

## **STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE**

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Date: Monday 3 June 2024

Title: Third Party Events Report

Contact Officer: Deputy Venue & Events Officer

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### **Background**

The Council works to facilitate a diverse range of third-party events on its community venues/grounds each year that provides popular and well attended events for the community to enjoy. These are events such as fairs, festivals and circuses that hire our venues/grounds, but are not Town Council events, although we work closely with organisers to ensure each meet the Council's criteria for a safe and well managed event.

### **Current Situation**

#### **Events that have taken place so far this year:**

##### **Hatwell's Funfair – 13<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> May:**

Hatwell's Funfair returned this year with another successful fairground event and some fine weather.

A representative from Hatwell's funfair raised that all of their posters had been taken down off of lampposts around town, despite them being compliant with previous years rules. Officers are looking into who and why these were taken down and whether rules have changed, so that they can accurately inform other events taking place on Council grounds.

Upon completion of a site visit carried out by Officers, no damage to the ground has been reported after this year's event.

##### **Witney Pride – 25<sup>th</sup> May:**

Witney pride hosted their third annual event on the Leys preceded by a march from Marriot's Walk up to the Leys. The event was successful with its biggest attendance to date and well supported, and the Council is looking forward to having them back next year.

#### **Upcoming Events:**

##### **Witney Music Festival – 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> June:**

Witney Music Festival's main event takes place on the evening of 7<sup>th</sup> June and from midday on the 8<sup>th</sup> June. Officers have been working with directors of the festival to help with the promotion of the event, as per the Council's partnership agreement. An additional advertising site on King George's Field has been made available for the festival to display an advertising banner, as well as use of The Corn Exchange notice boards, WTC's website, WTC's Facebook page and the digital notice board.

**Witney Carnival – Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> July:**

Witney Carnival returns in July 2024. This year's theme is Children's TV through the ages. The carnival is organised by Witney Round Table, Witney Lions Club, Witney Rotary Club and the Witney Air Cadets.

**Witney Feast – 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> September:**

A traditional event for the town that dates back as far as 1243! Wilsons Funfair will return this year with the large ever popular rides.

**Circus Ginnett: 30<sup>th</sup> September – 6<sup>th</sup> October:**

A popular touring circus event returning to the leys this year.

**Events in the pipeline:**

Courtside Hubs CIC have enquired about hosting some live music outside the Coffee shed on The Leys again this year. Officers are keen to support these events and are currently carrying out due diligence to make sure all licensing requirements can be met.

Oxford Playhouse have applied to host an outdoor pop-up theatre event on The Leys on 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> June. There would be no charge to the council the event itself and OP do not charge audience members to watch the performances. The visit is part of the charitable aims of OP, reaching out to bring educational performances to families and communities. The Leys has proven to be one of their most successful venues in previous years - with audiences averaging 80 people each. Officers recommend free use of The Leys is granted again this year for a free event for the children of Witney.

**Environmental impact**

Having declared a Climate Change Emergency at its Council meeting on 26 June 2019 Councillors should have due regard to the environmental impact of any decisions they make with regard to its facilities and services it operates

**Risk**

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

**Financial implication**

The standard charges apply to all hiring of the venues/grounds with the exception of those supported by Council grants.

The subsidised hire of The Leys for the Oxford Playhouse event would be £1,500 this can be covered from budget 4110/202.

## **Recommendations**

Members are invited to note the report and consider the following.

1. Members are invited to note the report and updates.
2. Agree to Courtside CIC using land at The Leys for live music, subject to the necessary checks by officers.
3. Free use for the Oxford Playhouse to host an outdoor pop-up theatre event on The Leys on 15th & 16th June.