

Street Trading Consultation

East Devon District Council

June / July 2016

Summary

Benefits

Percentages of respondents that feel if we were to make the whole of East Devon a consent area, it would have any benefit to them or their organisation:

- All respondents – 42%
- All business owners with fixed premises within East Devon – 15%
- All street traders – 82%
- All residents – 50%

There is a difference between the views of people within and those outside of Sidmouth that feel it would have a benefit to them:

- All respondents from Sidmouth – 14%, all respondents from outside of Sidmouth – 63%
- Residents of Sidmouth – 22%, residents outside of Sidmouth but within East Devon – 71%
- Business owners with fixed premises within Sidmouth – 0%, business owners with fixed premises within East Devon but outside of Sidmouth – 29%

The main reasons people gave for it having a positive benefit were:

- Increased opportunities for and revenue from street trading and so allow small businesses to grow
- Will increase tourism and footfall near static businesses / to the local area
- More diversity on the high street / more choice of products

When asked how they would improve it to make the proposal have a more positive benefit, the most common comments were:

- Ensure street trading does not happen near shops that are selling the same thing
- Prioritise consents to local street traders selling local products
- Keep the current system
- Make sure a variety of goods and services are sold at street trading events, not all the same thing

Problems

Percentages of respondents that feel if we were to make the whole of East Devon a consent area, it would cause any problems for them or their organisation:

- All respondents – 48%
- All business owners with fixed premises within East Devon – 71%
- All street traders – 10%
- All residents – 43%

There is a difference between the views of people within and those outside of Sidmouth that feel it would cause any problems for them:

- All respondents from Sidmouth – 81%, all respondents from outside of Sidmouth – 24%
- Residents of Sidmouth – 79%, residents outside of Sidmouth but within East Devon – 12%

- Business owners with fixed premises within Sidmouth – 88%, business owners with fixed premises within East Devon but outside of Sidmouth – 52%

The main reasons people gave for it causing a problem were:

- It will take too much trade away from permanent shops selling similar things
- Street traders have to pay out a lot less in terms of business rates etc so permanent businesses can't compete
- It will harm the look and feel of the town
- The streets are too narrow and roads will become too congested

When asked how the proposal could be improved to cause less problems the most common suggestions were:

- Don't do it
- Allow the town or parish council to manage street trading
- Set a maximum frequency for markets and street trading
- Regulate where street trading happens in relation to businesses selling similar products and services

Methodology

The consultation was publicised and sent out in a variety of ways:

- Press releases were sent out to the local media.
- It was publicised on the council's social media accounts and website.

It was also set out to:

- 400 local businesses by e-mail and in the post.
- Town and parish councils and elected members. They were asked to complete it themselves and then publicise it within their town or ward.
- All the local large organisations that organise street trading. They were asked to complete it themselves and send it onto traders.
- All East Devon Chambers of Commerce. They were asked to complete it themselves and send it onto local businesses.
- All the street traders from the Sidmouth Folk Festival.

We received 198 completed questionnaires back both online and in the post.