

# Economic Growth Scrutiny Panel

Agenda Item:

**A.3**

Meeting Date: 20<sup>th</sup> August 2020  
 Portfolio: Health and Wellbeing  
 Key Decision: N/A  
 Within Policy and Budget Framework: Yes  
 Public / Private: Public

Title: WINTER EVENTS  
 Report of: Deputy Chief Executive  
 Report Number: CS.23/20

**Purpose / Summary:** The purpose of this report is to update the Panel on the Winter Events programme 2020/2021 and to detail the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic.

**Recommendations:** The Panel is invited to make comments or suggestions that may assist officers in future event programming.

## Tracking

Executive:	
Scrutiny:	
Council:	

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1** The City Council delivers and manages events through the winter as part of the annual events programme. The events scheduled for the winter of 2020/2021 were:
- Carlisle Fire show in Bitts Park.
  - Carlisle Light Switch On, Carlisle City Centre.
  - Carlisle Christmas Market.
  - City of Lights (various locations, in conjunction with Cumbria County Council).
- 1.2** Events in the City Centre provide an economic boost by increasing footfall and visitor spend.
- 1.3** The Covid-19 pandemic has already led to the cancellation of all events up until the end of June including:
- Easter Market, Carlisle City Centre.
  - Upperby Gala, Hammonds Pond.
  - Armed Forces Day
  - Bitts Park Open Air concerts
- 1.4** Since July government guidance has allowed outdoor markets to operate and the monthly Farmers Market was held in July and August.
- 1.5** In late August the International Market is scheduled to go ahead in the City Centre.

## **2. IMPACT OF COVID 19 ON THE WINTER EVENTS SCHEDULE 2020/2021**

- 2.1** The winter events schedule has been assessed in relation to the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic.
- 2.2** Following the review of the events on the schedule:
- The 2020 Carlisle Fireshow has been cancelled.
  - The 2020 Carlisle Christmas lights switch on has been cancelled.
- 2.4** It is not considered possible to organise these two events in a Covid secure way under current Government guidance due:
- Compromising social distancing.
  - Putting pressure on the transport network.
  - Putting pressure on emergency services.
- Proceeding with organising the event would commit the Council to significant financial liabilities.

### **3. IMPACT OF CITY OF LIGHTS 2020**

- 3.1 A report was commissioned on the impact of the City of Lights events in 2020. The report is attached as an addendum and the Executive Summary outlined below:
- The inaugural City of Lights event in Carlisle in February 2020 provided a significant draw and motivation for people to visit the city. The event was instrumental in bringing people into the city, both locals and visitors from further afield.
  - The event had a widespread appeal – across all age groups, and party types (couples, families, friends) as well as attracting people from outside of the city (27%). The event was extremely well received, with high satisfaction rates across all aspects, and very high percentages of people who would return to another, similar event, and recommend the event to others.
  - Economic impact of the event is estimated at just over £166,000, with a good return on investment of over £6 generated for the local economy for every pound spent on the event.
  - In addition to the economic benefits, the event also played a part in changing perceptions of the city – people described it as ‘modern’ and ‘exciting’, saying it gave them a sense of pride in the city, and changed the way they viewed the cathedral.
  - Improved marketing, publicity and promotion would be recommended to help improve awareness of, and participation in, any future events.

### **4. CITY OF LIGHTS 2021**

- 4.1 City of Lights 2021 is proposed to take place on 11, 12 and 13 February 2021. The forthcoming event will be held outdoors and tickets will be limited to 200 per session to allow for social distancing. Other mitigating factors such as face coverings may be encouraged. The event will be subject to the latest government guidance. The proposal for the 2021 event is to have two outdoor shows using either the Cathedral or Castle, or a combination of both venues. The reason for holding the event outdoors is that the risk of transmission will be significantly reduced. Cumbria County Council will once again contribute to the event by providing exterior lighting on key buildings in the city.

### **5. CHRISTMAS MARKET 2020**

- 5.1 The Christmas Market is proposed to be held in Carlisle City Centre from 26 November until 20 December. Outdoor markets were one of the first sectors to be

able to re-open post lockdown. This is because the risk of transmission of significantly reduced outdoors. The aim of the market is to encourage visitors into the City Centre, increase dwell time and give visitors another reason to use the City Centre. The event management plan will include measures to make the event as safe as possible with measures relevant to government guidance at the time of the event.

## **6. CONTRIBUTION TO THE CARLISLE PLAN PRIORITIES**

### **6.1**

**Contact Officer:**

Paul Walker

**Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government Act 1972 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers:**

- None

#### **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS:**

**LEGAL –**

**PROPERTY SERVICES -**

**FINANCE –**

**EQUALITY –**

**INFORMATION GOVERNANCE –**