

Christmas –Sub Committee

Date: 27th February 2020

Title: Advent Fayre

Contact Officer: Project Officer – Tracy Minns

Background

The purpose of this report is to update and inform Councillors on the annual Advent Fayre hosted by WTC for the children and families in Witney.

The Advent Fayre was held in the Corn Exchange on Sunday 1st December 2019 from 11am through to 3pm.

Activities are mainly craft based enabling children to make a variety of things to take home. In addition to this last year we introduced a few new ideas to keep the event fresh. These consisted of face painting, photo booth and a free to ride fairground rides which all proved to be popular.

Having declared a Climate Emergency in June 2019, at least fifty percent of the activities were based on sustainable materials and this was well received.

The Advent Fayre is traditionally a Councillor led activity however last year with the exception of two Councillors and one of their spouses there was no other attendance or help. The Advent Fayre was totally reliant on the goodwill of the Air Cadets.

Finding a Father Christmas for the Advent Fayre 2019 was difficult despite appealing to voluntary groups. A solution was found last minute with the kind donation of a borrowed costume from a previous Mayor and the loan of the current deputy Mayors husband and although he did a great job this arrangement is not an ideal way to provide this important role.

The Fayre is aimed at children between the ages of 3 and 12 and local primary schools are included in the Christmas competition to design a poster for the Advent Fayre which is then used to promote the event via social media, around the town on notice boards and on WTC vehicles.

The Advent Fayre can only take place with the help of volunteers as this is not an Officers function. The Project Officer organises the event and is the only Officer who attends therefore we are reliant on the goodwill of the Air Cadets and Councillors to help run the various activities.

Financial Implications

The budget is set at £2,000 for this year and does restrict the addition of extra attractions or activities such as a professional Father Christmas.

There is the additional cost of the hire of the Corn exchange, plus the additional hours for the caretaking duties.

Recommendation

Members of the Sub-Committee are invited to note this report and consider the future of the Advent Fayre for 2020 and beyond, and in particular the following, which proved to be an issue in 2019 if Members are keen for its continuation:

- 1) A commitment from Councillors to participate
- 2) A Father Christmas (if required) will need to be found either a volunteer or hired in – including the costume.
- 3) Ideas for crafts or attractions not already included.
- 4) If Members decide to not continue with the Advent Fayre they may wish to consider an alternative event in its place.