

## RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No. 21

meeting date: 7 SEPTEMBER 2010  
title: CLITHEROE FINE FOOD AND CRAFT STREET MARKET  
submitted by: DIRECTOR OF COMMERCIAL SERVICES  
principal author: REBECCA WEBSTER – TOURISM & ARTS OFFICER

### 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide members with a follow-up report about Clitheroe's recent street market.
- 1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:
  - Council Ambitions – This report contributes to making sure that the council provides efficient services, to protect and enhance the existing environmental quality of our area and improving access for all.
  - Community Objectives – This report relates to the following priorities outlined in the community strategy: encouraging access for all, community cohesion, culture and tourism.
  - Corporate Priorities – To provide services for people where they live, improve access to services, promote the exceptional environment of area and lifestyle.
  - Other Considerations – None.

### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 A decision item was taken to Community Committee on 9 March 2010 reporting on the initial plans to develop Clitheroe as Lancashire's Food Town.
- 2.2 It was agreed at this meeting that these plans should be taken forward. The plans included the organisation of a street market in Clitheroe that will major on food and to encourage local producers to attend in order to increase the potential and promotion of Clitheroe.
- 2.3 The street market would also be the event that would formally establish Clitheroe as Lancashire's Food Town.
- 2.4 Following this report a meeting was convened between Ribble Valley Borough Council Officers from the Community Development and Regeneration Departments, the Leader of the Council and the Clitheroe Chamber of Trade and Commerce Committee to discuss how the plans for a street market could be realised.
- 2.5 Several meetings between the two organisations followed in order to establish roles and responsibilities from both parties, the financial commitment, operational and management control, promotional requirements and achievable size and scale of the street market as a result of the available resources.

- 2.6 It was later agreed following a detailed feasibility study, conducted by the Chamber representatives, that subject to identifying a financial budget for the event, the Clitheroe Chamber of Trade would become the overall event organisers and oversee all aspects of planning, event management, PR and press, VIP and on the day site management of the event, whilst Ribble Valley Borough Council would be responsible for organising the road closure, electricity, H&S Public Liability, organising the market stalls and supporting the PR and marketing activity.
- 2.7 As RVBC could not directly allocate a financial budget to support this event from existing budgets, the Chamber of Trade submitted a funding bid to the Local Strategic Partnership's Performance Reward Grant and Lancashire County Development Ltd's Revitalising Town Centre's Project for the projected cost of £12,853, to cover all associated financial costs of the event.
- 2.8 The funding application bid was later approved, allowing the organisation of the market to go ahead.
- 2.9 Several organisational and H&S meetings took place in the months leading up to the event when it became clear that a considerable amount of officer time was required to assist the Chamber, who were relatively new at organising such a large event, in their preparations and to make sure the event went ahead smoothly and safely.
- 2.10 As the Council does not have a designated events team it fell upon Chris Hughes, Community Development Manager, Rebecca Webster, Tourism & Arts Officer, Melissa Watts, Regeneration Projects Officer and Syd Chamley, Electrical Service Engineer to support the Chamber in various aspects of the organisation, all of whom were then required to work on the day of the event.
- 2.11 The pre-event organisation and on the day organisation was a massive undertaking. Beginning at 4am officers were involved in ensuring the safe closure of Castle Street to enable market stall company to arrive and set up the stalls in a safe and traffic free environment, installing the electrical supply for the stalls, assisting in the smooth and safe arrival of stalls and vehicles, marshalling on the day, PR activity on the day, even litter picking the site and then later the take down of all the equipment and infrastructure enabling Castle Street to reopen by the designated time.
- 2.12 The event itself was an overwhelming success. All stalls set up by 9am and visitors began to arrive. By 11am Castle Street had filled with crowds and the stalls were selling their goods fast. The peak period was at 2pm with some stalls selling out of the goods by that time. The event closed at 5pm.
- 2.13 A VIP event was arranged by the Chamber of Trade, in association with RVBC at 12noon to thank all sponsors and supporters of the event, this was very well attended. There was also public launch hosted by Nigel Haworth to officially open the event at 12.30. At 1pm Nigel then went down to the Clitheroe market to do a cookery demonstration there followed by further demonstrations throughout the afternoon at The Grand Venue.
- 2.14 Clitheroe Castle Museum had also organised a Medieval Re-enactment weekend from 9am-5pm, inviting the Freemen of Gwent to attend, demonstrating the weaponry, clothing and uniform of the medieval era, with a combat event at 3pm. This took place over both Saturday and Sunday, both days reporting high numbers of visitors.

### 3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 Feedback from the stallholders was overwhelmingly positive. Many comments were received by the Chamber of Trade, the following are just a few examples include:
- "Thank you for such a great event on last Saturday at the Clitheroe Street Market. It was a brilliant event from a local makers perspective and the people I have talked to who were visiting raved about it"
  - "Our staff wanted to man the stall but we think they were underestimating how busy the Inn would be... You have certainly raised the profile of Clitheroe and the traders should be incredibly proud of your achievements"
  - "A brilliant day had by all, would love to get involved again next year. Great response to the bread competition and demo"
  - The market was very busy and the sun was shining! Both our stand and shop did very well – the stall was a sell out and we will be back next year!"
- 3.2 Further anecdotal feedback tells us that many of the street market stalls sold out of their produce or had a very profitable day, with the majority of them keen to come to another event in the future. Several of the shops on Castle Street and indeed, on the other shopping streets in Clitheroe enjoyed a record breaking days in sales and numbers of visitors coming into their stores. The eateries in Clitheroe have also reported that they were packed out all day. Only a couple of shops on Castle Street itself reported that it was quieter day than a normal Saturday because of the stalls in the way. Clitheroe Market was also very busy with new visitors exploring their stalls.
- 3.3 Stewards who attended the road closure near castle gate, also reported that many out of town visitors were asking for directions to the traditional market, the Castle and other shopping areas of the town, some even to avoid walking through the crowds on Castle Street. Some stallholders confirmed that many of their customers were from further afield.

### 4 ISSUES

- 4.1 Whilst the event was deemed hugely successful as it attracted large crowds and potentially had a positive effect on the profile of Clitheroe, it is clear that due to the size and layout of Castle Street, the street market has already outgrown this location. Should the event take place again a larger/alternative site would be necessary.
- 4.2 The Clitheroe Chamber of Trade and Commerce were the designated organisers of this event however it is clear that they do not have the full capacity to organise an event of this scale without the support of RVBC.
- 4.3 Considerable RVBC Officer time was taken to organise and support this event, with substantial physical support required on the day.
- 4.4 RVBC does not have an events department nor the financial resources to organise events therefore, should further events of this nature be desired, it must be realised that existing staff are having to postpone their normal duties in order to accommodate the additional workload.
- 4.5 Working on events generally means working weekends and longer hours therefore staff are accruing lieu time and/or overtime pay.

- 4.6 This one-day event cost in the region of £13,000 to put on. Whilst some of these costs were the set up costs and could possibly be reduced for a future event, it gives an indication of the revenue support required to put on such an event. The sales of the market stalls provided an income but it was not enough to provide a self-sustaining event.
- 4.7 RVBC officers will arrange a wider partnership meeting in September inviting key stakeholders to ascertain the potential for future development of Clitheroe as a food town and of Ribble Valley as a food destination.

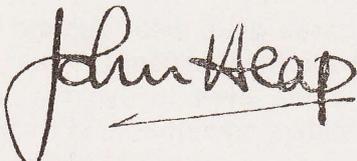
## 5 RISK ASSESSMENT

The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- Resources – Future events are subject to an increase in officer time and budgetary constraints to make it happen.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – A new location would be required to host a large scale event in Clitheroe.
- Political – Opportunity to actively engage with the community; increase the profile and inward economy for Clitheroe and Ribble Valley businesses. Consideration should be made on how to support other towns in Ribble Valley.
- Reputation – Positive involvement of the council in high profile events, encouraging the use of historic and local assets in the town of Clitheroe. Develop Clitheroe as Lancashire's Food Town.

## 6 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE:

Notes the contents of the report.



**JOHN C HEAP**  
**DIRECTOR OF COMMERCIAL SERVICES**

For further information, please contact Rebecca Webster Tel: 01200 414496