

STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Date: 7 June 2021

Title: Communications & Community Engagement Report

Contact Officer: Communications and Community Engagement Officer -Polly Inness

Background

To provide a brief update on Communications and Community Engagement

Current Situation

This report is intended to remind councillors of opportunities for community engagement coming up and ascertain what is going ahead in 2021, COVID-19 permitting.

In Bloom April - May

The In Bloom group has met and discussed various matters. Dedication banners for the Welch Way and Langdale Gate beds have been ordered. Vouchers have been issued to the community gardening groups. Wheelbarrows, compost and vouchers will be delivered to schools in the week following half term. An In Bloom web page will be added to the website as not all the gardeners have Facebook accounts but a web page is accessible to all.

Youth Council

Officers have continued to correspond with the Youth Council chairs throughout the last year. They have been asked to share Census information and the satisfaction survey with their peers and more recently asked how we might best facilitate a meeting for them, based on numbers attending. They are keen to meet as they will need to elect new officers. One of the chairs has been in touch to say that as some of them will be turning eighteen they will be stepping down. They have begun a recruitment drive within their schools to attract replacement members. This Chair has offered to carry on as a mentor for the new Youth Council, which is a great bonus as they have recently lost their independent mentor.

Heritage Open Day

The plan is to invite local hospitality and dining providers to take part with a map of those locations to be available throughout the Heritage Open Day dates. This fits well with the Witney Town Covid-19 Recovery workshop initiative that officers have been involved in

discussion with Emma Phillips of WODC and other stakeholders about. There may be some funding or other support that can be offered by WODC to this event.

Newsletter

The digital summer newsletter is now in production.

Belonging in Work webinars

As part of the Council's Inclusivity and Diversity and Belonging in Witney programme a series of Free Webinars, hosted by Helen May are currently being advertised on our social media pages.

Wild Witney

Recommendation P216 of the Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee held on 20th April 2021 was to promote Plantlife's 'No Mow May' Campaign this summer. As part of this recommendation, it was suggested that the Town Council further promotes wildflower planting by creating a 'Wild Witney' competition for Witney residents. This would be for households to leave an area in the garden for wildflower planting and would be run in the same way as the annual best -dressed house competition.

Children's Christmas Light Competition

The Council's Children's Christmas Light competition has been launched on Social Media and the website with a deadline of mid-July, to allow for the manufacture by the Lights contractor.

Resident's Annual Satisfaction Survey

A link to a report in Survey Monkey showing the data capture of the annual survey which took place in April and May will be made available to members before the meeting.

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

There are no financial implications other than those already budgeted for except for the suggested Wild Witney competition, where no budget has been set.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note this report and;

Consider if they would like to have the data of the annual residents' survey presented in a particular format for the next meeting, or recommend actions arising based on the information provided.