

Meeting: Economic Prosperity Sub-Committee

Date: 11 November 2015

Title: Winter Festival

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Service:	Democratic Services	
Directorate:	Law and Governance	
Wards affected:	All	

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to set out the background and context to this evening's scrutiny exercise to begin to examine the impact of the Council's Winter Festival on the economies of the borough's town centres.

2. Recommendations

The sub-committee is asked to

- a) note details of the events planned as part of the Council's Winter Festival, the anticipated benefits of the Festival and how these will be measured and assessed; and
- b) consider undertaking a scrutiny exercise to evaluate the effectiveness of the Winter Festival, in particular the Christmas markets, in terms of supporting the town centre economies.

3. Details

The sub-committee has responsibility to review and scrutinise matters in relation to economic development, planning, business and enterprise, the transport network, highways and road safety, town centres, inward investment and tourism.

Following consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chair of the sub-committee and relevant officers it is proposed that the sub-committee undertake an exercise to examine the impact of the Council's Winter Festival on the town centre economies. In particular the:

Wallsend Christmas Market on 20-21 November 2015
Tynemouth Christmas Festival on 28-29 November 2015
St Nicholas Festival, Whitley Bay on 4-5 December 2015 and
North Shields Victorian Christmas Market on 12-13 December 2015.

It is envisaged that this exercise will be in the form of three stages.

First, Peter Warne, Tourism and Events Development Manager, has been invited to attend this evening's meeting to provide an introductory briefing on what events are planned as part of the Winter Festival, what the anticipated benefits are and how this will be measured and assessed.

The Winter Festival programme is available on the Council's website at:

http://issuu.com/visitnorthtyneside/docs/winter_festival_2015?e=12300495/30798168

and further details are available at:

<http://www.visitnorthtyneside.com/whats-on/winter-festival>

Following this meeting members of the sub-committee are invited to attend the events to:

- a) observe and experience for themselves the markets and associated activities;
- b) speak to those involved, including Council officials, ward councillors, traders, residents, visitors and local businesses to seek their views on the impact of the events; and
- c) obtain evidence as to the success of the markets in terms of supporting the town centre economies.

The sub-committee will wish to consider whether they wish to undertake this task, and if so how they will approach it.

Finally, it is proposed that the sub-committee evaluate the effectiveness of the Winter Festival at its meeting on Tuesday 9 February 2016 based on:-

- a) a report from relevant officers;
- b) feedback from interested parties, for example representatives from the Chambers of Trade; and
- c) members own experiences and evidence obtained during the events.

The evaluation may then lead to the sub-committee making recommendations on how the Festival might be developed in the future.

4. Background Documents

The following background documents have been used in the compilation of this report and available from the author:

- Economic Prosperity Sub-Committee Work Programme 2015-16
- North Tyneside Council Winter Festival Brochure