

KETTERING TOWN COUNCIL

REPORT FOR DECISION

Item No:- ME22/027

Committee:-	Markets and Events Committee
Date:-	27 th September 2022
Author:-	Martin Hammond, Clerk
Report Title:-	Christmas 2022
Wards Affected:-	All

1. Purpose of Report

To agree the component parts of Christmas events in 2022

2. Recommendations

The Committee's views and approval for the elements set out in the report are requested, including a higher rate for hiring pitch and stalls for Christmas markets.

3. Information

3.1. NNC is committed, this year, to providing and installing the Christmas lights and for the light switch on event on Thursday 24th November. Everything else falls to the Town Council to provide. It is not yet clear if they intend to provide free parking on any day during December. Apart from Saturday, charges now end at 3pm most days. Although a question has been posed to NNC about the income loss that a free parking day involves – in order to judge if that is an expense the Town Council might want to bear – no answer has yet been provided.

3.2. It is suggested that the key component parts of Christmas events are

- A regular Christmas market on the Market Place starting on 24th November and then on the four subsequent Saturdays
- A Santa's grotto
- A Christmas trail (similar to an easter egg hunt)
- A window display competition
- Bands and choirs performing throughout town on four Saturdays
- Some roving entertainment at key times on four Saturdays

- Management and publicity
- Free parking on some days – see above

3.3. For reasons of cost and space, the idea of an ice rink is not really achievable and for reasons of likely organised opposition, a live reindeer appearance has also been ruled out.

3.4. Christmas market – Market Place

Alongside the lights switch on event, KTC is managing the Christmas market, and bookings are now being taken. Four further Christmas markets on the four following Saturdays (up until the 17th December) are being arranged. Each market will be able to accommodate 15 or so stalls.

3.5. Santa's Grotto

Also on the Market Place. This has been provided before. North Pole Productions are now provisionally booked. Some examples of the inside are shown below. The cost is made up of the hire of the grotto, which will be managed and staffed by North Productions, who will also operate a booking system, the marquee itself, and overnight security and fencing. North Pole are intending to charge £7 per visit, which is significantly less than other commercially run operations. It will be open from Sunday 27th November, and run across all weekends up until 24th December, and all week days from 16th December. Between 28th November and 15th December during the week, it will be available for group bookings.





3.6 Activities

A Christmas trail has been run in the past so this is being revived. In addition, North Pole Productions have volunteered to run a window display competition for town centre traders.

3.6. Bands and choirs

It is proposed that the Council provides seasonal musical entertainment on the four Saturdays from 26th November to 17th December comprising bands (e.g. Salvation army) and choirs who will move between several locations in the town during the day. Based on costs from bands in the park, we are assuming a cost of £500 per day, to ensure coverage throughout the day.

3.7. Street entertainment

Street entertainment to liven up key shopping has been explored. Normal daily costs for an entertainer are about £250 per performer; having three on any one day would therefore cost about £1000 – this number means that there will always be some one performing at any one time.

4. Consultation and Engagement

The consultation with retailers earlier in the year found that events/activities throughout the town centre were wanted by retailers – not just in the Market Place. One of the respondents suggested the themed Christmas trail idea mentioned above,

Some co-ordination with NNC and with the Newlands Centre will be required.

5. Finance, Legal and Resource Implications

5.1. The likely costs are

Item	Cost
Christmas markets – five in total	Income generating
Santa's Grotto – grotto, marquee hire, security and fencing	£12000
Street entertainment – bands and choirs on 4 Saturdays	£2000
Christmas trail and window design competition	£ 100
Street entertainment – roving entertainers	£4000
Publicity and promotion	£1000
Event management	£ 500
Stall erection costs	£ 700
TOTAL	£20,300

5.2. **Free parking** – it is likely that NNC will offer free parking on Saturdays in December. Parking is free after 3pm during the week, so there will be a benefit to most visitors (but not the traders) for the switch on event. .

5.3. **Stall hire rates** The usual rate for a market pitch and stall is £12. Last year, NNC charged £20 for a Christmas market stall. We know from Kettfest that traders thought £12 was very good value. Authority is sought to charge £20 for stalls on the five Christmas markets.

6. Policy Implications

The Council's policy is to support the economic vitality of the town centre.

Background Papers
