

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

LEISURE and ARTS ADVISORY BOARD

22 May 2007

Report of the Chief Leisure Officer

Part 1- Public

Matters for Information

1 TOUR DE FRANCE 2007

Summary

This report updates on progress regarding the preparations for the Tour de France as it passes through the Borough on Sunday, 8 July 2007.

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Members will be aware from previous reports to the Leisure Facilities, Culture & Youth Advisory Board that this Council has been working closely with Kent County Council (KCC), Transport for London (TfL) and Kent Police regarding the delivery of this major sporting event. This Council is represented on TfL's Marketing, Communications and Associated Events group as well as the Operations, Technical and Safety Planning Group.
- 1.1.2 Within Kent, the management of the race is being undertaken directly by KCC, which has appointed a dedicated Project Manager. In addition, a Police Steering Group has been established, on which this Council is represented by the Chief Engineer.
- 1.1.3 This Council's role is to assist KCC and the Police in ensuring the race is successful and to promote a positive image of the Borough to a global audience. A number of associated events are being planned for Tonbridge, and Parish Councils are being supported and kept informed on an ongoing basis.

1.2 The Route

- 1.2.1 The official route was announced on 15 January 2007. Whilst the route has been confirmed, minor amendments are continually being considered by both KCC and the Police and any alterations are then communicated to residents and businesses affected.
- 1.2.2 On 29 November 2006, Officers from this Council and KCC made a presentation to those Parish Councils in the Borough which will be directly affected by the race. The Parishes are Wouldham, Burham, Watlingbury, Mereworth, West Peckham and Hadlow. It was confirmed at the meeting that should the Parishes wish to

arrange events to help mark this occasion, they would be able to apply to the Council for revenue grant funding up to a maximum of £400. Grant applications were considered from Hadlow, Wateringbury, Mereworth and Burham Parish Councils at the last meeting of the Leisure Facilities, Culture & Youth Advisory Board in March 2007 and it was agreed that all Parishes making an application would receive the full £400.

1.3 Associated Events

- 1.3.1 A Corporate Officer Study Group (OSG) has been established to co-ordinate the Council's approach to the event, with the aim of promoting the Borough as a tourism destination and encouraging healthy lifestyles. The OSG has met regularly and is working towards the development and delivery of a range of events.
- 1.3.2 Tonbridge Castle - A two day Medieval Fayre will take place in the Castle Grounds on Saturday, 7 and Sunday, 8 July 2007 operated by a specialist event management company. Stalls will be located on the Bailey Lawn with "have-a-go" archery taking place on the old Lily Pond area. A display area will be left in the middle of the Bailey Lawn for combat displays to take place. A hog roast will be provided and musicians will be playing medieval style music. The timetable for the Medieval Fair on both days is as follows:
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| 10.00 am | Bosco the Jester |
| 10.30 am | Arming of the Knight |
| 11.00 am | Combat display |
| 11.45 am | Hillview and Trinity Youth Theatre |
| 2.30 pm | Hartley Morris Men |
| 3.00 pm | Arming of the Knight |
| 3.30 pm | Combat display |
| 4.30 pm | Bosco the Jester |
- 1.3.3 There will be a balloon release from the top of Tonbridge Castle Gatehouse at approximately 1.15 pm on Sunday 8 July, just after the race passes through the High Street. English Heritage has given permission for the Council to hang a large banner from the Tonbridge Castle Gatehouse welcoming the Tour de France to Tonbridge & Malling.
- 1.3.4 Trinity & Hillview Youth Theatre – the Youth Theatre has produced a roaming performance which will take place on Saturday 7 July from 8.30pm – 9.30pm. The performance is based on the history of the Castle and the audience will work its way around the circumference of the Castle grounds starting from outside Tonbridge Pool, and finishing by the Big Bridge at the Watergate area. Tickets will be limited to approximately 100 and these will be sold in advance by the Customer Services team at Tonbridge Castle.

- 1.3.5 Racecourse Sportsground - activities on the Sportsground are focused on promoting the Council's healthy living agenda and working with local clubs/organisations under the title "Zone Sportive". Numerous local organisations have agreed to present workshops and taster sessions to the public, and the Council's Sports Development Officer has been liaising closely with Tonbridge Sports Association to co-ordinate the activities. A list of those who have agreed to participate is shown at **[Annex 1]**. In addition to sports clubs, it is also felt important to include arts activities. Various local schools including the Medway School of Dancing, Bloco Foco (local Samba band) as well as community bands have confirmed their involvement in the event. A food area will be provided and the road train, used annually at the Garden Show in Tonbridge, will be in operation.
- 1.3.6 Farmers' Market - The company which operates the Farmers' Markets in liaison with the Council has expressed an interest in participating on Sunday, 8 July. To date, 13 traders have confirmed attendance and will be located by the river below the South Curtain Wall.
- 1.3.7 Tonbridge High Street - Kent Festival Brass has been booked to provide background musical entertainment whilst the public wait for the race to come through. Various street entertainers have also been booked including face painters and street magicians. Discussions regarding a parade and exhibition of veteran and vintage cycles are taking place with a local Veterans Cycle Club. Banners across the High Street will be erected welcoming the Tour de France to Tonbridge and so providing colour to the High Street. TfL has advised that no activities can occur on the route during the event closure period. This will be three and a half hours before the Caravanne Publicitaire, and ten minutes after the race and last vehicle has passed.
- The High Street road closure takes place from approximately 8.00 am with the publicity caravan expected into the High Street at approximately 11.24 am through until approximately 12.09 pm. This is then followed by the Tour de France cyclists at approximately 1.10 pm with the road closure ending at approximately 2.00 pm.
- 1.3.8 School Poster Competition – to help promote the event in the community KCC has established a Kent-wide schools poster competition with the 23 school clusters across the County. Posters for Tonbridge and Malling will be judged by the Mayor and the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth and Arts and winning posters will be exhibited at the Angel Centre on 8/9 July 2007. The winner in each cluster will then go forward to a Kent-wide final. The winning posters will be displayed on the tour route and possibly exhibited in Canterbury at the finish. The schools will also receive lesson plans for Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 relating to the tour in order to raise awareness of the event.
- 1.3.9 Mayor's Civic Reception - a Civic reception will be held on the morning of Sunday 8 July, which, in addition to Civic guests, will be attended by representatives from

the twin towns of Le Puy and Heusenstamm. The reception will take place at Tonbridge School.

- 1.3.10 Leisure Facilities - the Council's leisure facilities will be fully operational on the weekend of the race, with Tonbridge Pool and the Castle Gatehouse expecting to be extremely busy.

1.4 Road Closures

- 1.4.1 The Council has been advised by KCC to expect road closures to come into effect from approximately 8.00 am, with roads re-opening at approximately 2.00 pm. KCC has carried out a letter drop to residents and facilities whose properties are adjacent to the route, providing details of the road closures. Members have previously raised concerns about the extent of publicity regarding these practical issues and KCC has recently advised that signs giving advance notice of road closure will be displayed along the whole route a month before the race at 30 metre intervals. In order to ensure as many people as possible are aware of the road closures further letters to businesses, churches and other organisations have recently been sent by the Borough Council, and our leaflet will also provide a feature on road closures.
- 1.4.2 South East trains will be offering promotional "Follow the Race" tickets for the Tour de France weekend and KCC are working with the operator to promote these.
- 1.4.3 Following a study tour to St Quentin earlier this year it became evident that Kent Highways would need to allow for a minimum of two crossing points across Tonbridge High Street for public access. Kent Highways has confirmed crossing points will be provided and it will erect crowd control barriers where it believes pressure points along the route will occur. The Council's Chief Engineer is assisting KCC in identifying these areas, and it is anticipated that barriers will be located on both sides of the High Street in Tonbridge, from the Bordyke to St Stephen's Church.
- 1.4.4 The road closures may have an impact on those organising non related events in the area. We are striving to ensure that we identify any such people and are advising them to contact KCC to discuss the implications for their event arising from the planned road closures.

1.5 Media/Marketing

- 1.5.1 The Council's Media and Communications Manager has met with representatives from West Kent College. It has been agreed that students undertaking Graphic Design courses will assist with the design of the leaflet for the events being organised by this Council. The leaflet will include details such as a map, programme of events, parking and road closures. The students will also design posters to promote the event, which will be displayed around the borough. A four-page feature with relevant information will appear in the June/July edition of Here

& Now. West Kent College will also have photography students present on the day of the race, and Tonbridge Camcorder Club has kindly agreed to produce a DVD of all the day's events and activities.

- 1.5.2 This year's Leisure Guide includes a four page pull out section on the Tour de France and its associated events.
- 1.5.3 Students from Weald of Kent Grammar School are producing life size models of themselves and bikes for display on the day of the race, and a suitable location to display these pieces of art is currently being considered.

1.6 Car Parking

- 1.6.1 Despite a number of the Council's car parks being inaccessible as a result of the road closures, some 6,000 spaces have already been identified for use by visitors and spectators. In addition to the Council's own car parks, park and walk arrangements have been agreed with Tonbridge School and West Kent College and for the Tonbridge Farm Sportsground. Businesses are being contacted to inform them of the likely high demand for parking and seeking their co-operation in making as much parking as possible available to the public. Tonbridge Lions will be providing marshals to support the Council's Parking Attendants in managing and maximising the use of the parking available. Two of the Council's smaller car parks that will be "landlocked" during the day have been earmarked for dedicated cycle parking.

1.7 Waste Services Issues

- 1.7.1 An action plan has been developed and will be implemented in advance of the race to ensure the borough is presented positively. This will include street cleansing and graffiti removal and Kent Highways Services has been consulted on these issues. Additional litter containers and increased cleansing and toilet facilities will also be provided at key locations on the day.

1.8 Legal Implications

- 1.8.1 The Council has power to expend monies for economic development purposes and, given the understanding that the local economy will benefit from tourists to the area to witness the event, this is a proper use of Council funds.

1.9 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.9.1 The overall cost of hosting the Tour in Kent is £1.5M. Canterbury and Medway Councils have agreed their financial contributions separately with TfL. The remaining authorities in Kent are being asked to contribute a total of £200,000 - 50% of which will be met by KCC. This Council has contributed £20,000 towards this overall cost in line with the majority of other authorities affected by the event going through their boroughs.

- 1.9.2 Members may recall that a sum of £20,000 was set aside in the Leisure and Cultural Activities reserve to assist with the associated events programme this Council has established and to support Local Parish Councils. It is envisaged these events will help raise the profile of the area to a global audience and attract the local community to be part of and celebrate this historic occasion.
- 1.9.3 In view of the high profile of the event, the Chief Executive, in liaison with the Management Team, agreed to allocate a further £10,000 to the project by way of virement from the Second Homes grant 2007/08 from Kent County Council. The Director of Finance will be reporting the virement to the meeting of the Finance and Property Advisory Board on 23 May 2007.

1.10 Risk Assessment

- 1.10.1 On a local level, with advice from the Council's Health and Safety Officer, an event safety plan risk assessment will be carried out relating to the events taking place at both the Castle and the Sportsground. Regarding the Tour de France, TfL and KCC are producing a risk assessment for the overall event, and liaising very closely with Kent Police.
- 1.10.2 Tonbridge Lions Club has kindly agreed to provide a number of its members to help steward the car parking arrangements and the Council's associated events. External security staff will be employed by the Council over the weekend and also to patrol the grounds overnight.

Background papers:

contact: Stephen Gregg

Nil

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