

ITEM NO: 6

Report To:	STRATEGIC PLANNING AND CAPITAL MONITORING PANEL
Date:	1 July 2013
Executive Member/Reporting Officer:	Councillor Kieran Quinn – Executive Leader Tim Rainey – Assistant Executive Director, Media, Marketing and Communications
Subject:	ASHTON CHRISTMAS MARKET
Report Summary:	<p>A well-managed, professionally delivered and widely publicised Christmas Market in Ashton during the run up to Christmas 2013 would potentially bring tens of thousands of additional people to the Town Centre giving a major boost to trade.</p> <p>The Market would not aim to compete with the successful markets in the City Centre, but instead would focus on attracting families through regular entertainment and events.</p> <p>Increasing the footfall in the Town Centre at this important time will prove beneficial to the existing indoor and outdoor market traders as well as the other retail outlets around the Town Centre.</p>
Recommendations:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1 Capital funding of £69k is made available for the cost of building market cabins.2 Meet with key stakeholders and potential Partners to gauge support and buy-in to the initiative using the Market Street location as the preferred site.3 Manufacture, maintain and store cabins using local companies, employment development schemes and existing council industrial unit space.4 Procure event administration for day-to-day management of the Christmas market including power, health and safety, entertainment and security through the North West Chest.
Links to Sustainable Community Strategy:	The initiative supports the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy Prosperous Tameside aim.
Policy Implications:	The initiative supports the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan by supporting the retail sector.
Financial Implications: (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)	<p>The capital cost of the market cabins is estimated to be £69k, which will need to be subject of a bid to the strategic capital panel unless alternative funding can be identified (funding could be from a revenue source for this purpose).</p> <p>The initial estimated costs for running the market for 15 days is £97k. One off revenue sources are recommended to be earmarked for this purpose in the schemes first year. For future years consideration will need to be given to how the ongoing revenue costs will be funded.</p>

**Legal Implications:
(Authorised by the Borough
Solicitor)**

Should approval be granted to proceed with this initiative on the premise that the benefits to the economy outweigh the capital costs and loss of income to the car parks, there needs to be a fully worked up project plan to manage the issues set out in the report.

Risk Management:

A full risk assessment of the scheme will be undertaken once the operating model has been agreed on.

Access to Information:

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting Tim Rainey, Assistant Executive Director – Media, Marketing and Communications:-



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1. BACKGROUND INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Alongside the Metrolink coming to Ashton later this year, a well-managed, professionally delivered and widely publicised Christmas Market in Ashton during the run up to Christmas 2013 would potentially bring tens of thousands of additional people to the Town Centre giving trade a major boost during this crucial time.
- 1.2 The principle of a Christmas Market is to promote Ashton Town Centre as a Christmas shopping venue. It should be viewed as a long term commitment and even if successful in the early years it will still take several years to break even.
- 1.3 Manchester already has a very successful German Christmas Market and there would no point in trying to emulate or compete with it. The Christmas Market in Tameside has to be different and not try to compete with Manchester in terms of who it attracts.
- 1.4 As Ashton is the main sub regional shopping Centre in Tameside, the Christmas Market should be held in Ashton Town Centre; however we can involve shops and businesses from other Towns across the borough as they could hire one of the stalls.
- 1.5 The event would run from 8 December to 22 December opening late afternoon as it goes dark at around 3pm and closing at 9:30-10:00pm. (Oldham Christmas Market runs during the afternoon therefore it would not clash).
- 1.6 The Christmas Market would be timed to coincide with Ashton Lights Switch On. The opening night could also feature music and a Christmas Parade and on the closing night the end with a fireworks display. Each year the market could be themed such as:
 - Traditional Victorian market
 - Winter Wonderland
 - Disney Christmas
- 1.7 There would be a permanent stage where each night a different event/activity would be put on to entertain shoppers and attract people to come to the fair on more than one occasion. Local brass bands, theatre groups doing panto, live music, school choirs, fashion shows, cookery demos etc.
- 1.8 The market would be licensed to sell alcoholic drink but care would be needed to avoid the risk of anti-social behavior.

2 PARTNERS

- 2.1 Ashton Town Centre Partnership (Town Team) including Arcades, Ladysmith, indoor and outdoor markets.

3 KEY STAKEHOLDERS

- 3.1 Ashton District Assembly, Police, Trading Standards, Tameside Markets, Health and Safety, Fire and Ambulance.

4 CAR PARKING

- 4.1 Free car parking should be available in the Town Centre car park from 3pm until 10pm during this time.

5 LOCATION

- 5.1 There are 3 potential sites shown on the map below where the Market could be located within Ashton Town Centre. Option 1 is Market Street running adjacent to the Indoor Market Hall. Option 2 is along Old Street and Option 3 is along for pedestrianised part of Warrington Street by the side of the Council Offices and Wilkinsons.
- 5.2 Both Option 1 (Market Street) and Option 3 (Warrington Street) are pedestrianised areas and therefore lend themselves to being more easily converted into an appropriate site. Option 2 along Old Street would require road closures and could cause access and delivery difficulties for shops including Iceland who require regular access for their home delivery service.
- 5.3 Market Street is the preferred option because it is wide enough to accommodate two rows of market stalls with plenty of room for people to move, it is also tree lined which will allow festive lighting to be installed, and the open area near the clock tower is an ideal location for the stage. Locating the stalls on Market Street would also encourage people to visit the Indoor Market Hall and then on to the other shopping venues in the Town Centre.
- 5.4 Other activities/attractions such as a kids fun fair or ice skating rink could be located in civic square area in front of the Town Hall, further encouraging people to visit the indoor market and draw them towards the other shops.



6 CABINS

- 6.1 The Market Street area would accommodate 30 cabins (10' x 6' each). If properly stored and maintained they have at least a 10 year life span. They are typically manufactured in Europe and are specially designed steel framed cabins with wooden cladding on the sides and a metal clad roof. Each year they are waterproof treated on the outside and fire proof treated on the inside. The design and materials mean that they can be easily and quickly be transported, assembled, disassembled and flat pack stored. They can also be used many times without warping and breaking.
- 6.2 Each cabin is pre-fitted with lights and RCD breaker and main power sockets.



- 6.3 Power for the market would be fed either directly through mains if available or via a generator if not. Festoon lights would also be hung in the trees along the pedestrianised route and each cabin would have mains power sockets.
- 6.4 The market must offer affordable rent, especially in first year as there will uncertainty around numbers of people that will attend and takings generated. If it proves successful rates could be looked at again in the following year
- 6.5 The fair should have a mixture of goods on sale – craft, food, cards, gifts, mulled wine and other impulse buy products.

7 SECURITY

- 7.1 The area containing the cabins will be secured each evening using movable fencing and have night-time security in place.

8 MARKETING AND PUBLICITY

- 8.1 The event would be primarily marketed at families encouraging people into the Town Centre to enjoy a mix of Christmas shopping and festive entertainment. Alongside the more traditional marketing channels a wide range of other products including social media, taxi wrapping and advertising on the Metrolink would be used to raise awareness and generate interest. This marketing would not be limited to Tameside, the Christmas Fair would also be advertised in neighboring boroughs and along the wider Metrolink network. This would be funded through the councils existing marketing budgets for Ashton Christmas shopping.

9 OTHER TOWN MARKETS AROUND TAMESIDE

9.1 Once the stalls have been manufactured they can be used in other Towns around the borough for events such as Easter markets, farmers markets and summer markets. This would involve the other Town Teams and give them the opportunity to promote their Town Centre's.

10 COST

10.1 There are two options for the sourcing, storing and maintaining the cabins. We could enter into a contract with a third party company to buy, store and maintain them on our behalf, or we could commission them to be manufactured and maintained locally storing them in an appropriate industrial unit. (Approximately 3000 sq. ft. would be required).

10.2 **Option 1:** The estimated costs for purchasing one of the specialist cabins from the European manufacturer and delivery is £2.3k. This means the total capital costs for the purchasing 30 cabins would be £69k.

10.3 The storage and maintenance of the cabins over their 10 year life time is estimated at £5k per year including the annual water and fire proof treatments, small repair work and PAT testing.

10.4 Each time a cabin is used there will be a cost associated with delivery, setup and subsequent disassembly and return to storage. This is estimated at £50 per cabin.

10.5 **Option 2:** As an alternative to commissioning a third party company to buy, maintain and store the cabins they could be designed and manufactured in Tameside to a similar high specification. Working with local businesses, building material suppliers, local colleges, local employment creation schemes and using existing council premises (Industrial Unit) they could be manufactured, maintained locally.

10.6 Whilst the second option may not prove to be any cheaper buying a complete service from a third party company it would help support the economy and local people.

10.7 The estimated costs for running the fair for 15 days is £85k. This includes the costs of a stage for the duration of the fair (£8.5k) and other attractions such as a Victorian Carousel £9.5k, and street entertainers. Depending on the cabin prices income from rental will offset some of this cost, and issuing licenses for mobile food and drinks vans etc. could also be used to contribute to running costs.

10.8 Other local shops (Arcades and Ladysmith) could also contribute as they would benefit through increased footfall. (Estimate at 3000 extra people per day)

10.9 The purchase and maintenance of the stalls, along with the market logistics and day-to-day running (including entertainment) would be procured through the North West Chest for an initial 3 year period (with 5 year option).

Quant	Description	Capital	Revenue
30	Market Cabins	£69,000	
30	Annual Cabin storage & Maintenance		£5,000
30	Transport and setup		£1,500
1	Event Admin and Mgmt		£85,000
30	Cabin Income (£25 per day x 15 days)		-£11,250
	Loss of Car Parking Income		£17,000

		£69,000	£97,250
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11 RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Panel recommends to Executive Cabinet:

- (i) Capital funding of £69k is made available for the cost of building market cabins.
- (ii) Meet with key stakeholders and potential partners to gauge support and buy-in to the initiative using the Market Street location as the preferred site.
- (iii) Manufacture, maintain and store cabins using local companies, employment development schemes and existing council industrial unit space.
- (iv) Procure event administration day-to-day management of the Christmas market including power, health and safety, entertainment and security through the NW Chest.