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Document / Report #365

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Title	Winter Festival 2025 report
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1. Purpose

1. To report to the committee on the fireworks display for 2025.

2. Background

1. The annual Winter Festival event was well received, bringing the community together to celebrate the start of the festive season. The event offered a variety of different family-friendly activities, entertainment and opportunities for local traders to showcase their products.
2. It was held on Saturday 29th November 2025 in the Town Centre.

3. Attendance

1. The festival attracted a good turnout, with families, children and visitors of all ages coming together throughout the afternoon. Footfall was steady throughout the day, with peak attendance during the school stage performance and the Christmas lights switch-on.

4. Events Highlights

1. Food and craft stalls - a diverse selection of food vendors and craft stalls created a lovely Christmas market feel, with most encouraged to trade outdoors. Over 40 traders booked to attend the event, but many cancelled prior to the event and only 17 attended. This could have been due to the weather warning received earlier that week. Traders in attendance reported having a successful day, with many visitors purchasing handmade gifts, festive treats and artisan goods.
2. Petting zoo - the petting zoo proved popular with younger visitors, offering hands-on encounters with friendly farm animals. Staff reported a positive response from families.
3. Stage entertainment the stage programme was full, with some acts running slightly over scheduled times. The performances ranged from school performances, choirs and live music. Music was also played in between the performances, which contributed to a cheerful and energetic atmosphere.
4. Santa's Grotto
    1. Santa's Grotto was one of the most visited attractions, with every child receiving a gift from Santa. Waiting times remained reasonable, with peak times after the Christmas

lights switch on. Feedback from parents was positive.

5. Operations and safety
    1. A risk assessment was constructed prior to the event. Meetings were held between the Clerk, operations team and Events Co-Ordinator to ensure all safety and operational aspects were covered.
    2. The main road in Welshpool Town centre was closed for the whole day, with volunteers allowing traders and residents through the barrier. Letters were distributed to businesses and residents in the Town Centre who would have been affected by the road closure.
    3. Volunteer and staff coordination was effective, ensuring smooth running and quick response to any minor issues. Waste management and cleanliness were well-maintained throughout.
    4. Trained staff were on-site first aiders, with an arm band to signify their role to the public.

5. Feedback

1. Early feedback from attendees, vendorsand volunteers has been positive. Families appreciated the variety of free activities and the overall atmosphere. More formal feedback will be obtained throughout the next few months.

6. Finances & Budget

1. The budget for the event was £700 in income and £2000 in expenditure. Spend to date shows £1345.83 in income and £1940.20 in expenditure. There are several outstanding invoices for traders who did not attend.

7. Recommendation

1. Consider shortening the event, peak times were around the Christmas lights switched on, seeing numbers drop again, once the lights had been turned on.
2. Consider allowing more time between stage performances to avoid overlapping.
3. Consider utilising the Assembly Room for further craft stalls.
4. Explore opportunities for additional seating or sheltered areas, in case of poor weather.
5. Consider who uses the Corn Exchange to sell hot drinks/sweet Christmas treats.
6. Increase marketing efforts in the weeks leading up to the event.
7. Review stall charges - £48 food stall - £36 craft stall - £15 charity/information ony stall
8. Maintain the successful mix of free and paid attractions to ensure accessibility for all families.