

REPORT TO EVENTS AND TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT REPORT



Report Reference E-20-10
Meeting Date 11th January 2021
Agenda Item 7
Prepared by Town Centre and Marketing Officer

1.0 THE KNUTSFORD VOUCHER

The scheme has been received positively both by shops and the public and the number of vouchers sold have been encouraging. Promotion of the voucher has been fairly low key but will continue into 2021 along the theme of 'keeping spend local' and supporting the local economy. It is envisaged the voucher is an all-year-round purchase for birthdays, Mother's Day etc although it is recognised peak sales will be during the Christmas period

To date, £5000 of £10 vouchers have been sold (this includes £3700 worth sold to We Are Knutsford) and £1,480 of £5 vouchers have been sold.

£1,810 of vouchers have been redeemed across the following businesses: The Market Butcher, Hal Whittaker, Mr Simms, Dexter and Jones, Jonty's Fruit and Veg, Diamond Nails and Woods Butchers.

2.0 CHRISTMAS MARKET WEEKEND TRADING

The Town Centre and Marketing Officer is in the process of gathering feedback from retailers regarding the Christmas Market weekend. Feedback so far is as follows:

- Essential Shops – Two reported a reduction in turnover of 35%
- Hospitality – One reported a record Saturday – taking more in one day than they would in a week in January. One reported a 25% reduction in turnover. However, hospitality, are supporters of the Christmas Markets although it should be noted there was no hot food stalls this year.
- Two retailers feel it should be held late November each year and not December as it impacts negatively into their busiest period.
- Five would prefer it to be Sunday only as any road closures due to the market or entertainment reduces footfall for their business
- One would prefer it not to be held at all

- Five retailers support the market due to the 'feelgood' factor it brings to the town although their footfall decreases that weekend
- Two would prefer the market to remain on the car parks but keep Princess Street open to traffic
- One was expecting the Saturday to be 'awful' (they have considered closing in the past), but it was better than last year and in line with trading post Lockdown 2. They also opened on

the Sunday, quieter than normal but felt this was due to the poor weather not the market per se.

3.0 TOWN CENTRE BARRIERS

In the light of the new lockdown, it is envisaged that barriers to enable social distancing will remain in place. The TCMO will have an update meeting with Cheshire East in the coming weeks but expects Cheshire East will confirm they will not pay for planters to replace the 'toblerone' barriers.

4.0 TOWN CENTRE VACANCY RATES

The vacancy rate currently stands at 7.69%, or 5.56% if excluding units under offer.

Most recently Danielle Draper Jewellery has opened on King Street and Overfinch on Canute Place.

5.0 TOWN CENTRE FOOTFALL

According to data provided by Cheshire East, town centre footfall was down by 15% in November compared to the national average of 31%.