

Markets and Seafront Service- Request to Increase Headcount.	
Executive Summary	As part of the Council's Leisure and Localities function, the Markets and Seafront Inspector currently undertakes a dual purpose role supporting both market operations and seafront management. This post is presently vacant, and a review of the service has identified that dividing the responsibilities into two distinct roles would provide significant benefits, particularly in relation to recruitment and the overall effectiveness of each function. This action would result in an increase in headcount for the organisation but will not increase the overall budget for the service.
Options considered	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase the headcount of the organisation through the creation of two separate part time posts in the Leisure and Localities team, one Markets Officer and one Seafront Inspector. 2. Retain the current combined role of Markets and Seafront Inspector, not creating two separate posts and maintaining the current headcount of the organisation.
Consultation(s)	No Consultation
Recommendations	Full Council adopts option 1 and agrees to an increase in head count in the Leisure and Localities team to allow for the disaggregation of the Markets and Seafront Inspector roles.
Reasons for recommendations	Establishing two distinct roles would facilitate recruitment into a previously difficult to recruit role and would enable more effective delivery of the Council's corporate plan objectives
Background papers	None

Wards affected	Sheringham North, Beeston & The Runtons, Cromer Town, Mundesley Hickling
Cabinet member(s)	Cllr. Liz Withington
Contact Officer	Colin Brown, Leisure & Locality Services Manager

Links to key documents:	
Corporate Plan:	Developing our communities Investing in local economy & infrastructure
Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)	NA

Council Policies & Strategies	NA
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Corporate Governance:	
Is this a key decision	Yes
Has the public interest test been applied	Is the item exempt, if so, state why.
Details of any previous decision(s) on this matter	NA

1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1. This report seeks to outline a proposal to change the way in which the Council approaches the delivery of its Markets and Seafront Services. The report seeks permission from Full Council to increase the head count in the Leisure & Localities team, by the splitting of the Markets and Foreshore Officer role.

2. Introduction & Background

- 2.1. Since 2022, the Council has employed a Markets and Seafront Inspector (MaSI) responsible for managing the opening and closing of the Council's three markets, Cromer (Friday), Sheringham (Saturday), and Sheringham (Wednesday, in season). The role also provides a visible presence on the seafronts at Cromer, Sheringham, and Mundesley to help maintain a safe and welcoming environment across these resorts.
- 2.2. Up until 2024 the role of Foreshore and Markets officer was occupied by one permanent and one seasonal MaSI. With the removal of weekly beach hut and chalet lets in 2024 it meant that this role could be managed by the permanent MaSI, due to the reduction in work associated with cleaning and managing these weekly hires.
- 2.3. In September 2025 the officer in the role of permanent MaSI left the organisation and the Leisure and Localities Team took time to review the role and the services. In the interim period the operation of the markets on market days has been covered by two current NNDC employees in addition to their normal roles on an ad hoc overtime basis. No specific seafront presence has been in place over the autumn and winter months.
- 2.4. There was a proposal to transfer the management of the markets to the relevant Town Councils or Chambers of Trade in each location. Officers engaged with both organisations, providing detailed information on the financial and operational aspects of running the markets. However, both organisations ultimately declined the opportunity to take on this responsibility
- 2.5. With the option of handing over management of the markets to an external organisation not possible a decision now needs to be made on the correct approach to delivering these services going forward.

3. Proposals and Options

- 3.1. One option would be to keep the MaSI role as it is and recruit into it on a like for like basis. This has been difficult in recent years which is possibly due to the requirement for early starts and split shifts (opening the market early morning and then returning to close it later in the day). The combination of the two roles could impact on the effectiveness of the roles themselves.
- 3.2. The preferred option is for the role to be split into two separate jobs. A unique Seafront Inspector Role and a Market Supervisor Role. Taking the current number of hours and budget, we would seek to split the necessary hours required to open and close the markets over the course of twelve months from the remaining hours which would be allocated to a Seafront Inspector Role. Therefore resulting in no overall increase in Budget.
- 3.3. Having a separate Markets Supervisor creates a consistent point of contact for traders and means that the Seafront Inspector can focus on that specific role. The job description and person specification for both roles will be reviewed to ensure maximum effectiveness for the organisation. The role of the Seafront Inspector would cover a wider remit than the existing, covering all blue flag resort beaches (not just Cromer, Sheringham and Mundesley) and supporting the work of the wider organisations working closely with Property Services, Assets and Environmental Health. There will be a point in the job description of the Seafront Inspector post which require Ad-hoc cover for the Markets Supervisor to allow for holiday and sickness cover.
- 3.4. It is strongly believed that these two distinct roles will be much more appealing than the current joint role and therefore easier to recruit into. The splitting of the roles will also deliver better services to the district's residents and visitors.
- 3.5. The proposal was taken to CLT who were supportive of it, however it is noted that this would mean an increase to headcount within the organisation.

The following options are provided for consideration:

Option 1: Split the two roles, increasing head count but allowing for a more focussed and varied seafront inspector role which would deliver greater outcomes to the Council

Option 2: Maintain the Status Quo: Continue with the current joint Markets and Seafront Inspector role.

4. Corporate Priorities

The markets and seafront inspector role(s) contribute to the following corporate priorities:

4.1. Developing our communities

4.2. Investing in local economy and infrastructure

5. Financial and Resource Implications

- 5.1. Both options can be delivered with no extra cost to the Council.
- 5.2. Option 2 would require a growth in head count but would also create a more resilient service and a Seafront Inspector Role which contributes more to the Council.

Comments from the S151 Officer:

The recommendation does not increase financial strain and provides resilience.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1. The addition a markets supervisor role to a current NNDC employee could, if not managed, lead to issues with respect to the Working Time Regulations 1998.
- 6.2. This would be managed carefully by the Leisure and Locality Team Leader and the members of staff in question, with support from HR.

Comments from the Monitoring Officer

The Monitoring Officer (or member of the Legal team on behalf of the MO) will complete this section. They will outline any legal advice provided.

The report is before Members as it recommends an increase in headcount. However, it is not anticipated that there would be an increased financial strain. If agreed that this role should be disaggregated into two roles, proper arrangements and recruitment processes will need to be undertaken.

7. Risks

- 7.1. NA

8. Net ZeroTarget

- 8.1. Negligible Net Zero considerations

9. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

- 9.1. No known impacts.

10. Community Safety issues

Both options considered above would contribute to the Council's management and monitoring Community Safety issues such as Anti-Social Behaviour particularly in the area of the foreshore area of seaside resorts.

Conclusion and Recommendations

1. The Markets and Seafront Inspector role has been in place since 2022, with a permanent and a seasonal officer in post for most of that time.
2. The seasonal role was removed from the establishment in 2024 following the Council's decision to cease offering weekly beach hut and chalet lets, which reduced the amount of work required by this post quite significantly.
3. The permanent role has continued with the same officer in post until he resigned in late 2025. A subsequent review of the role and these two elements of the Leisure Service was undertaken to explore options.
4. Officers explored the appetite of the Town Councils and other local organisations taking the markets element on, but this was ruled out.
5. It is believed that to achieve the best outcomes for the Council the role should be split once again to allow for separate Markets Supervisors and a Seafront Inspector.

It is **recommended** that an increase to headcount is agreed to allow for the roles to be separated, making managing both elements easier and providing the opportunity to improve the outcomes which the Seafront Inspector can deliver for the organisation.