

REPORT TO: Corporate Policy & Performance Board
DAT 6 September 2011
REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director Policy & Resources
SUBJECT: Markets promotion
WARDS: N/A

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To provide members of the PPB with a summary of marketing activity carried out on behalf of Widnes Market by the Communications & Marketing Division in conjunction with markets staff.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- (1) Corporate Services PPB notes the content of the report.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 During 2010 a marketing plan for Widnes Market was devised by the Marketing Officer within Communications and Marketing and approved by the Divisional Manager, Communications and Marketing, and the Markets Manager.

3.2 The plan included background to previous marketing activity, observations of traders and stakeholders, user numbers, outcomes from the 2010 -11 action plan and an action plan for 2011-12.

3.3 In the past, markets promotions had mainly been via newspaper, radio and TV advertising. None of the methods required a return by the customer or employed a data measure other than door access counters.

3.4 Traders and stakeholders' observations over a number of months were collated to inform the marketing plan.

3.5 The 2010-11 marketing plan featured projects which were undertaken in Widnes Market with the intention that, following evaluation, would be used for Runcorn Market. However, following the closure of Runcorn, the application of themes and ideas, would only apply to Widnes.

3.6 Actions included establishing what traders and stakeholders want in the future, profile raising and creating an identity for the market, setting up a blog, newsletter and Facebook group, target direct mail marketing, issuing regular press releases, and a Christmas promotion.

3.7 Following consultation with the Markets Manager and traders, a plan for 2011-12 was put together with the emphasis on promotions, rather than advertising, to drive people to the market.

3.8 A series of events have been organised by the Marketing Officer in conjunction with the Markets Manager and traders, and promoted by the Marketing Officer through press releases, adverts, flyers, social media etc.

3.9 Events to date have included:

- Easter promotion with treasure hunt, Easter scene in the market, competition and even an Easter Bunny!
- Street market art – pavement artists in the market, workshops in junior schools, outdoor street art.
- Widnes on Sea – seaside themed activities such as a 'beach', donkey rides, Punch and Judy.

3.10 Planned events include:

- Link to My Halton Foody Fortnight, and British Food Fortnight, with food themed events in market.
- Cancer awareness promotion and Widnes Market charity fundraising calendar.
- Christmas promotions, outdoor Christmas market, Santa's grotto.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

A busy, vibrant Widnes Market is an important retail asset to the borough and the Council wants to ensure it continues to attract shoppers from Halton and beyond, by raising awareness of what it has to offer.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

5.1 Children and Young People in Halton

Events at the market provide an attraction for children and families.

5.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

Schools and colleges can be involved in events and promotions held at the market, and could provide an opportunity to learn more about markets and their contribution to the town centre.

5.3 A Healthy Halton

Promoting what the market has to offer shoppers can encourage them to buy healthy local produce.

5.4 A Safer Halton

None.

5.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

A successful market helps attract shoppers to the town centre, helps boost the economy of the borough, and provides people with value for money.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

Without marketing and promotional activity the Market could suffer in terms of attracting and keeping customers.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

There are no equality and diversity issues.

8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act.