

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

LEISURE and ARTS ADVISORY BOARD

8 December 2014

Report of the Director of Street Scene and Leisure

Part 1- Public

Matters for Information

1 EVENT UPDATE REPORT

Summary

The purpose of this report is to update Members on recent and future events across the Borough.

1.1 Background

1.1.1 The Council supports many community groups and other partners in the delivery of events and in some cases, deliver the events directly. With regard to the community group events, the Council is often represented on the organising committee and provides event management advice particularly relating to the preparation of health and safety documentation. Depending on the scale of the event, organisers are encouraged to liaise with the Council's Safety Advisory Group.

1.1.2 The events highlighted below are delivered with the support/assistance of Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council. However, numerous other events take place across the borough through Parish/Town Councils. All Parish/Town Councils have recently been contacted regarding events in their area and a summary of the responses is highlighted at **[Annex 1]**. It is the intention to seek these event updates on a quarterly basis.

1.2 Events to date

Since the last meeting of this Board, the following events have taken place:

1.2.1 Music at Malling - Bringing international artists to historical venues, the fourth Music at Malling festival took place from the 23 – 28 September. This year, organisers commemorated the centenary of the First World War with music from Ravel and Elgar. Bach was the featured composer and was heard in every programme along with dedicated concerts that took place in the churches along the Pilgrims Way, Birling, Addington and Trottiscliffe.

1.2.2 Tonbridge Half Marathon - The fourth Tonbridge Half Marathon took place on Sunday 28 September. This event is a joint collaboration between Tonbridge Lions Club and Tonbridge Rotary Club.

Starting from West Kent College, runners headed out of Tonbridge and through the countryside. They arrived in Leigh to a wonderful welcome and musical entertainment provided by the 17th Scout and Guide Band and the bell ringers of Leigh Parish Church. An enthusiastic and very vocal crowd awaited them back in Tonbridge as they came up the finishing straight.

The event was a resounding success with over 1000 runners taking part, raising an estimated £63,000 for charity.

- 1.2.3 Wrotham Festival of Light - Organised by Kent Equality and Cohesion Council, the second Festival of Light took place on Friday 17 October with an estimated 500 strong crowd. The event involved children from St George's Primary School, Wrotham, Platt Primary School, Stansted Primary School and Trottiscliffe Primary School.

The festival started at St George's Church in Wrotham where the children congregated with the lanterns they had made. They were joined by stilt walkers, Four by Four Bhangra and Samba group Bloco Olofi. The entertainment accompanied the lantern parade to its final venue at Wrotham Cricket Ground.

Following last year's success, event organisers were keen to develop the festival further and make the event a more diverse cultural experience. As well as the performers outlined above, other acts included a comedy act, Irish Dancing and a vocalist. The evening culminated with a firework display.

- 1.2.4 Tonbridge Christmas Festival - This year's festival took place on Sunday 23 November. For a second year, the event was organised by Tonbridge Rotary Club, and despite the wet weather was extremely well attended.

The High Street was closed for the afternoon and there were a variety of music and dance performances from local groups including Razzamataz, Medway School of Dancing, Tonbridge Community Choir, Ricky & The Hats and Bullshed. All of the performers donated their appearances free of charge for the event. Street entertainment was provided by Applause Rural Touring Scheme and the Hartley Morris Men. In addition to the activities outlined above, the Rotary Club had arranged for stalls to be located in the High Street to sell Christmas goods along with various refreshments for the public to enjoy.

The Mayor was joined by the cast of the Angle Centre pantomime Robin Hood & The Babes in The Wood, to switch on the town's lights and a fantastic firework display brought the entertainment in the High Street to a close. The activities then moved to the Chequer Board area (near the Angel Centre) where Tonbridge Rock Choir brought the event to a close.

1.3 Future Events

- 1.3.1 Jane Austen's Birthday - An event celebrating Jane Austen's birthday will take place on Tuesday 16th December at the parish church of St Peter and St Paul in

Tonbridge. The birthday address, entitled, 'Confessions of a Chronic Jane-ite' will be given by Sir Sherard Cowper- Coles.

The event will take place at 2.30pm. Tickets are £5 and include the lecture and refreshments. Tickets can be purchased from Mr Books, Tonbridge Library and Sevenoaks Library as well as Sevenoaks bookshop.

- 1.3.2 Open Air Cinema – The Council has recently approached Luna Cinema to investigate the potential of bringing open air cinema to Tonbridge Castle next summer. Luna Cinema is the country's largest producer of open air cinema events, hosting screenings at a number of high profile venues including Hampton Court Palace, Kew Gardens and Leeds Castle. Initial discussions have taken place with the Company with the potential to stage 2/3 consecutive night screenings between July – September 2015. Officers are currently considering a formal proposal from Luna Cinema and further details will be brought to the next meeting of the Board.
- 1.3.3 Tonbridge Arts Festival - Tonbridge Arts Festival committee has been meeting regularly to consider plans for the 2015 event. It has been agreed that next year's festival will focus on a 3 day musical event at Tonbridge Castle. The dates have been confirmed as 10/11/12 July. The programme is currently being developed and details will be brought to the next meeting of the Board.

1.4 Legal Implications

- 1.4.1 The Council has regular liaison with community groups, and provides advice and support with regard to the preparation of health and safety documentation in relation to the event. Depending on the scale of the event and taking into account any unique elements making up the event, it is likely that the organisers will be invited to attend the Council's Safety Advisory Group. The Safety Advisory Group comprises of emergency services representatives as well as Council staff representing services such as Environmental Health and Building Control.

1.5 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.5.1 With specific reference to Tonbridge Arts Festival, Music at Malling and Tonbridge Christmas Festival, these events are supported from within the Council's arts and tourism budget. In some cases private sponsorship is sought by community groups to supplement the contribution from the Council.
- 1.5.2 Tonbridge Christmas Festival secured additional income through pitch fees from stall holders, financial donations from Medway School of Dancing, Razzamataz and Weatherspoons.
- 1.5.3 The Christmas Festival obtained sponsorship from The Medway School of Dancing. Over events, such as Music at Malling and the Wrotham Festival of Fusion and Light secured additional funding from organisations such as Soundhub and the Arts Council.

1.6 Risk Assessment

- 1.6.1 Where the event takes place on Council owned land, organisers are required to complete an Events on Open Spaces application form, undertake a risk assessment and in some cases, an Event Safety Plan is required. Should the organisers be booking other organisations to provide music, catering or other elements, the Council recommends that they obtain copies of their public liability insurance certificate and a risk assessment from these external providers.

1.7 Policy Considerations

- 1.7.1 Community, Customer Contact, Healthy Lifestyles

Background papers:

contact: Lyndsey Bennett

Nil

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