



## CAERPHILLY TOWN CENTRE COMMITTEE MEETING - 16TH FEBRUARY 2012

**SUBJECT: CAERPHILLY MEDIEVAL MARKET**

**REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 To update Members on Caerphilly Medieval Market.

### **2. SUMMARY**

2.1 The 2011 Medieval market was the 8th year that the event has been run in Caerphilly and the 3rd time that the event has been run in its current format with stalls running through the town centre.

### **3. LINKS TO STRATEGY**

3.1 Caerphilly town centre management are a key part of the Regeneration Strategy one of the four thematic themes of Caerphilly Community Strategy.

### **4. THE REPORT**

4.1 Caerphilly town centre footfall for the weekend showed an increase when compared to 2010 of 5% despite a rain affected Sunday. There was a 23% increase in the footfall for the Saturday of the weekend compared with 2010. In comparison to the previous weekend, footfall figures showed a 76% increase in the Saturday footfall although the actual footfall figure for the town centre will be higher than that recorded by the footfall counters due to the location of the stalls.



Coach companies attended from Plymouth, Bath, Western Super Mare, Westbury and Gloucestershire and positive feedback has been received from many members of the public who attended the event from both near and far.

The main focus of attractions included over 140 stalls selling seasonal goods, craft and food complemented by a programme of entertainment inside and outside Caerphilly Castle aimed at the whole family.

The event was organised in partnership with CADW who organised an entertainment and activity programme within the Castle grounds that emphasised the medieval theme. Supporting town centre activities and events included the Caerphilly farmers market, a continental market, street entertainment, music, children's workshops and a small number of funfair rides.

A number of traders on Pentrebanne Street traded in the street for the event taking advantage of the road closure that combined with locating craft stalls and falconry along Pentrebanne Street helped to drive footfall to the indoor market.

The events team ran a schools competition to design a banner that could be displayed at the event. Over 50 banners were produced and the winning entry was judged as Park Primary School.



The BBC partnered with CADW to run a number of Merlin related activities inside the Castle grounds including an exclusive preview of the penultimate episode of the series in the Great Hall during the Sunday of the event. Cast members and original costumes were on display for the event and a special 'green' screen allowed visitors to have photographs taken 'on set' in the mystical world of Merlin.



CADW's Illuminata event was run to coincide with the Medieval Market this year and was free to the public running two showings a night for 3 nights offering scope for future joint working with CADW to develop the event offering.

#### 4.2 Areas For Improvement

Whilst retailers had several communications outlining the road closure plans for the event there were still one or two issues with delivery vehicles struggling to access Cardiff Road during the set up phase of the event.

Coach companies are now spoilt for choice when organising a trip to a festive market so we need to keep adding value building new attractions in to the event. From feedback at the event our unique selling point appears to be the creation of a positive atmosphere and we need to keep building on this through the use of street entertainment combined with the sounds and aromas of a traditional market.



### **4.3 Post-Event Surveys**

Following the event, surveys were sent to each of the businesses within the town centre to gauge their perception of the Medieval Christmas Market. A total of 31 questionnaires were returned.

Of the respondents, 87% said that they would like to see the event again. Only 51% felt that the event directly benefitted their business but the event was considered important by 68%.

In previous years, retailers were offered the opportunity to participate in a voucher booklet discount scheme. As not all retailers took part in this scheme, it was decided that a fresh, innovative approach would be adopted. As such, retailers were sent an A2 special offer poster with their copy of the Town Centre News. This poster would enable businesses to promote any special offer they wished and at any point, even while the event was in progress. Unfortunately, still only 1/3 of retailers offered discounts during the event. Of those who did, only a slim majority reported that the offers drew more people in. As such, there wasn't much enthusiasm to offer discounts during future events.

The questionnaire gave retailers the opportunity to add any additional comments on the event if they wished. These comments were generally positive about the event, particularly its organisation. Indeed, 84% of retailers felt that the full road closure of Cardiff Road worked well

## **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 Access implications were considered in running the event, to ensure it was fully inclusive.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are no specific financial implications to consider from the report.

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are no personnel implications arising.

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

8.1 Consultees comments incorporated into report.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 Report for information only.

## **10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

10.1 For Members to note the content of the report.

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Consultees: Andrew Highway (Town Centre Development Manager)