

Report of	Meeting	Date
Deputy Chief Executive (Introduced by Executive Member (Resources))	Council	Tuesday, 15 November 2022

## Update on Christmas proposals

Is this report confidential?	No
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Is this decision key?	Not applicable
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### Purpose of the Report

1. To update members on the plans for the Christmas celebrations this year and outline the measures being taken to make the events more energy efficient.

### Recommendations

2. To note the activities planned for the Christmas 2022 celebrations.
3. To agree the measures set out in the report with regards to energy efficiency.

### Reasons for recommendations

4. To highlight measures being taken with our events programme to demonstrate our commitment to working with suppliers to reduce energy consumption.

### Other options considered and rejected

5. The alternative option considered would be to look at attractions, which use little or no power, but when compared to the programme we are delivering these were deemed inadequate when it comes to attracting people into the borough.
6. We have worked with suppliers to ensure the power supplies are as energy efficient as possible and as time passes more options with greener and renewable power supplies will become more available on the market.

### Executive summary

7. Our events programme is really successful in attracting visitors into our borough but the attractions often require a significant amount of power as they rely on temporary installations.
8. The Christmas activities are our biggest draw on power so this report summarises what we are planning to do over the festive period and what changes can be made to make them more energy efficient.

## Corporate priorities

9. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all	<b>A strong local economy</b>
Clean, safe and healthy communities	An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area

## Background to the report

10. The festive period is a really important time of year for our local economy and the council puts a lot of time and effort into providing festive light displays and attractions to entertain people of all ages.
11. To put on these attractions does require a lot of power and we often face questions regarding the carbon emissions from such events.
12. This is the first Christmas since the pandemic started that we've been able to host a full programme of activity and we have set out what measures are being taken to reduce emissions and move towards a more cleaner, greener events programme.

## Programme of activities for Christmas

13. Planning is well underway for our festive period with the first of our events – the Christmas Lights Switch On and Christmas Market taking place at the weekend. The full programme is:
  - a. Christmas Lights Switch On and Christmas Market – Sunday 20 November  
This will feature an entertainment stage on Market Street (outside Pearsons), where the switch on will take place. Running alongside this will be the Totally Locally Chorley Christmas Market across the streets in the town centre, which will run from 10am-6pm.
  - b. Meet Father Christmas in Astley Coach House – every weekend in the run up to Christmas starting Saturday and Sunday 26 and 27 November  
Now we have admission fees for Astley Hall we are offering a different experience this year with a Christmas-themed exhibition in the Hall and the meet Father Christmas experience in our Coach House gallery. This will allow us to introduce something new with a brunch with Santa session in the mornings and then more of a traditional grotto visit in the subsequent sessions each day.
  - c. Christmas land train – every weekend starting Saturday and Sunday 26 and 27 November  
With the Hall back open this year we will reinstate the festive train that links Astley Hall and the town centre. This will be separated from the meet Father Christmas experience meaning there will be more flexibility for people if they just want to ride the train or just want to visit Father Christmas.
  - d. Christmas attraction – Friday 9 December – Monday 2 January  
This will feature the real ice rink, festive rides and tipis providing food and drink for visitors. We will also supplement this with entertainment over the weekends that will include ice sculptures on Saturdays 10 and 17 December.

### **What are the challenges from an emissions perspective?**

14. There are three elements of the Christmas activities that generate significant carbon emissions. These are the Christmas lights across the town centre, the land train and the Christmas attraction, in particular the ice rink.
15. While in an ideal world we would be able to reduce the carbon emissions further we have to be mindful of two key things.
16. Firstly, the events bring in visitors to the borough that we would not ordinarily attend and spend their money here. So there has to be a balance between hosting activities that will contribute to carbon emissions against not doing anything at all, which would have a detrimental impact on the local economy.
17. The option of having the ice rink as the Christmas attraction was overwhelmingly supported by the Town Team as the one they'd like to see again this year, from a long list of options supplied at the Town Team meeting held in October 2022.
18. Secondly, the market has yet to see product development whereby we can provide the temporary power supply required using renewable means. As an example generators that use HVO (hydro-treated vegetable oil) are not powerful enough for the chillers used to keep the ice frozen.
19. Where this becomes available we will work with our suppliers to make use of these developments for all our events moving forward.
20. It is also important to note that the events also give our residents festive activities to enjoy here in Chorley, which reduces their need to travel outside of the borough for experiences such as the ice rink.

### **What progress has been made in reducing carbon emissions?**

21. Each year we look at our events with a view to see how we can make them more environmentally-friendly and the following actions have been put in place for this year:

#### **Christmas trees and lighting**

22. All trees are recycled through either the Fylde Coast Sea Defence Project or through the Wildlife Habitat and protection projects.
23. All lighting systems use the latest LED Technology to extend the useable life of the light strings and reduce energy usage by up to 85%. This also reduces the repairs and maintenance cost with the more durable and greater reliability the need for repairs is minimised. Any defective lighting/electrical systems are recycled through our local recycle centres.
24. An example of this in practice would be say a festoon of 500 lamps with each being 15W (as would have once been, sometimes 25W) would once have consumed around 7.5kw. The led equivalent of the same festoon would now consume around 0.8kW. A whole street can in theory comfortably now be run from a single domestic plug socket.

25. Tree Delivery and Installation – the tree carrying capacity of our supplier’s delivery system has been increased this year with the aim of reducing the number of trips to complete the installation process.

### **Land train**

26. All the land train operators we have approached have no alternative to diesel that would provide enough capacity and be able to pull the weight up the inclines in Astley Park.
27. This is something we will keep under review and look at alternative options in future years. With the expectation that electric land trains will become more common practice in future years.

### **Christmas attraction**

28. The main source of carbon emissions is from the diesel generator. We have been able to work with suppliers to source a 200kva generator that is new on the market and more fuel efficient compared to the 250kva generator we used last year.
29. This could potentially save us 10 litres of fuel per hour as a 250kva generator working at 100% capacity would use 51.4litres of diesel per hour whilst a 200kva generator would only use a maximum of 41.4litres of diesel per hour. But this has to be considered against the fact that if we have mild weather during the period that the ice rink is in place it will inevitably require more power to stay frozen.
30. We will also continue to provide recycling bins and those supplying food and drink on site are being asked to ensure all products are recyclable and not single use plastics where possible. This will coincide with the increased recycling bins already installed in the town centre and in Astley Park.
31. Looking to the future if we are successful with our bid to the Levelling Up fund this will provide us with a dedicated events space in the town centre that could be set up to provide sufficient power from the ground that could be from renewable sources and prevent the need to bring in temporary power solutions.
32. We will also look at giving public transport equal coverage with car parking when it comes to advertising how people can get into Chorley as this may also help to reduce emissions.

### **Climate change and air quality**

33. The work noted in this report has an overall negative impact on the council’s carbon emissions and the wider climate emergency and sustainability targets of the council.
34. In particular the report impacts on the following activities (highlighted in bold):
  - a. net carbon zero by 2030,
  - b. energy use / renewable energy sources**
  - c. waste and the use of single use plastics,
  - d. sustainable forms of transport,**
  - e. air quality,**
  - f. flooding risks,
  - g. green areas and biodiversity.
35. The following mitigation measures have been undertaken to limit the environmental impact:

- a. The Council is looking at alternative fuels to diesel and contacting our supplier to ensure conformity of equipment.
- b. Energy efficiency measures have been taken to increase efficiency while still ensuring a high local economy during the festive period.
- c. Future plans through the Levelling Up bid will allow the Council to supply cable supply to events from sources of Council owned renewables.
- d. Active and public transport options advertised to visitors.

**Equality and diversity**

36. There are no equality and diversity implications of this report.

**Risk**

37. In relation to this report the main risks are around the wider success of the Christmas events and ensuring we attract enough visitors to ensure the activities are on budget. We will mitigate this by using our feedback from previous years and having a marketing plan in place.

38. There is no direct risk involving the alternatives we are introducing this year as our suppliers are supportive of the changes and have been helpful in adapting practices to become more environmentally-friendly.

**Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer**

39. There are no direct financial implications of this report. Costs are within existing, approved, budgets and are reported through quarterly finance reports.

**Comments of the Monitoring Officer**

40. There are no concerns with this report from a legal perspective.

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