

## **Cabinet – 17 December 2008**

Draft Budget 2009/10 – 2011/12: Recommendations of the Neighbourhoods Scrutiny and Performance Panel following Budget Consultation

### **Summary of report**

This addendum report presents an additional recommendation from the Neighbourhoods Scrutiny and Performance Panel meeting that took place on 25 November 2008. This recommendation was not included in the Panels initial budget recommendations from its meeting on 4 December 2008 that are included in the Panels first report.

### **Background**

At its meeting on 25 November 2008 the Neighbourhoods Scrutiny and Performance Panel considered an item on the outcome of the Illuminations 2008.

The Panel recognised that the 2008 event had some successes with a higher average attendance per night from previous years and very positive customer feed back. The marketing of the event was more focussed resulting in 41% of the visitors surveyed coming from Walsall, as opposed to 31% last year. However, the Panel was disappointed that the event had lost money three years in row and seriously questioned the future of the event. Members also recognised that the Illuminations brought a national profile to Walsall and was a historic event so recognised the value in retaining it. The Panel discussion reinforced that it is critical that the event is financially sustainable and, at the very least, it should not record a loss. The Panel were in favour of the Illuminations taking place in 2009 but only if it is at no extra cost to the Council taxpayer.

### **Recommendation**

**That Cabinet continue with the Illuminations in 2009, on the understanding that the viability of the event is based on realistic financial and visitor expectations.**

#### **Author**

Dan Mortiboys

☎ 01922 652982.

mortiboysd@walsall.gov.uk

Signed:



**Councillor Chris Towe**

**Chair, Neighbourhoods Scrutiny and Performance Panel**

17 December 2008