



<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Update on Markets</b>
<b>Date:</b>	3rd April, 2019
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<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</b>	
<b>After Committee Decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>After Council Decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Sometime in the future</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Never</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues</b>
1.1	<p>The purpose of the report is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• update the Committee on the performance of the city markets, including St George's Market and the Christmas Market at the City Hall;</li><li>• set out priority areas of work for the coming year at St George's Market; and</li><li>• seek approval for a markets licence, as part of the Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival (CQAF) in early May 2019.</li></ul>

<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. note the performance of the Christmas Market, including the economic impact and contribution to the city;</li> <li>ii. note and agree the priority areas of investment in St George’s Market for the coming financial year; and</li> <li>iii. approve the granting of a markets licence for a market to take place in St Anne’s Cathedral on 2nd May 2019, as part of Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival.</li> </ol>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
	<p><b><u>Christmas Market</u></b></p> <p>3.1 Members will be aware that the Christmas Market operates at the City Hall in the run-up to Christmas each year. The market is operated by Market Place Europe (MPE). As part of its contract with the Council, MPE is required to undertake an independent evaluation and economic impact of the market every two years. The report for the Christmas 2018 market has just been presented to Council officers as part of the post-event review process.</p> <p>3.2 Members will also be aware that, as a one-off, the Christmas Market was extended to the upper part of Donegall Place. This was due to the fire in the Primark building and the commitment by the Council and other partners to undertake an enhanced programme of animation and activity in the city centre in the run-up to the important Christmas trading period. The additional stalls were offered to those businesses affected by the fire.</p> <p>3.3 The evaluation and economic impact report was completed by an independent market research organisation. It involved a survey of 400 individuals who had visited the market, as well as an online survey of market users and visitors to the city. The survey covered a number of areas including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• levels of satisfaction with the market and opportunities for improvement</li> <li>• identification of how people were aware of the market – and what made them visit</li> <li>• an assessment of whether they would recommend the market to others</li> <li>• an understanding what other activities the market visitors had undertaken as part of their visit to the city</li> <li>• an assessment of whether visitors had used other city centre facilities as part of their visit to the city.</li> </ul>

3.4

The high level findings of the work include:

- More than one million visitors came to the market over the six-week period. The combined total expenditure for those attending was in the region of £87million. This covers items such as accommodation (for out of state and non-Belfast residents); eating out, shopping and entertainment. This does not just involve spend directly on the market but does illustrate the role of the market as a catalyst for spend in the city centre
- Adjusting the figures to take account of those visitors who would not otherwise have visited Belfast if the market had not been present, the evaluation indicates that the total estimated economic impact of the market itself is in the region of £40million
- 39% of visitors to the market were from the Greater Belfast area; 44% were from the rest of Northern Ireland; 8% from RoI and 10% from elsewhere
- Most of those visiting the market had been previously – 85% of visitors. They were aware of the event from their previous attendance but the social media profile also encouraged many visitors to attend
- Over a third of visitors planned their visit up to a month in advance – principally those attending from outside Belfast
- Over 91% of visitors rated the market as good or very good – an increase of 2% from the 2016 figures. Those who were positive commented in particular on the ambience, the fact that it offered something different to the mainstream brands and the fact that it felt safe. Those who were less positive suggested that there was a need for more variety in the stalls and they also suggested that it was too busy, particularly for prams. 78% of visitors said that they would definitely return next year
- 69% of visitors came to the market as they were interested in local products – and 42% of people confirmed that they spent more than they thought on products from local traders
- In terms of suggestions for improvements, the most common comments related to more space (particularly for seating) and additional entertainment. Despite the space constraints, there is overwhelming support for the market to remain in City Hall grounds
- More than 2/3 of those visiting the Christmas Market also shopped in other parts of the city centre. This illustrates the point that the Christmas Market is a significant draw for the entire city centre. 25% of those visiting the market were also planning to eat out elsewhere in the city following their visit to the market
- 97% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that events like the market encourage people to come to Belfast.

3.5	<p>Officers will work with MPE to review the market for Christmas 2019, taking account of these issues raised. MPE will also be responsible for the delivery of the Spring Continental Market which will take place at City Hall from 24-27 May 2019.</p>
3.6	<p><b><u>St George's Market</u></b></p> <p>Members will be aware that a three-day market operates at St George's Market each Friday, Saturday and Sunday. The market is a popular attraction for both local residents and visitors to the city. Up to one million visitors came to the market last year, with attendance figures generally ranging between 6,000 and 10,000 people each day. St George's Market recently won the award for the Best Large Indoor Market at the NABMA Annual conference – the umbrella body representing all markets across the UK.</p>
3.7	<p>The market performs a number of functions. It is an important tourism attraction and is generally considered as a must-see destination for visitors to the city. It is also a popular space for local residents of all ages – bringing together a mixture of food, craft and musical/entertainment performances. The market is also a great location for new business starts – and there are opportunities for new businesses participating in our business start-up programmes to undertake a period of test trading at the market. A number of businesses started life at the market – and many maintain a presence there, despite the fact that they now have stand-alone businesses elsewhere and are trading globally in a number of cases. It also provides a source of income for more than 200 independent traders that are based at the market on one or more of the operating days.</p>
3.8	<p>Taking account of all of these reasons, the market is a significant asset for the Council and all of our investment needs to work towards maintaining and enhancing its reputation. Officers are currently looking at how the market can evolve in the coming years to meet the increasing tourist demand while still serving an important role as an asset for the city, its residents and the businesses that operate within it. Members will be aware that, in 2014, Deloitte undertook work on a development plan for the market. This led to changes in the staffing structure and some of the operating hours of the markets. It also identified some longer-term development opportunities for the market which would require significant investment. Officers work with the market trader representative bodies on an ongoing basis to bring forward collaborative plans for the future development of the market. Areas for consideration in the coming year are likely to include the operating times; venue hire opportunities; enhancing visitor experiences and linking to key city events; opportunities for additional revenue generation to meet overhead costs and mechanisms to build in customer</p>

feedback in order to ensure that services meet with user expectations. Any proposals that significantly impact on the market will be brought back to the Committee for information and endorsement.

3.9 In parallel with the future development plans, officers are also placing an enhanced focus on the operational management issues at the market. Given that the team is now at full complement following a series of recruitment exercises, the frontline staffing resources will increasingly be deployed to focus on ensuring compliance with the various guidance documents such as the code of conduct, traders' permit and enforcement policy. The staff also have an enhanced customer service function and will be more visible on the market floor, thereby improving our service standards. Clearly, the traders at the market are obliged to abide by the various legal requirements around food safety, wider health and safety and trading standards. The Markets Management Team works closely with colleagues in Environmental Health and Corporate Health and Safety in order to ensure that individual traders and the market as a whole are meeting these legal obligations. This approach is critical to maintaining the reputation of the market. One of the current challenges is the need to invest in an extraction system for the market. Officers have been working with technical experts to identify how this can be resolved. This is challenging given the nature of the building. A solution has now been identified which involves a number of mobile extraction units for the hot food traders. One of these units has already been tested by an existing trader and the feedback was positive. Significant financial investment is required and officers are currently working to identify how this can be financed.

**Application for an External Market, as part of Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival**

3.10 Members will be aware that anyone wishing to operate a market or car boot sale within Belfast must apply to Belfast City Council for permission to do so. An application has been received for the "CQ Bazaar" to be held in St Anne's Cathedral, as part of the Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival, from 5 till 9pm on 2nd May 2019.

3.11 In line with the overall Belfast City Council Markets Development Strategy, this market will help to enhance this area of the city and, in doing so, drive footfall into Cathedral Quarter and the surrounding area. The market will complement the wider festival and programme of animation in the city at this time, including the Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival and the Festival of Fools. This will support the commitments to enhance the city animation activity as part of the City Revitalisation programme.

3.12	<p>Stall numbers are currently being finalised but it is expected that there will be up to 60 stalls at the event. The organisers are Destination CQ Business Improvement District (BID). They will be asked to supply the relevant documentation for this event such as public liability insurance, method statement and risk assessments, HACCP policy and house rule. An Operational plan covering issues such as security and stewarding, first aid provision, environmental health information regarding noise omission, sale of food and beverages, food sampling, alcohol sampling and licensing, waste management and fire regulations will also be sought. Officers from the Markets Development Unit will then engage with the relevant officers across the Council in order to check and verify this documentation and are content that all is in order. Checks will also be carried out during the event, in line with the Markets Rights Policy guidelines.</p>
3.13	<p><b><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></b></p> <p>No specific financial implications associated with this report. The applicant for the markets licence will have to pay an application fee of £50 in line with the markets policy. The total amount payable will depend on the number of stalls that are in place.</p>
3.14	<p><b><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></b></p> <p>No specific equality or good relations implications. No issue with Rural Needs Assessment.</p>
4.0	<p><b>Documents Attached</b></p>
	<p>None</p>