

STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Date: 25th January 2021
Title: Events Report
Contact Officer: Communications and Events Officer – Polly Inness

Background

The purpose of this report is to enable Councillors to consider what events might be possible this year with and without COVID-19 Restrictions. This report looks at activities for the whole year as many normal events may take some adaptation in order to run them.

Current Situation

The pandemic means that the Council's public halls are currently closed and there are restrictions and limitations on social gatherings, so alternative ways may need to be looked at in order to deliver events during 2021.

WITNEY HEROES – Launched 11th January

This initiative has now been launched and in the first week 30 nominations have been received. Inevitably nominations are being received for people outside of Witney, such as Didcot, Lechlade and Carterton, so Councillors may like to decide on a suitable criterion to respond to these applications. For example, how the recipients work has been to the benefit to individual, some or all the residents in Witney – similar criteria to the Citizen of the Year Awards.

NHS, SOCIAL CARE AND FRONTLINE WORKERS' DAY Monday 5th July

From Bruno Peek, Pageant Master.

“When the Coronavirus pandemic gripped the UK, we were suddenly at war with a ruthless, invisible enemy and on the front line were our NHS doctors, nurses and paramedics, plus platoons of critical workers keeping our shops open and stocked, our streets safe and our essential services running.

Now we have the chance to show our gratitude to all NHS and front line staff with an annual day of thanks and remembrance. The first NHS, Social Care and Frontline Workers' Day takes place on Monday July 5th 2021 with a series of events involving every aspect of society and raising money for two excellent causes – NHS Charities Together and the National Care Association”.

The program of events proposed by the Pageant Master is a replica of previous days marking Royal and military events such as jubilees and VE Day.

10am – Raising the NHS, Social Care & Frontline Workers' Day Flag

11am – Two-Minute Silence and Playing of the Last Post and Reveille
1pm – Nation’s Toast to the Heroes of the NHS, Social Care & Frontline Workers and playing of the brand new Brass Band Anthem
1pm – Street, Garden and Village Green Parties
4pm – Afternoon Tea, including a competition for the most unusual location
8pm – Clapping & the Ringing of Church Bells

Councillors may wish to consider a mix of the proposed activities and something less formal and community based.

For example. Purchase and fly a flag and light the Corn Exchange up in a suitable colour and then perhaps stage a socially distanced recorded community variety show of thanks in the Corn Exchange. This could involve performances from members of the community, who want to say thank you or key workers themselves, or a mix. Perhaps this could be organised in such a way that it can contribute to the fundraising suggested by the Pageant Master for NHS Charities Together and the National Care Association.

WITNEY CARNIVAL July

At this time there has been no communication of plans for the carnival this year, but Councillors might like to consider in advance, if they would like a stall at the event should it be possible and what they would like that stall to offer.

ZERO WASTE ROADSHOW 7-10 September

This was previously discussed at Stronger Communities and a budget of £500 set. There was no fixed date but it would be good to run it to coincide with Zero waste week which runs from the 7th – 10th of September.

CAR FREE DAY Wednesday 22 September

Councillors may want to consider whether a road closure is required, given that Market Square and High Street are currently closed to traffic other than buses, cycles and disabled vehicles. Planning activities and participants to invite should also be given some thought.

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY – 14 November

Hopefully Council will be able to stage a normal version of Remembrance Sunday this year. The Council may need to look for a qualified Parade Marshall, if a traditional parade and gathering is to take place.

WITNEY SUMMER CELEBRATION

Eric Marshall will be in attendance to explain an event he is hoping to organise on Market Square in August – subject to COVID restrictions.

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

Councillors need to allocate budgets for any events agreed, if one has not already been assigned.

Councillors may wish to purchase and fly a flag for the NHS, SOCIAL CARE AND FRONTLINE WORKERS' DAY Monday 5th July at the following cost:

Flag 150cm (w) x 90cm (h)

Best suited to freestanding flagpoles around 5-6m (15-20ft), wall-mounted and roof-mounted flagpoles of at least 2-3m in length at a height of a at least 4-6m (20-25ft).

@ £ 34.98 each

Flag 230cm (w) x 138 (h)

Best suited to freestanding flagpoles around 8m (25ft), wall-mounted and roof-mounted flagpoles of at least 3m in length at a height of a at least 10m (30ft).

@ £ 49.31 each

Recommendations

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

1. How nominations for Witney Heroes awards are dealt with for anyone outside of Witney;
2. A programme for NHS Day and whether a flag is to be purchased;
3. If the Town Council is to have a presence at the Carnival;
4. Agree a date for the Zero Waste Roadshow;
5. Whether a road closure needs to be applied for in respect of Car Free Day;
6. If/how the Council wishes to support the Witney Summer Celebration.