



Community Safety Sub-Committee

Date: 1 April 2019

Title: Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard Truck Convoy

Purpose of the Report: To seek Member endorsement in respects of the Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard Convoy and if required, to support the use of the Operation Dodford budget to support the additional policing for the event as it passes through the parish.

Contact Officer: Mark Saccoccio – Town Clerk

Corporate Aim/s	Town Council Five Year Plan and Objectives 2019-2024 To continue to support a vibrant town through partnership working and initiatives including management of the street market, support for local businesses, town and community promotions and town centre enhancements.
Implications:	
Financial	410/4401 to use the Community Policing Budget (Operation Dodford £40,000) for the purposes of meeting the likely cost which at present is unknown if it is found that Bedfordshire Police are not able to meet the cost
Human Resources	None
Operational/Service delivery	None
Procedural/Legal	None
Risk/Health and Safety	None

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

Should Members be minded to support the proposal that:-

- 1.1 That Operation Dodford monies be made available to pay for policing should it be found that the activity falls outside of the scope of policing activities that would otherwise be covered in their normal duties.
- 1.2 That the Town Clerk makes the Highways Authority aware that it would have no objection to the temporary weight restrictions being lifted in order to allow the convoy to pass through the parish.
- 1.3 That a communications plan be created which identifies how the organising body has made the parish aware of the event in order to gain support and mitigate against any potential negative publicity.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 To recognise and celebrate the Armed Forces, the Dunstable Truck Convoy was created some 4 years ago. Its purpose, to bring together like-minded truckers who would be prepared to form part of a convoy in order to raise the profile of the cause and in doing so, raise money for associated chosen charities.
- 2.2 It is believed that the first truck convoy ran in 2014 and since then, it has grown in size and reputation. The convoy forms at Flamstead truck stop (Junction 9 of the M1) and then travels in a northerly direction through Dunstable and the A505 on its way to its final destination at the Billington Showground. As a spectacle, the event which last year saw 100 trucks take part draws many thousands of spectators along its processional route. During this time, collection buckets are taken with proceeds going to charities associated with the armed forces.
- 2.3 At the Billington Showground, the trucks are parked up giving spectators an opportunity to inspect the vehicles as well as enjoy the event which includes music and food.
- 2.4 For the event organisers, it provides an opportunity to raise the profile of their chosen charities as well as celebrate the endeavour of individuals and their families who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of their country.

3 THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The agreed route is for the convoy to take the A505 Leighton-Buzzard bypass once leaving Dunstable and to continue up to Hockliffe. There, it turns left and continues down the A4012 Hockliffe Road and up to the White House Roundabout. From there, it turns left down Leston Road and onto the A4146 Billington Road.
- 3.2 From last year's experience, a convoy of this size would take at least 40 minutes to pass any fixed point within the route. Therefore, should Members be minded to support the principle, it should be impressed on the organisers that every

reasonable endeavour be made to publicise the event in the common interests of local residents as well as businesses. To this end, a communications plan should be a pre-requisite as this will demonstrate how the organising body has raised the profile of the event in the common interests of our residents and businesses alike. From last year's experience, several complaints were raised about the intense and incessant noise generated by the convoy as it passed through the parish. For many, this added to the atmosphere but to some, it was an uncomfortable irritation which in fact detracted from their reasonable enjoyment of the spectacle. The parish should be made aware that whilst a great spectacle, the convoy can be noisy.

3.3 The Safety Advisory Group is to meet on Friday 12th April 2019 where the operational detail of the convoy and how it is to be managed will be discussed. Last year, in order for the convoy to pass safely through Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard, a Sergeant and 3 motorcycle riders was required together with a total of 8 specials. The total cost for policing the exercise was £537.04 which was split between Dunstable Town Council and this council (£268.52 each). As set out at 1.2, should Members be minded to support the event, the potential cost (if required) be met from the Operation Dodford budget. Whether Bedfordshire Police are able to charge the Town Council remains to be clarified. Based on case law, it is believed that any costs would be borne by Bedfordshire Police.

3.4 The issue of the temporary lifting of lorry weight restrictions will also be considered at the meeting. Paragraph 3 of the South Bedfordshire District (Various Residential Zones) (Prohibition of Heavy Commercial Vehicles) Order 1996 states:-

“Nothing in Article 2 of this Order shall make it unlawful for any person to cause or permit a Heavy Commercial Vehicle to proceed in the Residential Zone if the vehicle is used”:

g:- “In connection with a circus, fair or similar event the holding of which in or in the vicinity of the Residential Zones has been authorised by this Council”.

3.5 From the above it would appear that subject to agreement being reached by this council and the principal authority, the lorry weight restrictions would be temporarily lifted for the event. Therefore, should Members be minded to support the proposal, the Committee can direct the Town Clerk to write to Central Bedfordshire Council requesting that the lorry weight restriction be temporarily suspended whilst the convoy passes through the parish.

3.6 It is believed that this year's chosen charities will be:-

- Royal British Legion
- Scottish Little Soldiers
- Pilgrim Bandits

4 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 As a spectacle, it is without doubt that the event has merit and has proven extremely popular with residents along its processional route. However, should Members be minded to support this, careful consideration needs to be given to the importance in having in place a robust communications plan.

End