

Festive cheer: The local impact of Christmas markets

Purpose of report

For information and discussion.

Summary

The Board approved a research publication into Christmas markets at its last meeting. This paper sets out the specification for the work and the successful supplier.

Recommendation

That the members of the Culture, Tourism and Sport board note the progress and provide a steer on direction.

Actions

Officers to progress as directed.

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Background

1. Christmas markets have become an established feature of the UK festive period. They can attract jobs, activities and visitors into local economies at a time when the usual visitor economy is less active.
2. The Board has said that it wishes to capture some of the key benefits of these markets in a short case-study publication, including:
 - 2.1. the amount of income generated for the area;
 - 2.2. the number of extra visitors;
 - 2.3. the number of jobs (permanent and temporary);
 - 2.4. an extrapolated figure for the economic contribution of festive markets in England and Wales.
3. Working with the National Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA), and with the support of the LGA, the supplier will identify ten case study markets in England and Wales to explore and evidence the findings of the research.
4. These case studies will need to reflect the diversity of markets, including their size, location in urban or rural settings, any thematic elements (German, local, Victorian etc). The case studies will be agreed with the LGA before being developed in depth.
5. The findings of the work will be used to produce a short publication for the LGA website. In addition to the case studies, it will contain advice on setting up and running markets, including managing any risks, such as safety. This is in addition to the figures on the national economic benefit of Christmas markets.
6. The work will also be used to produce a press release in mid-December, drawing attention to Christmas markets as visitor attractions.
7. The full document will be published in January. This will help those authorities considering the establishment of, or improvement of, Christmas markets in 2018.

The supplier

8. The specification was put out to tender and three bids were assessed. The successful supplier is NABMA Market Place. Market Place was an independent consultancy company that is now partnered with NABMA to provide advice to NABMA members on operating markets.

9. Since 2006 Market Place has been conducting Economic Surveys of its Markets; developing and identifying economic benefits, economic drivers in terms of tourism, social, leisure as well as retail footfall. It has gathered considerable research material which can demonstrate incremental growth patterns, provide information which enables continual improvements and identify pit falls and negatives outcomes.
10. Allan Hartwell founder Director of Market Place was also responsible for organising with Bath and North-East Somerset District Council the first Christmas Market in Bath and working alongside the Business Association and Galway City Council for the first Christmas Market in the City of Galway.
11. NABMA Market Place have undertaken strategic reviews of local markets for a number of councils, including Bassetlaw, Rugby, Wakefield, and Birmingham. They will use these insights to help develop the publication.

Implications for Wales

12. The publication will be available to Welsh authorities and we expect to include a Welsh market as a case study.

Financial Implications

13. This work is funded through the LGA policy budget.

Next steps

14. The supplier is working with NABMA and the LGA to identify suitable case study markets. These will have been contacted and case studies drafted by 23 November.
15. The final draft of the document will be submitted on 11 December, to allow for the LGA and NABMA press teams to develop the findings into a press release.
16. The fully designed publication will be published in mid-January.