

Safety Advisory Group Events: BRIEFING DOCUMENT

18-day Bath Christmas Market Thursday 25th November to Sunday 12th December 2021

Background: In January 2021 the Bath Christmas market asset moved from Visit Bath Ltd. to Bath and North East Somerset Council. All responsibility for financing, planning and delivery of the event now sits within the Local Authority. Earlier this year, several versions of a possible event in 2021 were presented to both Renewals Board and the Strategic Leadership Team for comment. Due to its scale and city-wide impact, Will Godfrey has requested that the matter goes to cabinet for a decision as to whether the event should take place this year. The following scenario will be put forward to cabinet on the 23rd of June for consideration.

The Safety Advisory Group Events are invited to comment on the proposal and invited to ask questions ahead of the submission.

Proposal: To operate and run the Bath Christmas Market in 2021 between Thursday 25th November to Sunday 12th December a duration of 18 days. As well as the usual attractions and retail offer, it would incorporate the elements of the 2020 Bath at Christmas campaign and work in partnership with various external organisations to support cultural activations and events. These would include indoor performance, carnival style processions, lantern parades and a festive programme of Arts. Shop fronts would be animated with festive themes where required to promote the high street regeneration programme. The event would be marketed 'in full' and messaging would encourage visitors to attend from both regional and national areas. There would be no intentional international marketing of the event in 2021.

Footprint: The event site would cover most areas of the city centre including the Abbey quarter, Milsom street, Orange Grove and Stall Street. A reduction in chalets from 205 (in 2019) to 161 will create additional free space to give crowds increased opportunity to move through the event site during traditionally busy periods. Overall consideration will be given to the general layout of the market and performance areas will be situated only where static audiences do not impede or obstruct non-market participating pedestrian routes. With a reduction in chalets and an increase in footprint it will be possible to create 'content free zones' where visitors can find space away from the market. Creating extra space will give the public better access to both incumbent and temporary retail outlets as well as temporary entertainment zones across the event footprint.

Public health considerations: The event would attract large numbers of visiting public to the city. Although the event dates are several months away from the end of potential lockdown restrictions, consideration will be given to the provision of public health messaging and infrastructure. This would include sanitizing stations and additional public signage. All participants/stallholders would be advised to continue with Covid -19 hygiene practices including the wearing of face coverings and use of hand sanitizer. The council would strongly support local hospitality and accommodation providers to follow good covid-19 infection, prevention and control practice.

Headline risks: The market is an outdoor open free public event; it attracts over 400,000 visitors over 18 days. It is not possible to restrict numbers of those attending or when they attend. Once in the city, controlling crowd movement outside of a large-scale emergency evacuation could be counterintuitive with regards to public safety.

It is likely there will be increased pressure on public transport and car parking infrastructure although this is not expected to be higher than any other year.

It is likely that hotels and guest houses would see an increase in overnight stays from visitors from outside of the region who may have also recently travelled outside of the UK.

Planning: Planning permission would not be required for this event under the Government's current temporary change in planning policy. Resident and Stakeholder consultation will take place as in previous years and the event will be submitted for SAGE sign off through the usual event application and planning process.

Negative/Positive reputation risk for consideration:

- Negative:(if event proceeds) possible negative public reaction with regards to holding a large-scale event in 2021.
- Negative: Loss of confidence from retail, accommodation and tourism sectors If event is cancelled or altered significantly once advertised.
- Negative: Event making a loss due to late cancellation.
- Negative:(Event cancelled) Commercial and brand damage if other markets then take place.
- Positive: (Events proceeds) Economic boost to the city for tourism, hospitality, retail and accommodation sectors.
- Positive: (Event proceeds) Public wellbeing and feelgood factors.
- Positive: (Event Proceeds) Community and charity benefit from projects and exposure.
- Positive: (Event Proceeds) Tourism sector benefit from return visitors in other seasons.



SITE NORTH



SITE CENTRE



SITE SOUTH