

Executive meeting on Tuesday, 14 April 2026

Written representation in relation to agenda item 7, York Christmas Market Operating Hours and Economic Impact

Dear Executive Members,

I am writing on behalf of The Queens Hotel, York City Centre, to object to the proposal to reduce the York Christmas Market to a six-day operation, with Tuesday as a weekly rest day.

While we recognise the importance of improving accessibility, we do not believe the current proposal is supported by sufficiently robust evidence to justify the economic risk to city-centre businesses.

The report itself accepts that it is difficult to separate the market's impact from normal seasonal trade, yet it still projects a potential loss of between £2.6 million and £7.82 million in city-centre spend. For hotels and other hospitality businesses, this risk is significant. A closed market day in the middle of the week is likely to affect visitor confidence, reduce overnight stays, shorten trips, and weaken midweek trade. Lost bookings are not necessarily recoverable on other days.

We are also concerned that the proposal assumes visitors will simply switch to another day, despite many trips being fixed around work patterns, accommodation availability, and travel plans. This is especially relevant for short-break visitors, group bookings, and tourists coming to York specifically for the Christmas Market experience.

In addition, a weekly closure creates a reputational risk for York. Even with advance publicity, some visitors will still arrive expecting the market to be open. This may lead to disappointment, negative feedback, and a perception that York is offering a reduced Christmas experience during its peak visitor season.

We therefore respectfully ask the Executive not to proceed with the proposed six-day trial in its current form and instead to explore

alternative ways of improving accessibility without reducing trading days during one of the most important periods of the year for the city centre economy.

Yours sincerely,

Mr L A Smith
DIRECTOR
The Queens Hotel