

## **COUNCIL MATTERS 19<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2025**

### **ITEM 6 - TOTNES CHRISTMAS MARKET AND LATE-NIGHT SHOPPING: EVENT MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS 2026, 2027, and 2028**

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#### **Background**

Totnes Town Council has been working with Miss Ivy Events to run our popular Christmas Market and Late Night Shopping events since 2022. A one-year contract was originally awarded following a competitive tender process. Following the success of this event, the contract was extended to cover an additional two years (2023 and 2024).

Totnes Town Council asks businesses to identify if they value the events each year in a post-event survey. Responses are usually limited to around x30 participants. Originally, it was hoped that the South Hams District Council-led Community Economic Plan process would provide a fuller opportunity to gather additional feedback from local businesses to inform decisions about future events.

Due to delays in this survey, and the need to agree a budget and start working on the Christmas Events by April 2025, Miss Ivy Events has again been contracted to manage the events in December 2025.

#### **Totnes Christmas Market and Late-Night Shopping 2026, 2027, and 2028**

- Businesses, community groups, councillors and staff are all very positive about the working relationship with Miss Ivy Events and the quality of the service provided.
- However, after four years working with the same event management company, it is good practice to invite new quotes and ideas from event management companies who may like to partner with us to deliver these events.
- A full tender process is not necessary as the annual budget for these events is below the threshold (event management costs are currently below £10,000 per year)
- Previous years consultations have proved that businesses and residents see value in the continuation of the Christmas Markets, with many businesses citing it as the reason they manage to remain afloat during the quieter winter months.
- A three-year contract allows for continuity of provider and development of the events to best serve the local community.

#### **Time scales**

The budget to run the Totnes Christmas Market and Late-Night Shopping events in 2026 needs to be agreed by November 2025. It is therefore necessary to follow the following timescale:

- 19 May 2025: Council Matters Committee agrees steps to appoint a contractor to deliver the Totnes Christmas Markets in 2026, 2027 and 2028.
- Start June 2025: Event management companies invited to submit their quotes by the end of August 2025
- 8 September 2025: Council Matters Committee assesses submissions and make recommendations to Full Council
- 6 October: Full Council Meeting appoint a contractor

## **Brief proposed**

**Deadline – 5pm 31<sup>st</sup> August 2025.**

### Introduction

Totnes Town Council is inviting submissions from suitably experienced, skilled and qualified event management service providers for the coordination and delivery of the Totnes Christmas Market and Late-Night Shopping events for the years **2026, 2027 and 2028**. These events are a much-valued tradition in Totnes and a vital part of the local economy during the winter period.

### Background and Overview

The Christmas Festival Night Markets in Totnes have evolved into vibrant community events with a strong identity rooted in handmade goods, festive atmosphere, and community participation. Since 2022, the event has been delivered in partnership with Miss Ivy Events. The Council now seeks to offer an opportunity for new providers to bring fresh ideas while preserving the traditions and successful elements of past events.

The events are typically held on the **first three Tuesdays of December**, featuring festive stalls, entertainment, and late-night shopping throughout the town centre.

### Aim

Totnes Town Council's aim is for this role to run the market square offer and oversee/facilitate partnership organisations events around the town. The overall aim of the Christmas Markets/Late Night Shopping is to have vibrant and lively local events showcasing the best traders in the area alongside the fantastic shops and eateries on the high street. We want to go back to the grass roots of the original Christmas Markets/Late Night Shopping with lots of handmade gifts from stallholders without overcrowding the town, entertainment in the form of music and performance spread around the town.

### Objectives

We would like the successful contractor to consider the following objectives, restrictions, and considerations in their plan:

- Work with Totnes Town Council, existing traders, business, and community groups to develop a strong vision for the Christmas Markets/Late Night Shopping.
- Limit the overall number of traders to allow free flow of crowds and keep the atmosphere as relaxed as possible. Market stalls will mainly be limited to the market square, inside the Civic Hall and other strategic locations in the town centre that will not create a 'pinch point'. To limit the number of outside catering traders to enable existing businesses to maximise the footfall.
- To engage with regular update meetings with the Council and operationally with officers of the Council.
- Engage with existing businesses and the Chamber of Commerce and enable them to have space outside their premises.
- To produce a A5 leaflet with a programme of events on one side and a layout map of the markets on the reverse. Also, to produce a larger size layout map which can be displayed at strategic points around the town.
- To organise the Park and Ride arrangements from Follaton and to potentially consider KEVICC and the steam railway as pick up points / transport as well.
- To organise Bob the Bus to collect in Bridgetown and potentially Follaton.
- Focus on local traders with a discounted rate for them.
- Stewards to be branded with the Town Council vests and to take a friendly, non-confrontational approach
- Engagement with the emergency services, ensuring emergency response such as St John's are on site
- To submit the Road Closure application to DCC, and associated Traffic Management Plan. Because of previous concerns from local businesses about the closure the Council have agreed to close the road only from the King William pub up and try to keep the road closure start point to later in the day

#### Scope of Services and Contractor Responsibilities

The successful contractor will be required to:

- Event Coordination and Delivery
  - Plan and deliver all operational aspects of the Christmas Markets.
  - Coordinate and manage stallholders, including booking, layout, and compliance.

- Organise all logistics, including security, stewarding, waste management, road closures, and signage.
  - Submit all necessary Traffic Management Plans and road closure applications to Devon County Council.
- Marketing and Publicity
  - Design and deliver a marketing campaign, including an A5 leaflet with a programme of events and map, and large-scale layout maps for display around town.
  - Manage all press, social media, and print communications in liaison with the Council.
- Community Engagement
  - Involve local schools, churches, choirs, and community groups, ensuring space for performances and Christmas-themed engagement.
  - Provide discounted stalls for local traders, producers, charities, and community groups.
  - Liaise with local businesses, Chamber of Commerce, and organisations to ensure their participation and minimise disruption.
- Transport and Accessibility
  - Organise Park and Ride schemes from Follaton, and potentially KEVICC and the steam railway.
  - Coordinate additional transport including Bob the Bus services from Bridgetown and Follaton.
- Health and Safety and Compliance
  - Produce and maintain risk assessments, ensure all operations comply with relevant health and safety regulations, and have an appropriate emergency plan in place.
  - Engage with South Hams District Council and the Safety Advisory Group as required.
  - Ensure that all stewarding staff are trained, visible in Town Council-branded vests, and adopt a friendly, non-confrontational approach.
  - Coordinate presence of St John's Ambulance or other medical support on site.
- Post-Event Responsibilities
  - Submit a post-event financial and operational report, including trader feedback, incident summaries, attendance estimates, and improvement suggestions.
  - Maintain detailed financial records for stallholder transactions, VAT compliance, and payments to the Council.

### Insurance and Liability

The contractor must provide proof of:

- **Public Liability Insurance** of no less than £10 million.
- **Employer's Liability Insurance** (if applicable).
- Insurance for all hired equipment and event personnel.

The contractor assumes full responsibility for event safety and operational risks. In the event of severe weather or safety-related cancellation, decisions will be made jointly with the Council. Financial arrangements for cancellations will be agreed in advance.

### Financial Arrangements

- A fixed management fee will be agreed and paid in two instalments (50% by 31 October and 50% post-event).
- The contractor will collect stallholder fees, maintain financial records, and transfer these fees (net of VAT) to the Town Council by **7 January** following each year's event.
- The Council will directly pay for any entertainment and services arranged separately.
- The contractor must be VAT-registered and ensure full VAT compliance in all transactions.

### Contract Termination and Dispute Resolution

- Either party may terminate the agreement with **30 days' written notice**.
- Immediate termination may occur if contractual obligations are not met.
- Disputes will be resolved through negotiation or mediation before any legal proceedings.

### **Scoring Matrix proposed**

Assessment Category	Detail	Weighting	Scoring Guidance
<b>MANDATORY – Pass/Fail</b>			
Insurance Provision	Evidence of <b>£10 million Public Liability Insurance</b> (plus Employer's Liability if applicable).	Required	Pass: Clear evidence provided. Fail: Not submitted or insufficient coverage.
Health & Safety Compliance	Submission of a draft <b>risk assessment</b> , outline of emergency procedures, and commitment to liaise with <b>SAG</b> and authorities.	Required	Pass: Documents submitted and in line with brief. Fail: Missing or inadequate information.
VAT Registration & Stall Fee Handling	Confirmation of <b>VAT registration</b> , agreement to collect stall fees and transfer funds to the Council net of VAT.	Required	Pass: Clear financial compliance statement. Fail: No VAT registration or unwilling to comply.
Road Closure Application	Statement confirming capability to manage road	Required	Pass: Demonstrated understanding and past

Assessment Category	Detail	Weighting	Scoring Guidance
	closures and traffic plans, liaising with DCC.		examples. Fail: No mention or experience.
SCORED CRITERIA	Detail	Weighting	Scoring (0–5)
Relevant Experience	Proven track record of running similar town-centre Christmas or public events.	25%	0 – No relevant experience 1 – Minimal relevant events 3 – Solid comparable experience 5 – Extensive, directly relevant experience
Community & Local Engagement	Plans to involve local schools, choirs, community groups, charities, and local traders. Evidence of understanding Totnes' local identity.	25%	0 – No mention of community 1 – Generic proposals 3 – Includes some local elements 5 – Comprehensive, locally informed engagement plan
Health & Safety and Stewarding Plan	Quality of proposals for stewarding, first aid, waste management, and ensuring a friendly, safe atmosphere.	15%	0 – No consideration 1 – Generic proposals 3 – Meets expectations 5 – Robust and detailed
Marketing and Publicity Plan	Detail of marketing methods, including printed leaflet and map, digital media, and outreach to local and regional audiences.	15%	0 – No marketing plan 1 – Basic proposal 3 – Covers key elements 5 – Strong, multi-channel approach
Transport and Accessibility	Inclusion of Park and Ride, Bob the Bus, and accessible planning to maximise footfall and reduce congestion.	10%	0 – Not addressed 1 – Partial coverage 3 – Includes key modes 5 – Comprehensive, locally-informed transport plan
Value for Money	Overall cost-effectiveness, clarity of pricing, and value added for the fee proposed.	10%	0 – Overpriced or vague 1 – Poor value 3 – Reasonable and clear 5 – Excellent value, well justified

### Scoring Notes

- Each scored criterion is rated from 0–5. The final score for each is multiplied by its weighting.
- Bidders **must meet all mandatory requirements** to proceed to scoring.
- A total weighted score out of **100%** will be used to rank applicants.

### **Officer Recommendations**

Officers recommend that the Council Matters committee agree to:

- Invite event management companies to submit a quote to run the events for three years (in 2026, 2027, and 2028).
- Set the brief to deliver the events following the current successful format.
- Review quotes using a scoring matrix, which identifies key criteria, including prior experience staging similar events, etc