



Date: 4 September 2017

Title: Community Events update report

Purpose of the Report: To provide a progress report on community events

Contact Officer: Ben Bodsworth, Town & Community Promotions Manager (Interim)

| | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Corporate Objective/s | LLTC Three Year Plan – Objective 2. To promote and develop a vibrant town through partnership working and initiatives including management of the street market, provision of town and community promotions, town centre enhancements, tourism and practical support for local businesses. | |
| Implications: | | |
| Financial | √ | Big Lunch Event remained in budget. Canal Festival saw increased expenditure due to planned price increases against a reduced car park income due to weather experienced on the day. Living History & Christmas events remain on track to be within budget. |

1. RECOMMENDATION

Should members be minded, the proposals are:

- 1.1 To note the report.**
- 1.2 To set up a Task and Finish group (comprising 4 Councillors) to undertake a review of the Christmas festival and that the group commence its review from September onwards prior to the delivery of the event as per para. 6.6.**

2. BIG LUNCH FOOD FESTIVAL



- 2.1** Council agreed to fund the Big Lunch as an annual event for the years 2015 – 2020 and to provide £10,000 support per year from the Partnership budget (311/LLP, 07/08/2014). It was further agreed upon an ongoing food festival theme for this event (013/LLP, 18/06/2015).
- 2.2** At this year’s event, 35 registered food and 9 food-related stall holders attended on the day along with cooking demonstration stalls, walkabout entertainers and children’s activities throughout the day. All entertainment and activities provided throughout the day by Leighton-Linslade Town Council was free for members of the public.
- 2.3** Based on survey information, comments received by staff throughout the day and via feedback to the Council offices, the Big Lunch Food Festival event appears to have been well received within the community by the public and by those stall holders, entertainers and vendors participating in the event. (see feedback below)
- 2.4** Public attendance is difficult to measure given the open plan nature of the event and the many entrance and exit pathways available to attendees. However, based on

observations made by staff and vendors, attendance was approximately the same as last year, attracting some 4,500 visitors to the event and the High Street area.

- 2.5** Promotion of the event was extensive, using a variety of means to reach the potential audiences, including print material, banners, posters, leaflets, social media methods and word of mouth promotion. The Council's Facebook page has proven to be an effective means of promotions, with page analytics indicating a reach of 57,772 people on Facebook, with 10,898 engagements and impressions on Twitter.
- 2.6** Advertising for the event was also undertaken in Bee Local (18,000 copies), Primary Times (43,000 copies), and Leighton Buzzard Observer (4000 copies), with additional advertising distributed around the town in the form of posters, leaflets, banners and signs.
- 2.7** Budget (101/4552) –The budget for the Big Lunch Food Festival in the financial year 2017/18 was £10,000. A further £3,000 was allocated from 101/4553 for salaries. Income for the event was generated through the sale of pitch fees at the event.

| | | | |
|----------|-------------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Income | Event Budget | £10,000 | |
| | Income from stalls/vendors | £ 2,410 | |
| | Total income | £12,410 | £12,410 |
| | | | |
| Expenses | Entertainment | £5,865 | |
| | Equipment rental | £4,049 | |
| | Advertising and marketing | £677 | |
| | Misc (First aid etc.) | £138 | |
| | Total expenditures | £10,729 | £10,729 |
| | Amount carried forward | | £1681 |
| | | | |
| Salaries | Amount Budgeted | £3000 | |
| | Expenditure | £1583 | |
| | Amount Carried Forward | | £1417 |

Actual amount spent on the event including advertising, entertainment, and equipment rental was £10,729, exclusive of staffing costs for which there is a separate budget as mentioned above.

- 2.8** The success of this event is measured in number of visitors attending on the day, increased quality of food and food-related vendors, the number of serious incidents (0), feedback received and social media statistics.

Exhibitor/Participant Feedback:

- *We had a great time. It was a fab day with loads of lovely food to try. The weather was kind & everyone there was absolutely lovely*
- *I would like to say a big thank you for putting on a great event again this year. It was extremely well organised and a pleasure to be part of.*
- *Great day feeding the visitors at the Big Lunch Leighton Buzzard.*

Visitor Feedback:

- "Awesome" and "Pretty Spectacular"
- "A well organised and executed event which has been really well received by the public"
- "The best so far"
- Wow, looks like this was a big success. Well done to everyone who was involved in the planning, organising and running of this event. This is what makes our town a great place to live in!
- Was brilliant. With help from a lovely council person, I even managed to locate a gluten-free & dairy-free option for my youngest son

3. LINSLADE CANAL FESTIVAL



- 3.1** Linslade Canal Festival celebrated its 15th Birthday on Saturday 29th July 2018, with 121 stalls, attractions and demonstrations on display at Tiddenfoot Waterside Park.
- 3.2** A combined total of 45 stewards and volunteers were needed for this year's event which included a team of fourteen being supplied by an external company to manage traffic and visitor parking.
- 3.3** The Fun dog show took place again in Peace Meadow, aided by VioVet and HULA who provided sponsorship, management and prizes for the categories throughout the day. Further sponsorship was received from Ark House Vets who kindly sponsored the Birds of Bray display once again.
- 3.4** Budget (101/4515) – At the time of writing this report, budget details are still being finalised and estimated figures are presented below:

| | | | |
|----------|------------------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Income | Target Income | £9,600 | |
| | Actual Income from stalls/vendors | £6,118 | |
| | Actual Income from Car Parking | £2,859 | |
| | Actual Income from Activities | £408 | |
| | Total income | £9385 | -£215 |
| Expenses | Event Budget | £18000 | |
| | Entertainment & Demonstrations | £5060 | |
| | Equipment rental | £6298 | |
| | Advertising and marketing | £935 | |
| | Misc (First aid, Ground Rent etc.) | £2576 | |
| | External Stewarding | £3168 | |
| | Total expenditures | £18,037 | -£37 |
| | Total Carried Forward | | -£252 |
| Salaries | Amount Budgeted | £3000 | |
| | Expenditure | £1992 | |
| | Amount Carried Forward | £1008 | £1008 |

- 3.5** To measure the success of this event we take into account the large number of visitors attending on the day and how long they stay, the number of serious incidents (0), feedback received and social media statistics.
- 3.6** It is always difficult to determine the exact number of visitors on the day though it was reported by many exhibitors who have attended in previous years, that there were just as many visitors as in previous years. An estimated attendance of around 8,000 visitors has been suggested. The Council's Facebook page analytics indicate a reach of 80,927 people on Facebook, with 15,783 engagements and impressions on Twitter. Survey Monkey has attracted 52 responses so far.

Exhibitor's feedback:

"Thank you for organising the festival over the weekend, the attendance was good and the weather held, and we had a good day"

"Thanks for having me at your event, it was lovely"

"Just to say a big thank you for letting me exhibit at the festival yesterday I really enjoyed the interaction with the people"

"As usual, it was a fabulous event with a good selection of stallholders, tasty food and drink and a great mix of music and entertainment"

Visitor feedback

"This is a really excellent event in the town with a lovely atmosphere where many local people meet for a good day out - it is a catalyst for social interaction as well as the event components. It is good that it is not overwhelmed by the normal plethora of commercial outlets but enables the showcasing of local community groups & activities. Well done LLTC & all who help make the event what it is!!"

4. MUSIC IN THE PARK

- 4.1** With the summer season of band concerts nearly at an end, attendance numbers have been steady with this year seeing an average of 175 visitors per concert, with an attendance of 330 at the proms themed band concert. Feedback from visitors has been good, with many commenting that it is a 'perfect selection of music for a Sunday afternoon' and 'well done Leighton-Linslade Town Council, keep up the good work'.
- 4.2** Budget (101/4513) – An event programme lasting 15 Sundays (excluding August Bank Holiday) takes the events until mid-September (17th), with evening concerts on 30th July (Town Twinning) and 13th August (Proms & Picnic in the Park), with an expected expenditure of £5365 on performers and the Leighton Buzzard Day centre, with an additional expenditure of £800 for stewarding at the events (101/4003) which is undertaken by members of Leighton Linslade Town Council.
- 4.3** During the course of this year's concerts, visitors have been asked to complete a short evaluation form. From 11 concerts a total of 100 forms have been returned providing



an extremely positive testimony of enjoyment and appreciation of the quality of the concerts.

5. 2016 LIVING HISTORY EVENT PREPARATION

- 5.1 Working with Historical Promotions, Officers are working on a programme of activities which will complement the re-launch of the market with a medieval market utilising the space available within the High Street, along with activities and performance spaces around the town centre.
- 5.2 Budget (101/4516) - The budget for this year's event is £10,000 with an additional £1000 for stewarding (101/4003). It will be utilised to provide a large historic market with additional attractions and the associated cover which they require, along with on the day staffing and support from partner agencies (medical cover etc.). It is expected to cost £8000 with a further £600 being spent from the stewarding budget, delivering a saving of approximately £2400 from budget.



6. CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL WEEKEND PREPARATION

- 6.1 Officers and members of LBFIRST are currently planning the three day event to take place from Friday 1st to Sunday 3rd December.
- 6.2 Friday activities will take place from 4pm to 8pm with the official switch on of the lights at 7pm. It is proposed to have a full programme of live Christmas entertainment on stage for the whole period along with the traditional Christmas Market and Firework display.
- 6.3 Saturday's activity will focus on the Christmas themed market, with a (synthetic) Ice Rink installed for use throughout the day alongside the market, fun fair, and additional food concession offering. Leighton Buzzard Fun Runners are expected to hold their annual Santa dash from Church Square on Saturday as per previous years.
- 6.4 Sunday will focus on a family day on the ice rink, with families being encouraged to spend time with their family 'on ice' whilst listening to the sounds of traditional Christmas music. For Saturday & Sunday, a limited number of food vendors will be incorporated into the High Street for the day, reducing the costs experienced in previous years with the need for less security & stewarding at additional road closure points.
- 6.5 Budget (101/4511) - At this point in time, the event is expected to be within the allocated budget.
- 6.6 Having previously proposed a review of the event and in recognition that the current three year event plan concludes in 2017, it is recommended that Committee set up a Task and Finish group to review the Christmas weekend. Further to this proposal it is recommended that the group commence its review prior to the delivery of this year's event in order to gain a full understanding of work.



End