

## **STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE**

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**Date:** Monday 20 January 2020  
**Title:** Council & Civic Events  
**Contact Officer:** Communications & Events Officer – Polly Inness

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### **BACKGROUND**

The purpose of this is to inform Councillors about plans for events for 2020 and give feedback on recent events.

### **PANTOMIME**

This was successful. We cut off sales on Christmas Eve having sold 138 of 150 seats, taking £1104. After charges for the hall are offset and the cost of the theatre company at £650 we made around £250 in profit. We could easily have sold the full 150 tickets and made an additional £150. We could also have made a lot of money from selling refreshments but instead were directing people to the local shop for soft drinks and snacks. We should make a provision for refreshments if the panto is repeated next year. As I attended to collect and check tickets, I would have had ample opportunity to have sold refreshments

### **REMEMBRANCE**

The Royal British Legion had contacted Witney Town Council ahead of this year's event with a view to arranging a meeting to discuss the future of the Remembrance Service and Parade. The meeting eventually took place in December following receipt of a letter from the Legion which explained that nationally, Royal British Legion branches were asking local councils to take on responsibility for the parade. The implications are that the cost of insuring and overseeing the parade (first aid etc.) will fall to the town council in future. RBL were also been told that they cannot run a parade with an unqualified Parade Marshal, so training will be offered to their current marshal (if a place is available on the course). Because this takes place relatively late in the year Witney Town Council is seeking to recruit a temporary replacement for this year only, to ensure that we can have a parade this year. While every effort will be made to continue with a traditional service and parade there may

well be other necessary changes to the format of these as we do not have the resources to cover the event as it stands. Our insurance company requires that we use only trained marshals on road closures and barriers. Youth organisations that currently take part in the parade will be invited to a meeting to discuss changes in late January and it will be imperative that they send a representative so that they understand any changes and implications for their groups.

#### CIVIC RECEPTION

The Reception is booked for Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March. Citizen of the Year Awards take place at the Reception and winners are due to be selected and announced very shortly.

#### VE DAY

Minutes from the VE Day meeting will have been made available. Witney Town Council will be organising a short program of music and dance events on the Market Square on Friday May 8<sup>th</sup> with community groups and organisations invited to make use of the Corn Exchange and Burwell Hall for their own community events.

#### LAKE AND COUNTRY PARK DAY

Proposed date for this is during the May half term. The format is likely to be the launch of a nature-based scavenger hunt leaflet for children and families. We will contact some of our local environment and nature groups such as Berks Bucks and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust, The Lower Windrush Valley Project and the RSPB to see if they can come along and offer some activities.

#### WITNEY CARNIVAL

The following minutes were received from Witney Rotary Club who had been asked to consider a theme of the 1920s (hundred years) of The Leys.

## **Theme**

***This was agreed-The 1920s: A celebration of the Leys. This takes account of the Town Council's letter of the 19<sup>th</sup> September. It was noted that this presents the Town Council with an opportunity to contribute via, say a Marquee used to display some of the photographs etc. of the Leys in the 1920s drawn from Witney Museum. Local artists or art groups might also get involved. This would be put to the Town Council.***  
**Action Chairman**

As a financial implication, the Council has set a budget of £500 for WTC use at the carnival.

The Committee has also stressed that any stall/activity (manned by councillors) will require risk assessments and proof of PLI.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

Having declared a Climate Change Emergency at its Council meeting on 26 June 2019 – with this in mind 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 IMPLICATIONS**

Described here or as stated in the report above.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Member are invited to note the report and consider the following:

- Whether to have a panto this year and if refreshments could be offered;
- Mayor to set a date to come in and select Citizens of Year;
- Decide the format of the Lake and Country Park day;
- The format of any stall at Witney Carnival 2020.