

Executive meeting on Tuesday, 12 May 2026

Written representation in relation to agenda item 6, York Christmas Market Operating Hours and Economic Impact

Dear Executive Members,

As the owner and operator of a business that looks after tourists and visitors to York, it seems nonsensical to have a Christmas Market that is only open sometimes. To expect visitors to know, understand and plan around a market that isn't open on every day of the week, is unreasonable and foolhardy. To ask a hotel and hospitality trade to explain to their guests that York is partially closed every Tuesday, so they should plan to visit on other dates, is utter madness. Hospitality is already struggling; why are you determined to make it so much harder and to punish these businesses, for completely intangible benefits?

The benefits of the Christmas Market are felt by businesses right across York, not just by traders at the market. Throughout the festive period, York is known as a great place to come for a visit due to a wide range of factors, of which the Christmas Market is a big, but not singularly defining part. However, York is well-known for its Christmas Market. Closing the market one day per week, without an enormous, continuous and costly public-awareness campaign to make sure people know it is closed on Tuesdays, will forever diminish the reputation of the city and the Christmas Market.

The hours of operation of the Christmas Market are already strangely short, with everything at the market, including its famous (on social media at least) food and drink stalls, closing at 7pm sharp. It is hard not to wonder why York is the only Christmas Market that can't cope with evening visitors and a later closing time. Fancy visiting the market after work, or after a day enjoying the museums in York, or after a day enjoying a tour in the countryside or out to Castle Howard? Well, you better be quick, because we can't possibly stay open past 7pm or a handful of market traders will be unhappy. Are we really unable to work it so that the Shambles Market traders use Church Street as their exit

point at 5pm? Who within the Shambles Market trading group has so much influence over the council that there is no possible solution other than to close Parliament Street and all the chalets that trade on it.

One day closed each week might not seem like much to some, but in reality it is a great big signal from York Council, on behalf of all York businesses, that York is only a part-time city – “DON’T COME ON TUESDAYS!”.

I am firmly opposed to any plan that closes the market one day per week.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Magee,
Grand Yorkshire Ltd.