

**RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT TO HEALTH & HOUSING COMMITTEE**

DECISION

Agenda Item No. 12

meeting date: THURSDAY, 1 SEPTEMBER 2016
title: CHRISTMAS MARKET 2016
submitted by: MARSHAL SCOTT - CHIEF EXECUTIVE
principal author: HEATHER COAR - HEAD OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

1 PURPOSE

1.1 This report is an overview on the Christmas activities promoted by the Council's market including the Christmas market proposal, the lighting scheme, events and integrated communications campaign.

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 the Ribble Valley.
- Corporate Priorities – To provide quality services efficiently and effectively.
- Other Considerations – None.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Traditionally Clitheroe market had a Christmas tree within the bullring. Current financial pressures are key in assessing the market's performance in both expenditure and income generation. The decision to hold a Christmas market encourages not only income to the Council, to the stallholders, to the cabin holders and most importantly to the retail establishments within Clitheroe.

2.2 The overall strategy for the market is to drive economic growth and improve on its economic performance. There are three elements to the Council's activity:

- The possibility that the market can offer and add to the Christmas retail mix.
- It incorporates the festive calendars of the Chamber of Trade and Town Council.
- It is co-ordinated to support key attractions and promotes Clitheroe as a destination to shop and visit at Christmas.

2.3 The market has the opportunity for Clitheroe to attract new tourism and visitors, high spending shoppers and increase visits during the crucial trading period.

2.4 The mix of events and activities across the period including the free Christmas light switch-on and the markets ensure that there is a broad range of activities for everyone in Clitheroe at Christmas.

3 ISSUES

3.1 The main audience to the campaign are families, couples and people interested in short break and Christmas shopping in Clitheroe with the objectives of the campaign to:

- showcase what Clitheroe has to offer;

- drive visitors to plan a visit;
 - highlight the Christmas offerings and events in Clitheroe, posting the town as a unique Christmas shopping experience;
 - motivate planning and booking of overnight stays/breaks over the festive season;
 - encourage visitors to come to Clitheroe and incorporate it into also using the public transport facilities that link us to Manchester and York.
- 3.2 All elements of the campaign are supported by our Press Officer in a drive to publicise it locally and nationally within the media.
- 3.3 The Council and its key partners continue to provide a solid platform on which the businesses and retail sector can build and deliver a positive festive experience for residents and visitors alike across the Christmas period, driving economic growth and enhancing the visitor offer in the town to support the tourism agenda.
- 3.4 In addition to the provision of illuminated street and tree decoration across the town, there will be an official Christmas light switch-on.
- 3.5 The Christmas light switch-on event will be the opportunity to launch the festive period to a live audience. At this time we are looking to have investment from local celebrities; however this is yet to be confirmed.
- 3.6 Historically the market has operated alone in all Christmas activities. There is a possibility of having up to 30 traders using the existing market stalls within the bullring; the main focal point being the Christmas tree decorated within the centre of the bullring. There is also the possibility of having up to 6 external and extra pitches for use by traders with trailers or vehicles.
- 3.7 The Council and the market traders are working to extend the retail offer around the market area as a continued commitment to enhance the festive atmosphere for visitors and residents allowing the opportunity to soak up the sights, smells and sounds of Clitheroe.
- 3.8 A steering group committee has been set up consisting of Council departments and also market traders who will be able to offer carefully handpicked traders an opportunity to showcase their products.
- 3.9 Clitheroe market is a traditional, distinctive British market and we love to highlight British business, with the majority of businesses being from the Ribble Valley and the surrounding area. We believe Clitheroe to be a unique opportunity for the local quality products to be showcased at the Christmas market.
- 3.10 The Christmas light switch-on will be an opportunity to promote traders with the opportunity to showcase themselves at the event. We envisage that local schools will be Carol singing at this light switch-on and therefore we would like to create the potential for a market to grow with Clitheroe for the four consecutive Saturday's prior to Christmas - 26 November; 3 December; 10 December and 17 December 2016.
- 3.11 We would like Clitheroe to become a recognised unique location, offering high quality activities and a bustling atmosphere. Will allow visitors a wonderful opportunity to buy Christmas gifts, decorations and festive food that can be found in abundance.
- 3.12 Management of the event will fall to the Council through its Market Superintendent with enhanced litter picking and refuse collection. There is a suggestion that two Market Superintendents will be required on all the Saturdays that these Christmas markets will be in operation to ensure that enough support is given to the traders and market visitors.

- 3.13 There will be a small charge of £50 to each cabin holder for making the provision of the Christmas lights and the Christmas tree; this will be to cover the costs of the extra resources required during this festive period.
- 3.14 Whilst the imposition of charging for the Christmas lights is not meant as an income generation method, it does enable the Council to recover costs incurred during this period.
- 3.15 The proposed charge for a stall and a pitch is £150 including VAT per unit. The payment must be received prior to the event. All traders must be willing to commit themselves for the four weekends commencing 26 November 2016. Charity stalls will receive a 10% discount off the total stall fee being £135 including VAT but this will be kept to a minimum number. It would be suggested that the stalls and pitches fee is non-refundable so as to ensure maximum occupancy.
- 3.16 The additional costs of the 2016 enhanced Christmas decorations and hosting four Saturday Christmas markets are estimated at £4,895. It is planned to recover these costs through the income from stalls and pitches and enhanced decorations contributions from cabin holders. 85% take up of stalls and pitches and cabin holder contributions will cover these costs. Part of the existing Clitheroe Market revenue budget could support any minor deficit, if necessary.

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

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

- Resources – None.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – None.
- Political – This 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 and effective services.
- Equality & Diversity – N/A.

5 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

- 5.1 Approve the recommendation of a non-refundable fee of £150 including VAT for a pitch or stall during the festive period upon the market.
- 5.2 Agree a 10% discount to charity stall holders (£135 including VAT).
- 5.3 Show commitment to the Christmas market and the retail trade within this area during the festive period 2016.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS - None.

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