

# Overview and Scrutiny

Meeting date: 30 October 2023

## Member Questions to Marketing Cheltenham on Christmas in Cheltenham

### 1. Question from Councillor Jackie Chelin

Regarding engagement with the Visit Cheltenham web page, what proportion of the views represent very local (ie Cheltenham) residents and what proportion are derived from a wider geographical area? Are there target numbers/KPIs to drive more views and to keep people browsing the site for longer?

#### Response

Thank you for your question. The latest figures for the website are from May 2023. Between 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020 and 24<sup>th</sup> May 2023, approximately **14%** of users of the website were located in Cheltenham. This is the second largest location of users, with London being the most popular at 20.75%. The third largest is 'not set' at 13.75% and this is followed by Gloucester with 5% and Bristol with 3.4%. After this, the user locations are fairly evenly spread across the whole country (0.16% - 2.94%) and no pattern can be demonstrated in terms of location.

72.12% of website users came from the UK between 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023 and 24<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

Service level KPIs monitor the level of engagement with each of the Marketing Cheltenham team's brands. For Visit Cheltenham, the target is to increase the profile of the brand through:

1. increase website user numbers by 5% (session duration and pages per session are monitored but not targeted)
2. increase subscribers to the newsletter by 5% (read rates are monitored but not targeted)
3. increase social media followers by 10%

### 2. Question from Councillor Jackie Chelin

The Cheltenham ice rink contributed an additional £3M to the local economy in 2021. How is this calculated and, if there are targets to try to exceed this year on year, what are the key actions to effect this?

## **Response**

The Marketing Cheltenham team commissioned The South West Research Company to undertake a visitor survey amongst visitors to Cheltenham over the Christmas period, 18/11/21 – 02/01/22. This survey aimed to evaluate the impact of the town's enhanced Christmas offer in terms of visitation, satisfaction levels and spend.

The survey was conducted online using Marketing Cheltenham's direct email database. There were a total of 628 responses from visitors to the town during the Christmas period. The survey asked a series of questions including questions on home location, spend during their visit, length of visit and demographic questions including age. The Cambridge Model was used to assess the economic impact based on responses received.

This survey will be repeated to focus on the impact of the 2023/24 ice rink.

We have not set a target for the economic impact because there are a number of variables that are outside of our control. However, the team are committed to boosting the economic impact of the ice rink and have a plan to encourage this with activities including:

- promotion of local businesses to ice rink visitors,
- partnerships with local businesses to offer associated discounts or promotions which will be shared via Visit Cheltenham and ice rink social media and mailings,
- training ice rink staff to provide information about what's on and where to go once they have finished skating,
- combined promotion of the wider Cheltenham offer alongside the ice rink,
- sponsorship and advertising opportunities around the rink to promote local businesses,
- comprehensive social media engagement with ice rink visitors.