

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Policy and Governance	Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel	30 November 2017

## PERFORMANCE FOCUS – COUNCIL EVENTS PROGRAMME

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

- To provide the Performance Panel with contextual information and initial questions for focus on the Council events programme performance.

### RECOMMENDATION(S)

- That the panel consider the context and questions to be discussed at the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel, with a view to understanding performance in this area.

<b>Confidential report</b> Please bold as appropriate	Yes	<b>No</b>
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### CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

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

### BACKGROUND

- In its terms of reference, the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel agreed that at each meeting, as well as considering performance reports, the panel have the opportunity to focus in on any specific area of service delivery. For the November meeting, the panel have selected the Council events programme delivery as an area of focus.

## CHORLEY COUNCIL EVENTS PROGRAMME

5. Chorley Council has gained an excellent reputation for organising and delivering events for both residents and visitors to Chorley. The first coordinated events delivered through a dedicated team were held in 2009 with the delivery of just two annual events, Picnic in the Park and the Christmas light switch on.
6. The Council events delivery has significantly increased since 2009 and now sees a yearlong programme of activity which delivers events for people of all ages and attracts both residents and visitors to Chorley alike. In 2016/17, the Council's events programme attracted over 60,000 attendances.
7. The 2017/18 budget for the delivery of events is £159,000 and within this budget a number of events are delivered by the Council across the year (more detail on each of the events can be found at Appendix A).
8. The events programme is delivered by the Communications and Events Team which also encompasses responsibility for internal and external communications including press enquiries, social media, branding and website development.
9. The delivery of events supports the Council's corporate priorities of being an ambitious council, involving residents in their local area and developing a strong local economy. Events provide income generation to offset their cost of delivery, support economic activity in the area and provide engaging activity for both residents and visitors whilst raising the profile of Chorley as a place to live, work and visit.

## PERFORMANCE CONTEXT

### Events, attendances and costs

10. The table below outlines information on events delivered over 2016 and 2017. The table outlines attendance figures available for each event, the amount of income generated from each event where applicable and the net cost of each event.

Year	Month	Event	Last attendance figure	Income	Net Cost (after income)
2017	April	What's your story, Chorley?	1,500		£5,400
	April	Chorley Grand Prix	2,000 +	£4,000	£36,000
	Summer months	Theatre in the Park x2	1,000	£5,000	£2,000
	June	Picnic in the Park	8,000		£15,000
	June	Taste of Chorley	1,000		£2,000
	October	Chorley Live	10,000	£15,000	£0
	July	Chorley Flower Show*	13,000	£62,108	£67,000

2016	November	Astley Park Bonfire and Fireworks*	4,000	£500	£12,337
	November	Christmas lights switch on	5,000	£3,000	£14,000
	November	Christmas pantomime	400	£900	£600
	December	Chorley's Santa Express	2,400	£17,000	£2,000
	December (throughout month)	Christmas attraction	15,000	£40,000	£5,000
	<b>Total</b>		<b>61,300</b>	<b>£147,508</b>	<b>£161,337**</b>

\* 2017 figures yet to be confirmed

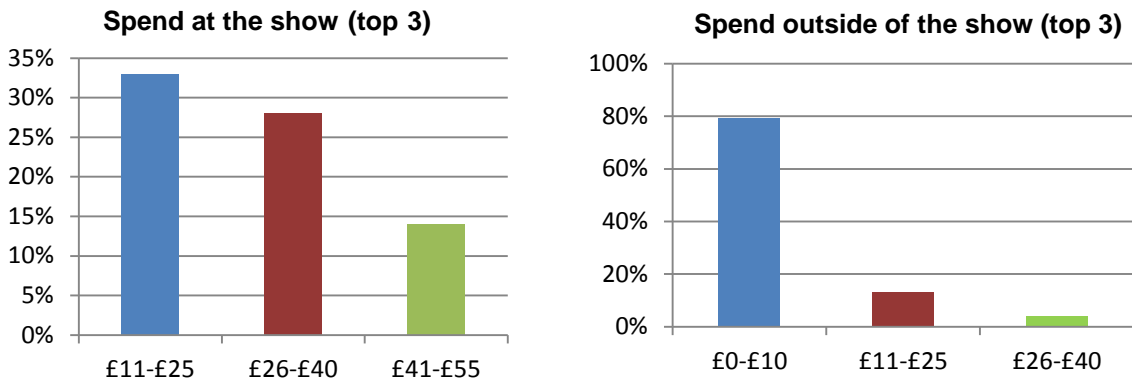
\*\*not reflective of total cost of 2017/18 events

11. A total of 61,300 people attended the events listed above. It can be seen that both the Flower Show and the Christmas attractions have the highest number of attendances of the all events organised. However, it must be noted the Flower Show is a weekend event compared to the Christmas attraction which is held over a longer period therefore the Flower Show can be deemed to attract the highest number of visitors over a two day period.
12. The Flower Show is the highest costing event held across the year, with the 2016 show costing in the region of £67,000 (net). The lowest costing event is Chorley Live which was delivered at no net cost to the Council in 2017 due to the income generated from this event covering the outgoing cost of organising the event.
13. With regards to value for money or cost per attendance, Chorley Live shows the best value for money in terms of attendances at nil cost per visitor. The event with the highest cost per attendance is the Chorley Grand Prix, although it is difficult to exactly quantify attendances at this event due to its nature and they layout of the of the course and it is therefore thought that actual attendance at the 2017 event was actually much higher than 2,000 people.
14. The event with the highest income is the Chorley Flower Show, with an income of around £62,000 generated in 2016.

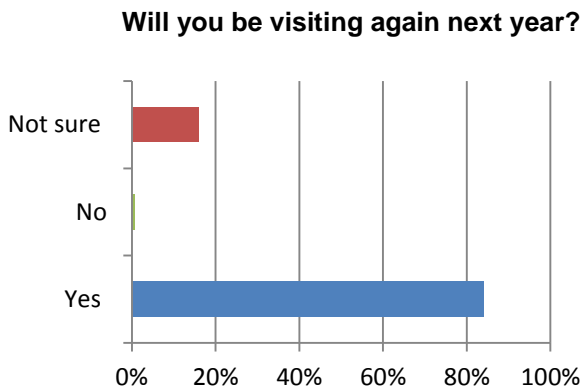
### Event feedback focus – Chorley Flower Show 2017

15. Following the delivery of events, a satisfaction survey is sent to customers asking for their views. A total of 283 people completed the feedback questionnaire following the Chorley Flower Show in 2017. The below outlines some key areas of feedback received from visitors:

16. Respondents were asked what their favourite part of the show was with the majority of people mentioning the words **gardens**, **displays**, **marquees** and **stalls** in their response to this question.



17. The majority of people said that they spent between £11-40 pounds whilst at the Flower Show and the majority of respondents spent between £0-10 on their visit to Chorley outside of the show.



18. 84% of respondents said that they would like to visit the Flower Show again next year.

### Marketing and promotion of events

19. Council events are marketed through a number of different means including the Council website; Check out Chorley website, social media (Facebook and Twitter) and the What's Happening magazine which is a publication produced by the Council three times a year.

20. The below table shows the top three ways in which people heard about Picnic in the park, Chorley Live and the Chorley Flower Show events held in 2017:

	<b>Chorley Live</b>	<b>Chorley Flower Show</b>	<b>Picnic in the Park</b>
1	<b>Previous attendance at event</b>	<b>Previous attendance at event</b>	<b>Facebook</b>
2	Facebook	Facebook	Word of mouth
3	Word of mouth	Word of mouth	What's Happening magazine/Council website

21. The most popular ways in which people heard about the above events were Facebook and attendance at previous events. Facebook is recognised as a key tool to enable two way communication between the Council and residents and the feedback from visitors demonstrates its effectiveness in communicating about events. Previous attendance and word of mouth were also popular ways of people hearing about events and this demonstrates the success of previous events, encouraging people to attend year on year and talk positively about the events to friends and family.
22. One of the key marketing tools used for promoting Chorley as a place to visit including the promotion of events is the Check Out Chorley website. Over quarter two 2017/18, there were over 17,000 page views on the Check Out Chorley website.
23. Facebook is also used as a key communications tool to engage with residents and is also used for the marketing of events. Over quarter two 2017/18, there were over 210,000 post engagements on the Council's Facebook page. Post engagements include likes, comments and shares about anything that we post on our page, including any information about events.
24. Performance against the indicator 'number of event attendees' will be reported at quarter four 2017; however performance so far over this year for event attendances is extremely positive with 40,500 events attendances against an annual target of 65,000.

## **QUESTIONS**

25. The below provides some suggested questions to initiate discussions of the panel:
1. Given the financial challenges facing the council;
    - a. How could event delivery be made more sustainable?
    - b. Other authorities are pursuing sponsorship as a way to fund events, has this been considered by the Council?
  2. Is the economic impact and benefit of each of the events known? How could this be measured and reported to ensure that the events we deliver provide the most impact?
  3. Which events in the calendar have the most/least impact in terms of attendance, cost, income and wider benefits to the borough and how could the more successful events be developed?
  4. Is there a delivery plan for future events, can a brief outline of this plan be discussed within the meeting?

## IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

26. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors' comments are included:

Finance		Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	
Legal		Integrated Impact Assessment required?	
No significant implications in this area	x	Policy and Communications	

## COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

27. No comment

## COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

28. No comment

REBECCA HUDDLESTON  
DIRECTOR OF POLICY AND GOVERNANCE

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Kate Howcroft	5061	14 Nov 17	O+S Performance Panel – Council events performance context

## **Appendix A – summary of events held over the year**

### **What's your story Chorley?**

This event is organised in partnership with the Creative Network and is Chorley's literary festival which sees authors, poets, writers and other creatives running workshops or sessions in various venues around the town centre. The 2017 event saw the introduction of a book bench trail with local schools decorating the benches which were then displayed across the borough. The book benches proved extremely popular with many people visiting the town centre to see them, the trail has since been replicated in Manchester City Centre.

### **Chorley Grand Prix**

This event is organised in partnership with British Cycling and has proven very popular with cycling fans and families within the borough and has seen others visiting from further afield. Feedback from British Cycling showed that this race gained the most media coverage by some distance against others with a reach of over 14 million.

### **Picnic in the park**

This event sees the Council working in partnership with Rock FM to bring a large stage to Astley Park with a main headline act aimed at children and families. Picnic in the park 2017 saw over 8,000 attendances.

### **Theatre in the park**

The Theatre in the Park events are held at Astley Hall and Park and this year saw the delivery of performances of The Secret Garden in July and The Taming of the shrew in September. This is a paid for event.

### **Taste of Chorley**

First held in 2017, this event was a mini food festival involving stalls in the town centre. The stalls were run by town centre food-related businesses to sell products and raise awareness of their business. There were also some cookery demonstrations and recipe cards prepared to promote the message of healthy eating and health and wellbeing.

### **Chorley Flower Show**

2017 saw the delivery of the third annual Chorley Flower Show. This is one of the largest and most ambitious events we deliver over the year. The 2017 event saw increased attendance and positive visitor and trader feedback.

### **Chorley Live**

Chorley Live is held over two evenings (Friday and Saturday) in October and is organised in partnership with the Creative Network. The event sees live music being played across numerous venues in the town centre. This year over 10,000 people attended the event.

### **Bonfire and firework display**

This is an annual event which sees a bonfire and firework display being held in Astley Park along with food and drinks stalls being available. The 2017 event saw over

### **Christmas light switch on**

The event has traditionally been organised in partnership with Rock FM and had included a stage, warm-up acts, a headline act and firework/ pyrotechnics for the stage and the town hall. The aim of the event is to get people into the town centre to kick-start the festive shopping period.

### **Astley Illuminated**

Astley Illuminated is a family event based around on Nuit Musee Paris (Paris Museum Night) and is designed to show Astley Hall and ground in a different light, often highlighting unseen treasures such as paintings, ceilings, furniture external building features and landscapes. This is a pre-Christmas/Christmas launch event for Chorley.

**Christmas attraction**

Over the last few years we've had a variety of attractions including a snow slide, a Nutcracker trail, the Big Wheel and a real ice rink. The aim has been to draw people into Chorley to do Christmas shopping and despite mixed weather at times income from ticket sales has roughly offset expenditure on the attraction. We generally have good feedback about the attraction and last year the real ice rink and winter wonderland was the best yet in terms of feedback from visitors.

**Santa Express**

Now in its fourth year, this attraction links the town centre to Astley Hall where there is a chance for children to see Father Christmas and receive a gift. The attraction proves very popular with tickets nearly always selling out, with ticket sales covering the majority of the costs of the attraction.