relating to Item 6. Bury Indoor Market Hall – Continued Support for Traders

I am/was a market hall trader with my husband.

In recent articles in the local newspapers, you have managed to paint yourselves in an extremely benevolent way. Without wanting to sound rude - I would heartily disagree with this version of the facts. The package you put together was not a level playing field for all traders. It mattered not how many leases you held; how big your premises were - you were only entitled to the flat package. Add to this that it then became a lottery as to where you managed to relocate to and thus how much of the package you could access, it went from bad to down-right ugly.

On a personal note my question is - as we relocated ourselves and therefore had limited access to the package - and were in the Millgate and thus could not access the free rent - and were then promised we would receive this once we were back in the hall - now almost a year on and you are no further forward with making any progress or even attempting to get us into the hall - and don't even mention the schemes you've been hatching to knock it down and start again at which point we wouldn't be able to fit in there anyway! It is becoming blatantly clear that very few, if any, of the 49 traders will ever make it back into the hall. So, are you prepared to give those of us who have not had any free rent period our rent-free money in a lump sum? - in our case, based on the rent we paid faithfully every single month when in residence in the hall, that would equate to around £13K?

Karen Simpson

Bury Council have been very supportive of traders under very difficult circumstances. This has been echoed nationally through the National Market Traders Federation (NMTF) and National Association of British Markets (NABMA).

All traders were able to access the support packages and those who chose not to access them, did so of their own accord.

The packages available to traders were the most financially available at the time of the emergency situation and has supported traders to either relocate to new locations or arrange solutions for their own business with additional financial support.

All traders were encouraged to take advantage of the support packages, including the considerable support to operate in the Mill Gate.

The package included providing traders opting to operate in the Mill Gate a fully refurbished, compliant unit, with a further £3,000 to support relocation as well as paying rent comparable to their lease in the Market Hall.

The Market Team throughout this process have offered traders a wide variety of options for traders which has supported their trade under considerable challenges.

Although some traders were offered several options, some decided that solutions offered were not appropriate but were able to access a support fund of £3,500 to allow them to make their own arrangements.

The cost to the Council to support the traders operating in the Mill Gate is more than £268,000.

The decision on the future of the Market Hall has yet to be made, therefore the offer of the rent-free period to return to the Hall remains.

Traders are not being charged rent currently for their paused leases. We are unable to offer the financial equivalent of the value of the rent for traders who opt not to return to the Market Hall.