



Subject:	Feedback on Twilight Market and Plans for Future Activity
Date:	7 December 2016
Reporting Officer:	Donal Durkan, Director of Development
Contact Officer:	Clodagh Cassin, Markets Development Manager

Is this report restricted?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	<p>The purpose of this report is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Update Members on the success of the November 2016 Twilight Market, held on 8 – 9 November 2016.– Outline plans for future markets-related activity for the coming year, in line with Council support for “Growing the Economy”, support additional tourism growth and revitalise the city centre and key neighbourhood areas.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Note the success of the award-winning Twilight Markets to date– Agree to support the delivery of three future Twilight Markets in the course of 2017, alongside a wider programme of activities to support tourism growth, business start, local regeneration and city development. Costs have been built into the estimates for the 2017-2018 financial year and will be subject to approval as part of the rate setting process.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p>Members will be aware that the first Twilight Market took place at St. George’s Market on 11 November 2015. The event was an unprecedented success, with visitor numbers</p>

significantly exceeding expectations: almost 17,000 people attended over the six hours that the market was open. Based on the success of the first event and taking account of the fact that 2016 is the Year of Food and Drink, two further markets were planned for 2016.

3.2 The second Twilight Market was held over two days in May 2016. This event attracted more than 18,000 people. The most recent Twilight Market took place, again over two nights on 8 – 9 November 2016. Despite inclement weather on the first evening, more than 28,000 people attended the event over the course of the two evenings. The market featured over 140 local food and craft retailers. The traders included 15 local restaurants who took stalls at the event.

3.3 The event generated significant social media coverage, all of it very positive. It was the leading item on the Council website, attracting more than 10,000 visitors. Meanwhile, on Twitter, 224,000 accounts were reached with 500,000 impressions. On Facebook, 316,000 accounts were reached, 37,000 viewed the posts relating to the Market and 9,000 Facebook users engaged by posting items or commenting on the event.

3.4 The November 2016 event brought a number of new partnerships. Bank of Ireland linked the event to Global Entrepreneurship Week which took place the week after the event. They ran a competition for 20 of their small business customers to take stalls at the event. Feedback suggests that this was a very positive experience for both the bank and the participating businesses and this opens the door for further partnerships and potential sponsorship or other income arrangements.

3.5 Taking account of the success of the three events to date, it is proposed that three Twilight Markets take place in the course of 2017. Where possible, these events will link into other planned activity in the City in order to maximise profile and visitor numbers. At present, indicative dates of March or April, June and November are being proposed but these may be subject to change.

3.6 Lessons are being learned from each event both in terms of logistics and also in terms of trader mix as well as costs. As previously noted, there have been a number of expressions of interest from potential sponsors for the upcoming events. It is proposed that further market testing of these opportunities is undertaken and that officers link in with the Corporate Communications Unit in order to maximise exposure and positive profile for the

<p>3.7</p> <p>3.8</p> <p>3.9</p> <p>3.10</p> <p>3.11</p> <p>3.12</p>	<p>Council from our investment.</p> <p>At present, there is financial support available from DAERA (Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs) to support some of the activity at the market while Tourism NI has provided promotional support as part of its Year of Food and Drink campaign. It is not yet clear whether this income will be available in the coming financial year.</p> <p>Members will also be aware that St. George’s Market recently won the UK Market of the Year Award at the Observer Food Awards. This is the latest in a series of recognitions of the valuable role that the market plays in animating the city and providing a unique space for both residents and visitors. As a visitor attraction, it draws in up to one million people each year. Likewise, the weekend markets provide an opportunity for around 300 small traders to do business. The market therefore has a positive impact on both the economic and social life of the city.</p> <p>Work is underway to look at how the markets can act as a starting point for new businesses, helping them refine their product and build customer loyalty. Given the demand for stalls at St George’s, this will also include exploring opportunities for supporting traders to do business in alternative venues. This may include the other markets taking place across the city (currently ten are in operation) or looking at how vacant properties can be brought back to life to house new retail businesses while at the same time animating the city centre and key arterial routes. A report on these activities will be brought back to a future meeting of this Committee for information and approval.</p> <p><u>Financial and resource implications</u></p> <p>At present, there is a net cost of around £4,000 for each Twilight Market once the income from trader fees and public sector funding is taken into account. The funding for the 2017 markets has been factored into the budget for the 2017-2018 financial year.</p> <p>As noted above, there may be opportunities to consider how additional external income can be secured to cover the costs of organising future events.</p> <p><u>Equality or good relations implications</u></p> <p>The Markets Team works closely with the Good Relations Unit to devise an equality and accessibility strategy for each event.</p>
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Appendices – Documents Attached</p>

	None.