

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO HEALTH & HOUSING COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No. 9

meeting date: THURSDAY, 16 JANUARY 2020
title: CHRISTMAS MARKET
submitted by: MARSHAL SCOTT – CHIEF EXECUTIVE
principal author: HEATHER BARTON – HEAD OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To provide an overview on the Christmas Market activities undertaken in 2019 and the proposal for 2020.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Community Objectives – To promote and support health, environmental, economic and social wellbeing of people who live, work and visit Ribble Valley.
- Corporate Priorities – To provide quality services efficiently and effectively.
- Other Considerations – None.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 The Council has now delivered Christmas Markets for over four years. The Council objectives in doing so were as follows:

1. Bring visitors from outside the district.
2. Encourage visitors to spend money in the borough.
3. To provide value to community effort.
4. The offer of an opportunity over time to generate an income stream.

2.2 Christmas markets are clearly perceived by visitors as bringing something different to a typical market shopping trip.

2.3 The 2019 Christmas markets were seen as a success due to the high capacity of footfall generated during the Christmas period. An income of £787 was generated to the Council as a result of the event being hosted.

2.4 It was noted that traders and visitors alike enjoyed the festive atmosphere with traders mentioning that sales for the fourth year were up.

2.5 Loyalty is also a significant factor in building and expanding Christmas markets. It was noted that people said they had visited the first Christmas market and they came back because of the excellent benefits it brought.

2.6 We are now being approached by big named traders to support our Christmas markets and therefore we have to make a commitment to the Christmas markets early. There are a number of must have features to make the Christmas markets successful. These being:

- Authenticity – most of the visitors feel the market is 'original'

- Quality hot food and beverages – environmental health inspect to ensure all traders are meeting food hygiene standards
- Showcase of local products and talent – people recognise that Christmas shopping is their spending high point of the year. They are likely to believe that by supporting a local Christmas market they are buying locally made products and boosting the local economy. As part of the appeal is getting a good balance as to the locally sourced quirky goods.
- Focal points – the Christmas markets hanker after a feature to make it the heart of the market. Whilst Clitheroe Market has a heritage and architectural backdrop from the castle, it is believed that there is a need for a focal point for people to come. Over the past 2 years there has been a large number of school children and young people performing, and last year there was the entertainment from a paid for organ.
- Good transport and parking – liaison will be undertaken with the Head of Engineering Services regarding the offer of Christmas parking

3 ISSUES

- 3.1 The market was seen as an opportunity for Clitheroe to attract new tourism and visitors, high spend shoppers and increased visits during the crucial trading periods.
- 3.2 The management of the event will fall to the Council to its Market Superintendent.
- 3.3 The Christmas Markets are making a significant contribution to the winter economy in three ways.
1. They have become important generators of retail turnover to the market at the time of year when we would lose visitors and trade would be out of town.
 2. They bring in new footfall into market, for example customer surveys have suggested that there is a regrowth in people and young students, family groups and work colleague groups are supportive of the Christmas markets.
 3. The well managed coordination of the Christmas Market brings a commercial benefit right across the whole town, not just the market themselves.
- 3.4 It is hoped that the Christmas market will coincide with the Santa dash which typically occurs on the first Saturday in December, which is hosted by the Chamber of Trade and also the Town Council event.
- 3.5 It is suggested that the Head of Environmental Health Services sends out application forms in the late Summer. It is also anticipated that a large amount of advertisement will go out particularly on Facebook, local magazines and that an anchorage in the form of a focal attraction is created.
- 3.6 It is anticipated that the Christmas light switch on would occur at 3pm on the first day of trading as it has been historically undertaken. It is hoped that a local celebrity or the Mayor would undertake the role of switching on the lights. The focal point may be to pay someone to come and switch on, however this would be with the approval of Committee at a later date.

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- Resources – No implications identified.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – No implications identified.
- Political – The decision reflects the Council's intention to maintain a vibrant market.
- Reputation – This document reflects the Council's ability to meet change in circumstances to maintain efficient, effective services.
- Equality & Diversity – No implications identified.

5 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

- 5.1 Provisionally approve the dates of 5, 13, 20 December 2020 running from 9am to 4pm.
- 5.2 Recognise the success of Christmas 2019 and continue this into the financial year.

HEATHER BARTON
HEAD OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

MARSHAL SCOTT
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

BACKGROUND PAPERS

(If any)

For further information please ask for Heather Barton, extension 4466.

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