

To ratify the appointment of Maku Bakery at Trackside

Report to: Services Committee

Date of Report: 09.10.26

Officer Writing the Report: Town Clerk / RFO

Pursuant to:

Services Committee 24 September – minute number 66/26/27.

Purpose of Report:

To provide Members with an update on the process of appointing a new concessionaire.

Officers Recommendations

Members are asked to ratify the appointment.

Report Summary

As instructed by the Town Council, a clear and transparent procurement exercise was undertaken to appoint a new concessionaire following the resignation of Trackside Café, effective from 31 October.

The Town Council received five applications and shortlisted five candidates for interview with four attending. Following a comprehensive assessment process, the interview panel concluded that Maku Bakery presented a distinctive and community-focused proposal, with strong potential for sustainable growth at an appropriate pace.

The proposed operating hours will be broadly similar to the current provision:

- **Monday to Friday:** 7:15am to 2:00pm
- **Saturday:** Keen to open, with opening hours to be reviewed in line with train timetables and periods of increased customer demand.
- **Sunday:** A longer-term ambition is to open on Sundays.
- **Official opening:** End of November, first week of December

Maku Bakery advised that staffing resilience would be supported through the established business operated by her partner, which has sufficient capacity to provide additional personnel when required. Team members would therefore be available to support operations at Maku Bakery during periods of absence or increased demand.

In relation to the bakery element of the business, Maku Bakery has identified additional support from experienced contacts who would be able to assist when required. Furthermore, some menu items will be prepared and frozen in advance, with a tall freezer located within the storeroom, similar to the arrangement used by the previous concessionaire.

Given the proposed operating hours and the requirements associated with fresh baking, it is anticipated that some menu items may not be available every day. The panel acknowledged this as a reasonable and practical aspect of the business model.

The panel was satisfied with the responses provided during the interview process and is content to proceed with the appointment of Maku Bakery.

Next Steps

- The Town Clerk is currently preparing the concession agreement.
- Trackside Café is awaiting confirmation from the coffee machine supplier regarding collection arrangements. As collections are not undertaken at weekends, there is a possibility that the café may cease trading on 29 or 30 October, slightly earlier than the previously agreed date of 31 October.
- Following vacation of the premises, the Service Delivery Team will undertake a programme of maintenance improvements, and the Town Council's electrical contractor will complete the necessary electrical works.
- Maku Bakery has expressed a desire to refresh the internal appearance of the café, including redecorating selected walls and reviewing the layout and presentation of tables and seating.
- As a result, the waiting and café area will see some changes from its current appearance, creating a refreshed and welcoming environment for customers.

Signature of Officer:

Town Clerk / RFO