

# **ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY REGENERATION CABINET BOARD**

## **REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT – G. NUTT**

**4<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2014**

### **SECTION A – MATTER FOR INFORMATION**

**WARD(S) AFFECTED: Neath North**

#### **NEATH FOOD AND DRINK FESTIVAL**

##### **Purpose of Report**

To inform members of the success of Neath Food and Drink Festival 2014.

##### **Background**

Several years ago, the Local Authority developed a strategy to promote the Town Centre of Neath in order to counter the effects of the recession and to identify events that could be developed to encourage footfall into the Town. A local food producer and Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council worked in collaboration to put forward a proposal to run a food festival as a mechanism for boosting the town centre generally and the local food economy in particular. As a result of positive feedback during the first two events, the decision was made to extend the event to a two day festival with events going right through the day into the evening. The event started as a one day festival in 2009 with around 35 exhibitors and has more than doubled in size five years along the line.

The Welsh Government awarded funding to the sum of £9,952 for the sixth Neath Food and Drink Festival which took place over two days on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> and Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> October.

Neath & Drink Festival has now established itself as a major event in the town and the wider area. The event has rapidly grown in size and popularity over the past five years, and 2014 saw the biggest festival to date with 72 exhibition stands, a hot food zone and seating area, cookery demonstrations, cask ale tasting, a champagne tent, educational walks, talks and demonstrations all set against a backdrop of fabulous live entertainment from local groups.

Restaurants, cafes, other town centre businesses and even churches opened their doors and put on themed events and offers over the weekend and it was a

celebration of Neath's Community Spirit. Thousands of people visited the town over the two days and it was a true celebration of the market town atmosphere.

The festival is a Finalist for Best Event/Festival in the Swansea Bay Tourism Awards 2014. The Awards celebrate quality, innovation and excellence in the vibrant Tourism, Leisure and Hospitality industry.

There has been a huge interest in the awards this year with over 1400 entries & nominations received - therefore competition has been very competitive in all categories. The winners will be announced at the awards ceremony on the 27<sup>th</sup> November.

### **Appendices**

None

### **List of Background Papers**

None

### **Officer Contact**

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