

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Strategic Commissioning Committee
DATE	23 June 2022
EXEMPT	Not exempt: Covering Report; and Appendix 1. Exempt: Appendix 2 – Paragraph 6 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (other than the authority).
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Christmas Village Feedback Report
REPORT NUMBER	COM/22/128
DIRECTOR	Gale Beattie
CHIEF OFFICER	Richard Sweetnam
REPORT AUTHOR	Stephen O'Neill
TERMS OF REFERENCE	4.3

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the evaluation of the 2021 Christmas Village, as required by the Council's contract with John Codona's Pleasure Fairs Ltd., to enable the Committee to monitor the service delivery.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee -

- 2.1 Instruct the Chief Officer – City Growth to report back to the Strategic Commissioning Committee in 2023 with John Codona's, Pleasure Fairs Ltd.'s annual feedback report, as per their contract obligations.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 Aberdeen Inspired have been a funding partner, with responsibility for the delivery of the Christmas Village event, from its inception in 2015 until the service level agreement ceased in 2018. During this period Aberdeen Inspired contracted John Codona's Pleasure Fairs Ltd., as the Christmas Village Operator to manage the event on their behalf.
- 3.2 On 28 May 2019 the Strategic Commissioning Committee approved the Business Case PLA011 to extend this service level agreement for a further year, in order to ensure the successful delivery of Aberdeen's Christmas Village in 2019. The Committee also resolved to instruct the Chief Officer City Growth to provide a further Procurement Business Case to the meeting of the Strategic

Commissioning Committee on 21 November 2019, detailing options for the delivery of Aberdeen's Christmas Village 2020 onwards.

- 3.3 Following this decision, Officers assessed the options available which would ensure the continuation and development of Aberdeen's Christmas Village and concluded that the best approach would be to engage in a procurement exercise to find a suitable Christmas Village Operator. This was the Officer recommendation as it ensured that Aberdeen received best value offering available from the open market; ensured competency of operator, reducing the risk or reputational damage or financial loss; allowed Aberdeen City Council to receive and consider alternative proposals for the content of its Christmas Village; ensured adherence to public procurement policy, legal frameworks and industry best practice; and ensured transparency and accountability for use of public funds.
- 3.4 This approach (PLA019) was supported by funding and delivery partner Aberdeen Inspired and approved by the Strategic Commissioning Committee in November 2019, with an Open Procedure Invitation to Tender following shortly thereafter.
- 3.5 Despite work to publicise this opportunity, only two bids were received. The conclusion of this procurement exercise was the awarding of the Christmas Village Delivery Contract to John Codona's Pleasure Fairs Ltd. for an initial period of one year, with the Council reserving the right to extend the contract by a further 12 months up to a maximum of 3 times until 2023. Due to the pandemic, the award of this contract was delayed until May 2021.
- 3.6 Following the Council budget in March 2022, Officers are in the process of extending this contract. As this contract ends following the 2023 event (subject to funding approval), the intention of Officers would be to retender in 2023 to ensure continued service delivery in 2024. A report will be presented to Strategic Commissioning Committee in due course.
- 3.7 Despite uncertainty, and operational challenges, caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, John Codona's Pleasure Fairs Ltd. delivered the Aberdeen's Christmas Village in November 2021. The delivery of the event was supported by Officers of Aberdeen City Council and representatives of Aberdeen Inspired.
- 3.8 In line with the Council's contract with John Codona's Pleasure Fairs Ltd, a feedback report was produced by Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce. This report is attached as Appendix 1.
- 3.9 Additionally, feedback from Aberdeen Inspired's Board has been positive, with their CEO, Adrian Watson, confirming their agreement to continue to support the event on Broad Street in 2022.
- 3.10 Officers have also considered the Springboard data available to determine whether the event increases footfall in the city centre. The data can be summarised as demonstrating that the Christmas Village results in a large increase around the Broad St area, and a smaller increase across city centre generally.

Year	City Centre % Change	Upperkirkgate % Change
2018	8%	52%
2019	6%	32%
2021	4% ¹	23% ²

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Funding of £150,000 was approved for the 2022 Christmas Village by full Council in March 2022.
- 4.2 Additional financial support of up to £50,000 from Aberdeen Inspired is anticipated.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This report is expected to have no impact on Aberdeen City Council's contractual arrangements with John Codona's Pleasure Fairs Ltd.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 As part of the council's tender process, bidders were informed of the Council's aim to act as a role model within the public sector, by carrying out its activities in a responsible and sustainable manner. Bidders were scored on how their plans would assist the Council in furthering these sustainability and community benefits objectives in relation to this Contract.

In response, John Codona's Pleasure Fairs Ltd highlighted that they are committed to reducing their environmental impact and are continually improving their environmental performance as an integral part of our strategy and operating methods. Key initiatives employed by John Codona's Pleasure Fairs Ltd. include:

- Working with a local packaging supplier 'Travelstock Packaging Ltd' to move the majority of their single use packaging to alternatives that are recyclable, compostable or biodegradable.
- Food and drink supplies are sourced via local companies.
- Offer visitors a souvenir beer 'Stein' cup. Any subsequent purchases of beer would be discounted by re-using the Stein cup.
- Ensuring food or produce close to expiry, but perfectly edible and safe to eat, is offered to local homeless charities such as the soup kitchen located in close proximity to Aberdeen Christmas Village.

¹ Given the rise of Omicron, and public confidence during the 2021 event, it is assumed that this has had an impact on the overall % change.

² Springboard counter no longer in use at Upperkirkgate, so % increase has been estimated based on previous data.

- Oil and food waste from catering units is recycled and turned into renewable energy via OLLECO
- Visitors are encouraged to correctly dispose of their waste in different coloured/ labelled bins strategically placed throughout the venue and clustered together to ensure visitors can easily identify the correct disposal method.

6.2 Due to the 'mains' power supply on Broad Street being insufficient for some of the larger infrastructure requirements at the event, there is a reliance of temporary mobile generators, which has a negative environmental impact.

6.3 However, to minimise this negative impact, improvements have been made to the mains power source in the Quadrangle. This will allow the market to operate using solely mains power which will reduce the reliance on temporary generators and reduces the environmental impact of the event. This measure supports Aberdeen City Council's duty to adapt to climate change.

6.4 Officers are monitoring the development of technologies that support hydrogen mobile generators and will continue to liaise with contractors and suppliers to explore options for their utilisation at all Council events as progress is made and the technology becomes more viable.

6.5 The road closures installed in and around the event site, reduce the traffic around the area which has a positive impact on the air quality in the area.

6.6 As part of the event's marketing activities, efforts will be made to promote and encourage sustainable transport options.

7. RISK

The assessment of risk contained within the table below is considered to be consistent with the Council's Risk Appetite Statement.

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	No significant risks identified against the category.			
Compliance	Risk that Aberdeen	The council's contract with John Codona's	L	Yes

	<p>City Council's appointed Christmas Village delivery partner fails to comply with statutory obligations, whilst delivering an event on Council land.</p>	<p>Pleasure Fairs sets out their legal obligations as the 'occupier' under the Occupiers Liability Act (Scotland) 1960. Additionally, the contract stipulates that they are responsible for ensuring that all aspects of their work-related activity are safe, fit for purpose and compliant with all relevant codes of practise, regulations & industry best practise.</p> <p>Finally, the contract stipulates that health and safety documentation, relating to the event, must be submitted to Aberdeen and that all relevant regulatory permissions are in place. These documents include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event Manual • Contingency Plan • Crowd Management Plan • Traffic Management Plan • Wind Management Plan • Counter Terrorism Plan • Noise management Plan • Risk Assessment • Fire Risk Assessment • Communications Plan • Marketing Plan • Insurance • Sub-Contractors Documentation • Food Safety Documentation 		
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		These documents will be shared with multi-agency partners six weeks prior to the event to allow for feedback and advice to be given as required.		
Operational	The event restricts access to Marischal College, which prevents members of the public accessing the services which they require.	Measures will be put in place to maintain public access to Aberdeen City Council services and Police Scotland's customer service centre.	L	Yes
Financial	No significant risks identified against the category.			
Reputational	Constituents have grown accustomed to a high-quality Christmas Village offering. Failure to meet these expectations represents reputation risk for the organisation and the city.	As is demonstrated with the feedback report, contained as Appendix 1, the current Christmas Village offer meets the expectations of those who were surveyed.	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	No significant risks identified against the category.			

8. OUTCOMES

COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN

Impact of Report	
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	<p>Aberdeen's Christmas Village links to the Aberdeen Events365 Strategy and Plan, a City Century Masterplan project which aims to develop a new portfolio of events that can be attracted to the city.</p> <p>The proposals within this report support many of the objectives of the City Centre Masterplan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promoting the view of Aberdeen city centre as an energetic, inclusive and fascinating place where people will want to live, work and visit.• Creating a stronger and more diverse city centre economy.• Building on local distinctiveness and maximising local business opportunities.• Ensuring Aberdeen city centre reflects its distinctive local culture, so it is like no other place.

Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan

Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	<p>The proposals within this report support the delivery of LOIP Stretch Outcome 2.1 Supporting labour market to recover from impact of Covid-19 on employment.</p> <p>Events supported by the Council, such as the Christmas Village, provide an opportunity to promote and enhance the long-term economic prosperity of Aberdeen and the wider region by attracting additional visitors to the city because of the event. In turn this attracts additional commercial activity in the city. Officers work with partners including Visit Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen Inspired to maximise both the benefit of events on city-centre businesses and provide information on the event itself.</p>
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Regional and City Strategies	<p>The proposals support the City Council's Economic Rescue plan by strengthening local supply chains and contributing towards local business growth; creating space to move and enjoy; and supportive the Shop, Visit, Eat Local initiatives.</p>
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9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Not required.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required.
Other	Not required.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 PLA011 - Delivery Contract for Aberdeen Christmas Village 2019

10.2 PLA019 - Aberdeen Christmas Village 2020 onwards

11. APPENDICES

11.1 Appendix 1: Christmas Village Feedback Report

11.2 Appendix 2: Christmas Village Accounts – Exempt

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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