

## **Camberley Town Centre Christmas Event**

### **Summary**

It is proposed to hold a Christmas event in Camberley Town Centre at London Road Recreation Ground. This will consist of a “real ice” skating rink and associated seasonal market stalls along with an illuminated trail to connect the event to the key Town Centre access points. It is considered that the event will help promote Camberley as a destination of choice for seasonal eating, shopping and recreation and run at a break- even point financially.

### **Portfolio: Leader**

**Date signed off: 21 May 2015**

### **Wards Affected:**

**Town, St Michaels**

### **Recommendation**

The Executive is advised to resolve that

- (i) a winter ice rink and Christmas fair event be held on London Road Recreation Ground in winter 2015/16 to promote the Town Centre;
- (ii) any funding shortfall be taken from the Town Centre events budget; and
- (iii) the project delivery be delegated to the Executive Head of Business.

## **1. Resource Implications**

- 1.1 Benchmarking and business modelling processes have been carried out to look at various scenarios relating to this event. It is considered that a financial break-even point for this first event of its kind is achievable, based on a conservative take up of 33% capacity off-peak and 80% capacity at peak times.
- 1.2 Should the event run at a loss, it is intended that the balance be taken from the Town Centre Events budget held by the Council for promoting and enhancing Camberley.

## **2. Key Issues**

- 2.1 It is proposed to hold an ice rink and associated Christmas Fair on London Road Recreation Ground. The event will take place for 4 weeks over the Christmas/New Year period 2015/16.
- 2.2 An illuminated and well signed trail will lead users to the venue from key points in the Town Centre. Parking will be encouraged at Main Square Car Park. It is anticipated that the event will contribute significantly to the Town’s Christmas offer, encouraging families to stay longer and shop. The nearest similar rinks are at Winchester or Windsor, providing opportunity for Camberley to provide a unique seasonal offer in the local area.

- 2.3 A Christmas fair, undercover, will be held in the Recreation Ground as part of the event. This will sell seasonal products as well as food and beverage. Local businesses will be given first chance to take up stalls.
- 2.4 The project is being developed in partnership with a professional events company and an established ice rink hire company. The rink will be supplied fully staffed, maintained and serviced.
- 2.5 All tickets sales will be via card machine to minimise cash handling. Pre-booking will be encouraged, using the Theatre Box Office system.

### **3. Options**

- 3.1 The Executive can agree to:
  - 3.1.1 Proceed with the event as described;
  - 3.1.2 Suggest changes to the event; or
  - 3.1.3 Choose not to proceed with the event

### **4. Proposals**

- 4.1 It is proposed that the Executive agrees for the Christmas Ice Rink event to proceed, with any shortfall in funding coming being taken from the Town Centre event budget.

### **5. Supporting Information**

- 5.1 Considerable benchmarking work was undertaken to establish prices and potential business scenarios.
- 5.2 The ice rink will be a “real ice” facility, providing a higher quality offer than the “plasticised” versions often used. Up to 150 skaters can be accommodated at a time.
- 5.3 Peak times are considered as being all weekends skating time slots, all evening slots and all slots during the 2 week school holidays. Off Peak slots are considered as midweek during 2 weeks of term time until 4pm.
- 5.4 The Victorian changing pavilion in the Park will form a key part of the set-up, adding a traditional feel to the proceedings.
- 5.5 Skate Hire and changing areas will all be provided as part of the rink hire, along with suitably experienced staff.
- 5.6 The associated fair will be under marquee cover and will include seasonal stalls and refreshments. This will be professionally managed by an independent events management company.

- 5.7 It is anticipated that 10 x 1 hour sessions per day will take place, with the first starting at 10.00am and the last finishing at 9.00pm.
- 5.8 The Ice Rink will be located in the Recreation Ground on an existing football pitch. All costs have included the renovation of this pitch to playable standard after the event, for the following season. It should be noted that current demand means this pitch can be freed from use for football for the latter half of the 2015/16 season.

## **6. Corporate Objectives And Key Priorities**

- 6.1 This project supports the Corporate priority for developing and enhancing Camberley as a destination of choice.
- 6.2 Furthermore it contributes to making Surrey Heath a great place to live.
- 6.3 The financial modelling indicated this event will also be an example of business efficiency, providing a great, high profile event at little or no cost to the Council.

## **7. Legal Issues**

- 7.1 A Temporary Event Notice will be required for the event. This will include the sale of alcohol in association with the event.

## **8. Governance Issues**

- 8.1 All financial matters will be carried out under strict audit guidelines.

## **9. Sustainability**

- 9.1 No issues identified.

## **10. Risk Management**

- 10.1 The key risk is a financial one as this event has not been tried before. However modelling suggests that break- even is feasible with a low to medium risk of a cost of circa £5k - £10k.
- 10.2 It should be recognised however that contractual costs associated with the ice rink hire are considerable, should the event fail significantly through low take up.

## **11. Equalities Impact**

- 11.1 None identified. Equipment to allow users of less physical ability or low confidence is supplied as part of the ice rink package.

## **12. Consultation**

12.1 Two ice rink operators have been consulted as well as other Councils who have put on similar events.

### 13. PR And Marketing

13.1 This event provides excellent opportunity to promote Camberley Town Centre as a destination of choice for Christmas shopping.

13.2 Combined with other recent events (Freedom of the Borough for the RMA, Tour of Britain) it continues to develop the identity of Camberley as a place where exciting things happen.

<b>Annexes</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>Background Papers</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>Author/Contact Details</b>	<b>Leigh Thornton – Executive Head of Business Leigh.thornton@surreyheath.gov.uk</b>
<b>Head Of Service</b>	<b>Leigh Thornton – Executive Head of Business</b>

#### Consultations, Implications And Issues Addressed

<b>Resources</b>	<b>Required</b>	<b>Consulted</b>
Revenue	✓	
Capital		
Human Resources		
Asset Management		
IT		

<b>Other Issues</b>	<b>Required</b>	<b>Consulted</b>
Corporate Objectives & Key Priorities	✓	
Policy Framework		
Legal		
Governance		
Sustainability		
Risk Management		
Equalities Impact Assessment		
Community Safety		
Human Rights		
Consultation		
P R & Marketing		

**Review Date:**

**Version:**