Dear Sir/Madam,

Economic and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel  
Thursday, 8th August, 2013

With reference to the above meeting, I now attach the following report which was marked “to follow” on the agenda:

Agenda Item No. 8 – German Christmas Market (report of the Head of Estates and Town Centres)

The other report which was marked “to follow” on the agenda regarding Town Centre Markets Uptake (Agenda item No. 7) will be sent to you early next week.

Members of the Panel are asked to bring this additional report with them to the meeting.

Yours faithfully,

ALAN FRANKS  
Managing Director

To: All Members of the Economic and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel  
(Councillors V.N. Fowler (Chair), K.D. Wilson (Vice-Chair), B.L. Hawkes, J. Haynes, K.A. Kondakor, B.J. Longden, N.J.P. Phillips, C.M. Watkins and K. Young)
AGENDA ITEM NO. 8

NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to: Economic and Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Panel
Date: 8th August, 2013
From: Head of Estates & Town Centres
Subject: German Christmas Market
Portfolio: Finance & Civic Affairs

OBJECTIVES OF OVERVIEW

To consider the provision of a German Christmas market in Nuneaton Town Centre during the festive period.

WHAT IS THE PANEL BEING ASKED TO CONSIDER?

The Members of the Panel will bear in mind the context of the corporate priorities and the financial constraints and come to a view on the provision of a German Christmas market in Nuneaton Town Centre during the festive period.

WHO CAN THE PANEL INFLUENCE?

The outcomes of the Panel’s debate will be provided to the Portfolioholder for Finance & Civic Affairs, who has responsibility for Town Centre matters, for consideration.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Operators of specialist markets, such as this, tend to want to trade in the best pitches for a defined period of time. This will be based upon costs of providing the market and fees recovered from traders. In terms of a typical German market this is not financially viable for a small Town, such as Nuneaton. Further, those with the typical German wooden stalls are limited to areas of significant population, such as Birmingham and Bristol, and operate in prime locations, 7 days per week, for up to 6 weeks closing just before Christmas.

- Existing market traders have agreements with the Council relating to the street markets on Wednesdays and Saturdays and consequently we would be unable to allocate these areas for use as a German market.
The Council runs a number of additional markets on the run up to Christmas. These have been provisionally set as 15th, 22nd, 23rd and 24th December, 2013.

A number of national and regional market operators have been approached to ascertain level of interest in operating a German style Christmas market in Nuneaton. None have expressed an interest in running such a market in Nuneaton and the following comments have been received:

“German markets have been very popular for a number of years and have expanded in our opinion to the point that many are not generally in any way German with the exception that they trade from wooden chalet stalls. Traders have often been nowhere nearer than Hull to Germany.”

“They may also have passed their sell by date.”

“We do have partners from Europe and run themed markets but they tend to be over the Summer period.”

“We tend to look at traditional English Christmas markets and our Farming and Fine food has been particularly popular, as have Christmas Crafts.”

“Markets as you well know are going through considerable change and we are having to look at new ways of delivering the service.”

The Council is trialing a number of Craft markets, riding on the back of the existing market trading Saturdays, throughout the forthcoming year. These are planned for 31st August, 12th October and 7th December.

The Panel is asked to acknowledge that there is a lack of interest from German Christmas market operators in running a market in Nuneaton Town Centre during the festive period.

Further, the Panel is asked to note that there is no interest from operators to run a market of this type in Nuneaton Town Centre outside the festive period.

Panel could give consideration to running other themed markets, subject to demand from traders and operators, at key points during the year as adding to existing market trading days offer, or as stand alone “one off” events on non-market days.