

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Regeneration Scrutiny Panel
2.	Date:	24 November 2010
3.	Title:	Rotherham Town Centre Christmas Events 2010
4.	Directorate:	Environment & Development Services

5. Summary

The Events & Promotions Service continues to deliver a diverse range of events within Rotherham Town Centre and this year is no exception.

This report summarises the key Christmas activities and potential benefits together with the impact on the proposals in the Town Centre.

6. Recommendations

That Members note the proposed events programme outlined in Appendix A.

7. Proposals and Details

Due to the global recession, 2010 has been a difficult trading year across all industries. Christmas sales, however, are traditionally a strong profit-earner for most retail businesses. Christmas is, therefore, a critical trading period.

Retailers and Market traders view events and promotions in Rotherham Town Centre as the main driver in maximising footfall and expenditure during the festive season. A strong events programme coupled with other retail offers such as the Shop Local initiative are essential for attracting new people into Town.

This year's programme of Christmas events has been developed from a combination of analysis from evaluations of last year's events as well as a direct contribution from stakeholders. The Town Centre Marketing Group and ACT for Rotherham business group have been prevalent with shaping the calendar of events.

The programme retains the firm family favourite events such as the Real Reindeer event but also introduces fresh ideas to the Christmas Craft Market with the addition of the Festivals Around the World event. Competition between Towns and Cities is fierce during Christmas, therefore three new events including a Winter Lantern Parade, Ghosts of Christmas Past walk and Santa's Run & Frosty's Fun have been introduced.

Businesses are combining resources and are developing their own events. Retailers on Riverside Precinct are hosting 'Victorian' themed events with craft stalls, Victorian dress, live music and festive decorations; the events are a welcome addition to the wider events programme.

Rotherham Minster traditionally host a number of events over the festive season and this year's events are set to be better than last. Commencing with a Victorian Christmas Market, the Minster will also play host to the internationally renowned Mediaeval Babes on Sunday December 5th. The Minster too will continue to support and host traditional events such as the Age Concern Concert and the Rudston Preparatory School Christmas Carol Service.

Please refer to Appendix 1 for a comprehensive list of events and promotions scheduled to take place over the festive season including those within Rotherham Minster.

7.1 Event Marketing & Promotion:

This year, a fresh approach has been taken to the promotional material produced for the Christmas events calendar. The 'traditional' designs have been transformed with a fresh contemporary appearance which is a reflection of the arrival of a new range of independent shops in Town and should, therefore, be more appealing to a wider audience.

The Christmas Events Programme, which incorporates events both in the Town Centre and within Rotherham Minster, has also been redesigned providing a greater opportunity to provide detail on each event. The Shop Local initiative together with selected offers also features on the back page of the programme.

20,000 copies of the guide will predominantly be distributed within the Town Centre as well as to Parish Councils, Libraries and other community buildings. Posters, press adverts, coverage on the Town Centre website, free website listings and a dedicated page on the Council's own website will all support the Christmas campaign.

To maximize impact, the Retail Investment Office and the Events & Promotions Service have combined resources and coverage will be achieved in the monthly Town Centre supplement in the Advertiser, Update business newsletter, Shop Local magazine, radio 'tags' on Hallam FM and through Team Hallam, editorial features and during Shop Local 'roadshows'.

Furthermore, events such as the Winter Lantern Parade and Santa's Run and Frosty's Fun have their own specific marketing campaign. Supporting literature will also be distributed to schools, via databases including 'Tell us who you are' (local people who wish to find out about forthcoming events), to special interest groups. A radio commercial has also been produced to support these new events.

The Christmas events campaign has also attracted the support from the One Town One Community agenda and ACT for Rotherham business group. One Town One Community has provided support to undertake a small promotion which directly aims to distribute guides to Town Centre shoppers. To ensure maximum impact, the activity is scheduled to take place on the day of Rotherham Minster's Victorian Market.

8. Finance

The events outlined in Appendix 1, which are organised by the Events & Promotions Service and Rotherham Markets department, are delivered from the existing budget and Rotherham Markets Trading account respectively.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

It should also be noted that adverse weather conditions can affect attendance numbers at outdoor events.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The Events & Promotions Service and Town Centre & Markets events programme supports and contributes to the Council's themes as identified in the Community Strategy – in particular Alive and Proud.

Events also contribute to the cross cutting issue of Regeneration particularly with reference to non-physical activity which supports Town Centre businesses in the short term whilst the Renaissance programme is implemented.

The events programme directly relates to actions/ priorities contained within:
Rotherham Town Centre Marketing Plan
Culture and Leisure Service Plan
Planning and Regeneration Service Plan

The Economic Plan for Rotherham – 2008 – 2020

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Appendix 1 – Summary of Christmas Events and Promotions

Consultation with:

Members of the public via event evaluations carried out throughout the year

Stakeholders represented on the Town Centre Marketing Group

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