

## RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No. 9

meeting date: 15 MARCH 2011  
title: FOOD FESTIVAL  
submitted by: JOHN C HEAP, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES  
principal author: CHRIS HUGHES, HEAD OF CULTURAL & LEISURE SERVICES

### 1 PURPOSE

1.1 To advise members on preparations for this year's event, and to ask for endorsement of the Council's role in supporting it.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions/priorities:

**Principle aim** – to be a well-managed Council, providing efficient and responsive services based on identified customer needs and, more specifically:

- to encourage economic activity
- to support the regeneration of Clitheroe as a sustainable service centre

### 2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Last year saw the development of the first Clitheroe Street Market as a platform to showcase food and drink within the Ribble Valley.

2.2 The event was organised by a committee made up from Council representatives, local organisations, stakeholders and regional agencies, with Clitheroe Chamber of Trade acting as co-ordinators of the day.

2.3 The event was focussed on Castle Street, and attracted an estimated ten thousand people to Clitheroe over the course of the day. The event was supplemented with activities at the castle, market and The Grand.

2.4 Although blessed with extremely good weather, overall it was deemed a great success and something that should be built on for future years.

2.5 Funding for the event was provided from Revitalising Market Towns funding, Performance Reward Grant, and income from stall holders.

2.6 An event co-ordinator was appointed and employed through the Chamber of Trade.

2.7 The Council supported the event through the provision of event planning, health & safety, road closures and financial management.

2.8 The overwhelming conclusion from all concerned was that a food festival should be developed into a regular showcase event, but recognised that a greater management capacity would be required for what is likely to be a growing event.

### 3 CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 Given the time needed to organise the event, it was concluded that some time in August would give sufficient lead in time. It was also felt that, if there were other complementary events happening at the same time, it would make sense to take advantage of any such opportunities. It was, therefore, agreed that Saturday 13 August 2011 would work well, being the weekend of the Rock concert and Last Night of the Proms.
- 3.2 In response to the issues from last year's event, the organising committee has been working on the following:
- Seeking advice from other food festivals around the country on how to grow the event into something of regional significance, and to ensure long term sustainability.
  - Identifying management structures for future events. Work is currently being carried out to set up a Company Ltd by Guarantee to act as the co-ordinating body for future festivals.
  - Venues – it was agreed that current activity has already outgrown Castle Street as the main venue. Clitheroe Market will act as host for this year, along with other future venues, depending on how quickly the festival grows.
  - Sustainability. The identification of future grant aid, sponsorship and income streams to develop an independent, sustainable product.

### 4 ISSUES

- 4.1 Ideally, the new structure would have been in place for this new event. Unfortunately, given the timescale, this is probably not achievable.
- 4.2 Discussions have, therefore, taken place to explore interim arrangements to ensure the success of this year's festival. Although the working group is still active, the Chamber of Trade have concluded that they do not have the capacity to continue with event co-ordination, given that it is likely to have grown from last year.
- 4.3 After initial discussions with the Leader and Chief Executive, the Council's Corporate Management Team concluded that the Council would be best placed to act in an enabling role to deliver the transition.
- 4.4 In terms of specific responsibilities for this year's event, this would include:
- Providing the market as the main festival site
  - Providing event management/health & safety support
  - Providing financial management
  - Responsibility for contracting and managing dedicated event management support

### 5 RISK MANAGEMENT

Approval of this report may have the following implications:

- **Resources** – funding for this year's festival will come from the same sources as last year, ie Performance Reward Grant, Revitalising Market Towns, and stall income. Confirmation of such funds is expected shortly. It is also hoped that

this year's event will attract commercial sponsorship, although this is likely to be limited, owing to the late start in organising the event. There has been no commitment from the Council in terms of cash, although our in-kind contribution will be significant. The key message to the organising committee will be that the event must run within the resources available.

- **Technical/Legal** – there will be a number of technical matters to deal with, such as road closures etc, and a clear understanding of the Council's responsibility, and when and how such a responsibility is transferred to the new operating company.
- **Political** – it has been made clear that this is not a Council event, and our role is both transitional and in support of the wider steering group.
- **Reputation** – if the festival is to grow into one of regional significance, then it is important that we ensure, where possible, that the event provides a platform for this to occur.

6 **RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE**

Notes the contents of the report, and endorses the Council's role in facilitating the provision of the Clitheroe Food Festival for 2011.

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DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

For further information, please ask for Chris Hughes 01200 414479