

Gloucester City Council

Meeting:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Date:	30 November 2015
Subject:	Marketing Gloucester Performance Monitoring		
Report Of:	Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure		
Wards Affected:	All		
Key Decision:	No	Budget/Policy Framework:	No
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Appendices:	None		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

***Note:** The special circumstances for non-compliance with Access to Information Rule 5 and Section 100B (4) of the Local Government Act as amended (items not considered unless the agenda is open to inspection at least five days in advance of the meeting) were to ensure that thorough consideration was given to all relevant factors.*

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 This report sets out how Gloucester City Council currently monitors the performance and effectiveness of Marketing Gloucester.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Overview and Scrutiny Committee is invited to comment on the content of this report.

3.0 Background and Key Issues

3.1 Marketing Gloucester Limited (MGL) was established in 2008. The company was set up as a limited company with a board to promote the city and establish a new brand. Prior to the setting up of MGL, the marketing and promotion function for Gloucester was fragmented across the City Council. MGL was set up to pull functions together and achieve co-ordination and resilience, and also to bring a private sector 'entrepreneurial' ethos to the task of marketing the City.

3.2 Over time the remit of the organisation has widened and it has also become responsible for the City Council's highly successful events programme from the Carnival through to the Tall Ships Festival.

- 3.3 In recent times the company has been strongly managed and has achieved financial stability. Marketing Gloucester has been very successful in drawing in external funding, sponsorship and commercial income on an ad hoc basis to enable events to progress and to be extremely popular e.g. Scrumpty Trail. For the year 2015/16 this sponsorship, funding and commercial income will amount to a contribution of an additional £442,000 from sources outside the City Council. This is the highest amount achieved to date. Part of the increase came from the new approach to funding the Tall Ships event. Gloucester has been one of the first cities to successfully achieve this type of conversion of a 'free' to a 'pay for' event and was cited at the 2015 Local Authority Event Organisers Group conference as a model for other destinations.
- 3.4 The 'Your City' brand has been promoted and subsequently superseded by the Gloucester Quays and The Gloucester Citizen's 'Believe in Gloucester' Campaign. Improvements and developments have taken place to the website and in the provision of electronic updates with a new Marketing Gloucester website launched in 2015 and a completely new www.thecityofgloucester.co.uk visitor website due to be launched before the end of 2015. The company has extensively increased its press coverage through PR with over 120 stories being covered by local, regional and national media, including press, online media and TV leading to many millions being exposed to positive news stories about Gloucester and the events taking place in the city. By aggressively negotiating low rates on advertising there has also been wide investment in paid for media promotion of the city and its events throughout the South West, Midlands and nationally with brand promotion to millions of readers. Facebook statistics indicate that Marketing Gloucester has one of the largest social media impacts in the city. Marketing Gloucester produces in house the 'Gloucester Visitor Guide' which is self-financed through advertising and during the past year has been responsible for producing a number of other guides, maps and leaflets using the same self-financed model with a total distribution of over 300,000
- 3.5 Marketing Gloucester actively promotes the city to coach tour operators and group leisure organisers through financing and organising familiarisation trips for these tours of the city and through attendance at exhibitions. The team at Marketing Gloucester work closely with the team at the Tourist Information Centre on this and in the active direct marketing to coach tour operators and group leisure organisers.
- 3.6 Marketing Gloucester has also excelled in the events and promotions field, whether through direct organisation or supporting others in programme delivery. For 2015 alone Marketing Gloucester contributed to or directly delivered a significant raising of the profile of the city, this included:

- **Gloucester 2015 - Our BiG Year** - a campaign that celebrates a significant time with sporting tournaments, tourism events and cultural festivals shining a spotlight on the city. It is a spin off from the 'Believe in Gloucester' brand (celebrating all that's great about Gloucester)
- **Rugby World Cup**
- **Rugby World Cup Cultural Programme**
- **Gloucester Tall Ships Festival**
- **Strike A Light Festival**
- **Scrumpty sculpture trail**
- **Gloucester Quays Food Festival**
- **Rhythm & Blues Festival**
- **Gloucester Carnival**
- **Gloucester Goes Retro**
- **Gloucester History Festival**
- **Christmas Lantern Procession**

3.7 The success of the branding of the city and the high profile events programme is as a result of the hard work put in by the team at MGL in partnership with others. Marketing Gloucester maintains good relationships with the managers of the shopping centres in the city centre who freely provide their footfall figures on request. Events such as Gloucester Goes Retro typically show an increase in footfall of 20%.

3.8 To facilitate monitoring of performance and to plan ahead, annually a programme of events is submitted to and considered by Cabinet, including associated budgets. As part of this process the preceding year's activity is evaluated e.g. prior to the approval of events for 2015 an evaluation of 2014 was undertaken and included, for example:

Gloucester International Rhythm and Blues : Marketing Gloucester worked on the promotion of the Blues Festival. The event was well attended. The Blues Festival was more of a regional event with visitors coming mostly from the South West and South Midlands.

Summer Festival – Gloucester Park: The two week Summer Festival was launched to coincide with the summer holidays and began with Summer Sound, a music festival which due to bad weather had to be re-located at the last minute, but was popular nonetheless.

Paint Jam: This event was organised by MGL and the GCC Guildhall team. The city centre was filled with over 80 street and dance artists. Local buildings were painted and over 200 plywood boards were put up in Kings Square and Gloucester Park. Street and dance artists came from all over the country to join in on the event.

3.9 MGL is required to provide financial detail of the performance of the more significant events. For example the Tall Ships Festival, a cost verses income assessment was provided. This assessment illustrated that the festival returned a modest surplus against budget, but still relied on City Council support of £25,000 as well as other sponsorship. Whilst the event should be cost neutral, the primary objective is raising the profile of the city, driving footfall to bring economic benefit and providing a magnificent event for local residents and visitors.

4.0 Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) Considerations

4.1 Marketing Gloucester works hard to contribute towards ABCD. It aims to set the context, through the events programme, to enable many of our independent and mainstream retailers to benefit from marketing activity. A good example is the Gloucester Residents' Card which is funded through a partnership between the three major shopping centres in the city and coordinated by Marketing Gloucester in collaboration with a large number of independent retailers. The card aims to encourage people into the city and to support our business, most of whom employ local people.

5.0 Alternative Options Considered

5.1 Not Applicable.

6.0 Reasons for Recommendations

6.1 To enable the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider the performance of Marketing Gloucester.

7.0 Future Work and Conclusions

7.1 Consideration will be given to how the monitoring process for Marketing Gloucester will be developed in the future.

8.0 Financial Implications

8.1 The City Council currently contributes to the costs of Marketing Gloucester as follows:

Annual Grant	175,000
Contribution to Staff	60,000
Events budget	160,000
Staff seconded to MGL	69,000
	£464,000

8.2 These resources enable MGL to provide a comprehensive and dynamic events programme and establish Gloucester as a sub-regional powerhouse. However as with all budgets, this will constantly be reviewed and MGL will be under the same pressure as other parts of the Council to deliver efficiencies and generate income. (Financial Services have been consulted on this report).

9.0 Legal Implications

9.1 There are no direct legal implications in this report. (One Legal have been consulted on this report).

10.0 Risk and Opportunity Management Implications

10.1 There are no risk and opportunity management implications arising from this report.

11.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA):

11.1 The PIA Screening Stage was completed and did not identify any potential or actual negative impact, therefore a full PIA was not required.

12.0 Other Corporate Implications

Community Safety

12.1 There are no community safety implications arising out of this report.

Sustainability

12.2 There are no sustainability implications arising out of this report.

Staffing and Trade Union

12.3 There are no staffing or trade union implications arising out of this report.

Press release drafted/approved

12.4 No press releases have been drafted.

Background Documents: None