



Belfast City Council

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| Report to: | Development Committee |
| Subject: | St George's Sunday Market |
| Date: | 12 January 2011 |
| Reporting Officer: | John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470 |
| Contact Officer: | Shirley McCay, Head of Economic Initiatives, ext 3459 |

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| 1 | Relevant Background Information |
| 1.1 | <u>St George's Sunday Market Review</u> Members will be aware of a report taken to Committee in April 2010 requesting permission to operate a Sunday Market in St George's Market. In June 2010 permission was granted by Council for a trial of 3 months, commencing July and ending September 2010, an extension of which was granted in October until the end of January 2011. |
| 1.2 | The Sunday market differs from the Friday and Saturday Markets. Friday is the traditional variety market, Saturday is the traditional Food Market while Sunday is predominantly arts and crafts, with a small mixture of food and antiques. The Sunday market lay out is similar to that of the Saturday lay out, with an emphasis on several seating areas for customers/visitors to relax, enjoy the atmosphere and browse the various stalls at their leisure. |
| 1.3 | The weekly live entertainment is another attraction and assists in promoting new local bands willing to entertain. |

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| 2 | Key Issues |
| 2.1 | <u>St George's Sunday Market Review</u> Although starting at a traditionally quiet period for markets in Northern Ireland, due to summer holidays and other summer events held throughout the region, the Sunday market has performed well. Since October it has continued to attract new traders, as well as a new and steady customer base. |

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| 2.1 | <p>Stalls allocated each Sunday have continued to be above the required number of 120 stalls each week. This has ensured that operational costs are covered. On average 145 stalls are allocated each Sunday with up to 168 stalls allocated on occasion, with an average weekly income of £2,000. A positive point is that even on one of the worst days of the recent weather (Sunday 19 December) 96 traders turned up to trade, taking up a total of 128 stalls. The Markets unit continues to receive application forms from new potential traders on a regular basis and is steadily building a waiting list for the Sunday market.</p> |
| 2.2 | <p>Customer numbers attending the Sunday Market continue to be steady, August survey figures indicated approx 2500 customers, November/December survey figures indicated just over 3000 customers.</p> |
| 2.3 | <p>The November/December customer survey results so far indicate:</p> <p>94% of customers stated that visiting St George's Sunday Market was the being the main reason for them being there 98% That the Sunday Market met or exceeded their expectations</p> |
| 2.4 | <p>The Sunday traders consider that many of the visitors and customers are now regular faces, with new customers being added weekly. Traders have also noted a regular turn out of tourists to the market. The traders also consider the new Sunday Market has not had any effect on the current customer/visitor numbers at the Friday or Saturday Markets.</p> |
| 2.5 | <p>Millward Brown Ulster on behalf of Belfast City Council has carried out an economic impact assessment on all the markets; including trader and customer surveys during November/December 2010 and January 2011. Full details of these results will be available later this month.</p> <p>The November/December trader survey results so far indicate:</p> <p>96% agree Sunday market should be made permanent 82% agree the range of goods available at the Sunday market should be expanded 84% agree there should be an increase in advertising and marketing of the Sunday market 92% agree if the Sunday market was made permanent they would commit to trading every Sunday 96% agree having live music at the Sunday market is a good idea 90% satisfied with current opening hours of 10.00am – 4.00pm</p> |
| 2.6 | <p>There are a number of new start businesses that have started due to new traders attending the Sunday market. These consist of mainly craft traders with some new food traders.</p> |
| 2.7 | <p>The traders and their representatives are keen to seek Council permission for the Sunday market to be a permanent fixture. Whilst there is uncertainty over the Sunday markets future, some traders attend other events as well, and that may continue until such times as a decision has been made by Council on the Sunday Market. They believe that with a permanent Sunday Market to promote, the current and any potential new traders would become more committed.</p> |

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| 2.8 | The St George's Market Traders' Committee will present their members' views, on the Sunday Market to Committee tonight. |
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| 3 | Resource Implications |
| 3.1 | Operational Costs approximately £1550 per week exceeded by income from Sunday Market |

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| 4 | Equality and Good Relations Considerations |
| 4.1 | There are no equality and good relations considerations attached to this report. |

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| 5 | Recommendations |
| 5.1 | It is recommended that the Committee consider approval for the continuance of the Sunday Market in St George's as a permanent fixture in the Markets' Calendar subject to a positive review in one years time |

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| 6 | Decision Tracking |
| Subject to Committee approval that the Sunday Market at St George's continues as a permanent fixture in the Markets' Calendar. | |
| Time Frame: January 2011 | Reporting Officer: Shirley McCay |