

Report Purpose:

To update committee on progress and work associated with local service delivery.

Author:

Town Clerk, Assistant Town Clerk, Town Centre Manager and Events Officer.

6.1 Events update

Event	Step Into Christmas	Twilight	Lantern Festival
Footfall Week before event	8438	5893	8891
Event figures	15384	11,585	11,365
Previous year	17654	10234	9,308

Christmas Events

It was a slightly damp start to the Christmas season for Step into Christmas. Macc Youth Brass band moved into the Church for their performance to avoid the showers but luckily by early afternoon the rain moved on and the day became noticeably busier. Visitors enjoyed a range of walkabout acts, stilt-walkers and jugglers as well as close up magic and crafting. The Choose Macc programmed stage proved popular again with Tom Hingley closing the event.

The Twilight Market was busy again this year with many vendors selling out before the end of the evening. We had live music over the evening and a range of local street food vendors. ArtSpace were also with us as they hosted bauble making in the Buttermarket on behalf of the Mayors Charity.

Lantern Festival

We were concerned the high winds would keep people away for the Lantern Parade but that turned out not to be the case. Hundreds walked with the parade and arrived in Market Place to enjoy the fire-show, walkabout acts and our surprise showstopper; a traditional 19th century carousel. Despite the high winds all the acts persevered and were able to perform, for which we were very grateful and an extra thankyou to our team of volunteers who kept everyone safe during the parade and in the Market Place.

Lunar New Year

It was a cold and bright day for this year's Lunar New Year celebrations. With the event falling on Valentines Day we moved the start point to Castle Street to avoid disrupting the numerous weddings taking place at the Town Hall. A large crowd followed the parade down to Park Green where visitors were invited to take part in Tai Chi lessons, paper folding and try a selection of traditional Lunar New Year foods.

1261 Festival

The 1261 Festival will be returning on Saturday 20th June. Following the success of last year's project we will be offering another round of community funding, where local organisations and individuals can apply for up to £250 to put on an activity for the event. Last year this led us to activities such as Poetry in the Park and community pottery at the Clay Rooms. Funding applications will open on Friday 27th February and close Friday 27th March.

Other News

- The Silk Museum will be hosting a series of events in March to celebrate Women's History Month, as part of this MTC are funding a series of free historical walking tours from Tina Russell-Cruise and Daisy Hughes, focused on womens stories.
- ArtSpace are co-ordinating the first Macclesfield Textiles Week, to be held this September. They intend to host a variety of exhibitions, workshops, talks and open-house days around the town and are working closely with the Silk Museum as well as individual artists. We are currently looking into ways we can support this exciting new event.

6.1.1 Macclesfield Pride

Proposal – To consider funding the Macclesfield Pride event for £3,000

ACTION – To consider the above proposal

6.2 Festoons

The festoon lights, funded through the Shared Prosperity Fund, were installed in April by CEC. As of the time of writing, they have not yet been formally handed over to us by CEC and remains the case, as with all of the Macc on Foot equipment.

We are having to have lights removed from the trees outside Gail's due to essential electricity maintenance. The electricity company have agreed to pay for the lights to be removed. They will be re-installed when the work is complete.

6.3 Christmas lights

The Christmas tree fared very well despite the stormy weather it faced but we have been told by the installers that a smaller insert inside the tree pit would increase stability of the tree. We are arranging for this work to take place.

Due to the difficulties experienced in the lead up to Christmas with securing a reliable electricity supply for Mill Street festive lighting, we began asking for a quote from Cheshire East Council straight after Christmas for installation of feeder pillars along Mill Street to allow our festive display to operate on its own system, removing the issues faced in 2025.

CEC agreed to meet with us to discuss our requirements before providing a cost. We will need to keep the pressure on this project to ensure that it is completed in good time for Christmas 2026.

The meeting has now taken place. In order to provide sufficient feeder pillars to support the Christmas lights on Mill Street, the lighting designer needs to provide detailed electrical plans and risk assessments. The quote has been provided and has previously been approved via email due to the necessity of speed for this project but now needs to be ratified. Following the initial site visit and lighting designs, we will be given an accurate quote for the installation of the feeder pillars. We have been told that we will be looking at around £15,000 for install.

ACTION – To formally approve the attached quote of £3,448 to provide lighting design services for the Mill Street festive lighting improvement works.

END OF REPORT