



## Cultural and Economic Services Committee

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**Date:** 27<sup>th</sup> July 2020

**Purpose of the Report:** Endorsement of event cancellation due to Covid-19 restrictions. Re-Allocation of budget to facilitate online & additional festive activity.

**Contact Officer:** Ben Bodsworth, Town & Community Promotions Manager

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<b>Corporate Objective/s</b>	LLTC Three Year Plan – Aim: 2 – 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.	
<b>Implications:</b>		
<b>Financial</b>	√	Reduction in budget spend due to non-delivery of events programme
<b>Human Resources</b>		
<b>Operational/Service delivery</b>	√	Non-delivery of some events, re-configuring of others.
<b>Procedural/Legal</b>		
<b>Risk/Health and Safety</b>		

### 1. RECOMMENDATIONS

Should members be minded, the proposals are:

- 1.1 To cancel the live Music in the Park programme of events in August & September, including Last Night of the Proms and host online versions.
- 1.2 To create a trail and online content for Living History Day focussed on the shops within the Town Centre.
- 1.3 To re-allocate a proportion of the Music in the Park budget to facilitate a Thanksgiving event for Key Workers, NHS Staff, volunteers, and those affected by Covid-19.
- 1.4 To re-allocate a proportion of the Big Lunch budget to facilitate additional music and leisure offerings within the Town Centre.

- 1.5 To use the Christmas Festival budget to hire 3D Christmas motifs and/or Christmas props to install within the Town Centre for the Christmas season and to cancel the Friday night Christmas lights switch-on event.**

## **2. INFORMATION**

- 2.1 The government has re-opened the hospitality sector and has provided a 5-point plan for the restarting of events and theatrical performances. At the time of writing, no guidance has been produced for the timescales on which this 5-point plan will be actioned.

- 2.2 The 5-point plan is as follows;

- Stage One - Rehearsal and training (no audiences and following social distancing guidelines).
- Stage Two - Performances for broadcast and recording purposes (following social distancing guidelines).
- Stage Three - Performances outdoors with an audience plus trials of indoor performances with a limited, socially- distanced audience.
- Stage Four - Performances allowed indoors/outdoors (but with a limited distanced audience indoors).
- Stage Five - Performances allowed indoors/outdoors (with a fuller audience indoors).

- 2.3 To manage expectations, consideration has been given to producing events and online content which can be managed within the current guidelines. However, should more stringent guidelines be re-introduced it may be necessary to revise the delivery further.

## **3. MUSIC IN THE PARK (JUNE – SEPTEMBER)**

- 3.1 Due to Covid-19, Committee endorsed the cancellation of live music performances in the park over June & July, (Ref: Covid-19 Delegated Decisions, 15/05/20). Officers sought an alternative way to continue the concerts and liaised with bands to deliver short online versions of performances at 3.00pm every Sunday as per the original programmed concert time. They have proved popular with combined views of over 2000 on Facebook so far.
- 3.2 Currently, there is no guidance as to when the 5-point plan outlined by the government will move into stage three which would allow us to permit outdoor performances with a socially distanced audience.
- 3.3 The recommendation at 1.1 to cancel the August & September dates (including Last Night of the Proms) of the live performances will manage the expectations of the performers and audience members. Previous discussion on cancellation of event dates identified that decisions can only be made on current advice and holding out for potential changes in guidance prevents preparation for

alternative activity and the release of committed funds to facilitate them.

- 3.4 Pre-Recorded concerts will continue to be shown across our social media channels. It is hoped this will also include a proms themed concert.
- 3.5 There will be no financial losses in cancelling the live Music in the Park concerts as funds are only committed and not yet paid.
- 3.6 **RECOMMENDATION 1.1 - To cancel the Music in the Park concert series planned in August & September and host online versions.**

#### **4. LIVING HISTORY DAY (3<sup>RD</sup> OCTOBER)**

- 4.1 Living History Day currently takes place alongside the Charter Market which is likely to be experiencing ongoing social distancing measures in October.
- 4.2 In its current format, and with the re-formatting of the charter market on a Saturday, there is little to no space for Living History to be held safely in its current or revised format.
- 4.3 Officers are working with local history groups and shop keepers to determine the history of some of the shops within the town centre and create a trail which can be undertaken around the shops once launched. This will help to encourage visitors back into the town centre and is part of the Keeping It Local campaign.
- 4.4 To facilitate the sharing of this history further, and to reach those who may yet be venturing out of their homes with any frequency, as well as regular visitors to the town, an online version of the information within the trail will be produced. A series of short 1-2-minute video's featuring the shops along with their past and current residents; the 'living history' of the shop. These can be uploaded to social media and to the Town Council website to strengthen the creation of a 'virtual museum', e.g. Living History Trail, History of local Pubs publication, and so on.
- 4.5 Further digital content can be created over the coming months & years to add to this virtual museum approach.
- 4.6 The Living History Day budget will be used to facilitate the creation of the online content, with some budget held to provide live, 'Covid safe', entertainment during the launch period if permitted to do so within government guidelines.
- 4.7 **RECOMMENDATION 1.2 - To create a trail and online content for Living History Day focused on the shops within the Town Centre.**

## **5. THANKSGIVING EVENT (DATE TBC)**

- 5.1 Members have expressed a desire for the Town Council to facilitate a thanksgiving event for key workers, NHS staff, volunteers and those affected by Covid-19.
- 5.2 To facilitate the event, a budget will be required to ensure the safety and welfare of those working at the event along with those attending. It may also be necessary to stream the event live across social media channels so those who are self-isolating or self-shielding can also take part.
- 5.3 Officers will be working with local community and faith groups to facilitate the service.
- 5.4 It is anticipated that the service, along with the online streaming elements will cost no more than £5,000 to produce and that this cost could be borne through the re-allocation of the 2020/21 Music in the Park budget (101/4513).
- 5.5 **RECOMMENDATION 1.3 - To re-allocate a proportion of the Music in the Park budget to facilitate a Thanksgiving event for Key Workers, NHS Staff, volunteers and those affected by Covid-19.**

## **6. KEEPING IT LOCAL INITIATIVE (ONGOING)**

- 6.1 Following the launch of the Keeping It Local initiative encouraging residents to shop locally, officers are mindful of the need to continue the appeal of the town centre to attract return visitors.
- 6.2 Through the pedestrianisation of the High Street environment, an opportunity to utilise the space during weekdays and weekends when no market is taking place has arisen.
- 6.3 Officers are investigating the use of the space for performances of music and other leisure activities, e.g. a children's ride, (once permitted to do so by government guidelines) within the town centre and to provide a background ambience to those businesses offering alfresco dining.
- 6.4 It is currently anticipated that this will last for an initial 6-week period (from launch) for an average of two to three days per week, at a cost of approximately £350/day. Where possible, local providers will be sourced.
- 6.5 During the festive season, it is hoped this will continue to entice shoppers into the Town and enhance the festive offering of the Town Centre at a similar cost for a period of up to 4 weeks.
- 6.6 It is anticipated that the additional activity around the town centre will cost no more than £10,000 to produce. This budget could be borne through the re-allocation of the 2020/21 Big Lunch budget (101/4552).

**6.7 RECOMMENDATION 1.4 - To re-allocate a proportion of the Big Lunch budget to facilitate additional activity within the Town Centre pedestrianised area and during the Christmas period.**

## **7. CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL**

7.1 Officers are anticipating the need to change the approach for delivering the festive season's event. This is partly reflected in the above recommendation at 1.4, which proposes to use the Big Lunch budget to deliver 4 weeks of activity.

7.2 Delivering the Friday Christmas Lights switch-on event is no longer a realistic option as it has inherent dangers of large-scale gathering which even with some changes in guidelines, is unlikely to be permitted to the extent we are used to hosting. Delivering a Christmas gift Market on the Sunday, however, remains a possibility and will bring added interest to the town's shopping offer.

7.3 Officers are liaising with the Council's Christmas Lighting contractor to explore installing one or two 3D standing motifs that will create 'selfie' photograph opportunities for visitors to enjoy and send out on social media thus promoting the Town Centre for visits.

7.4 The motifs will only be viable if they do not block market area space, maintain social distancing space, are robust and have access to electricity. The cost is approximately £3000 for the present (see picture below) yet will have impact and attract attention as per below images. Officers area also looking into robust theatrical props.



15053.420WH

3DMOTIF H=4.20m  
L=3m W=3m  
P=111W MV= 240

7.5 The supplier deadline for securing the hire of Christmas the 3D structures is 31<sup>st</sup> July. It is proposed to utilise the existing Christmas Festival budget (£14,625.00) towards securing the structures and/or props if suitable locations can be found. The remaining budget is yet to be allocated and it is anticipated that some income will be secured from the Sunday gift market to re-invest in more alternative seasonal activities yet to be worked up.

7.6 Members of Cultural and Economic Services Committee have expressed an interest in trialling the playing of Christmas themed music in the Town Centre during the Christmas season via sound speakers to enhance the seasonal ambiance. Officers will explore the technicalities and best options for delivering this trial and will seek to utilise the Christmas Festival budget. Should funds not be sufficient, a paper will be brought to C&E Committee in September for alternative budget spend.

**7.7 RECOMMENDATION 1.5 – To use the Christmas Festival budget to hire 3D Christmas motifs and/or Christmas props to install within the Town Centre for the Christmas season and to cancel the Friday night Christmas lights switch-on event.**

**End**