

Minutes of a meeting of the **COMMUNICATIONS and EVENTS** Committee held at the Council Offices, Pine Grove, Crowborough on Tuesday 18th January 2022 at 7.30pm

Present	Councillors	Alison Arthur Martyn Garrett Kay Moss David Neeves Gareth Owen-Williams Alan Penney Ron Reed* Matthew Street Natalie Whittle	Vice – Chairman Chairman
Also present		Melanie Street Mia Kelly Peter Cunnington	Assistant Town Clerk Events Coordinator Operations Manager (online)
		Six members of the public	

*Denotes non attendance

APOLOGIES

Cllr Ron Reed

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Natalie Whittle declared a personal interest in item 7.1 as the potential recipient is known to her through one of her volunteering roles outside the council.

MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting of 5th October 2021

9639 **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 5th October 2021 as confirmed be ratified by the Chairman.

QUEENS PLATINUM JUBILEE BEACONS

Members discussed whether to light the Crowborough beacon as part of the national event. It was agreed that this would be an excellent addition to the celebrations already planned for the Queen's Jubilee. The committee noted that the beacon is currently out of

order and would need to be repaired. It was agreed to play the national anthem as part of this ceremony.

9640 RESOLVED to light the Crowborough beacon as part of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Beacons event on 2nd June 2022

EVENTS

Members reviewed the events which had taken place since the previous meeting.

Fireworks Display

The event was very well attended and received much positive feedback. The committee discussed the siting of the display, exit routes from the site and problems encountered with the sound. It was agreed the Events Coordinator would investigate sound issues and potential solutions for the 2022 event.

There was discussion regarding the potential for silent fireworks, lasers or drones instead of traditional fireworks. Members noted that the council has agreed a three-display contract with the current supplier whose expertise is fireworks rather than technology displays. There is one more year left on the current contract. It was agreed that alternative options to traditional fireworks would be considered as an agenda item later in the year.

Standing orders were suspended.

A member of the public spoke to express concern as they live adjacent to Goldsmiths Recreation Ground and the fireworks display causes their horses, sheep and other animals distress. Additionally they are concerned that wild animals may also experience distress. The member of the public stated that following the display they often have to collect a large number of firework shells from their property and that they are concerned that residents parking along Pilmer Road to attend the display block the road for any potential emergency vehicles.

A second member of the public spoke to express concern as they live in the same property adjacent to Goldsmiths Recreation Ground and are concerned with residents parking along Pilmer Road during the event. He noted that the council had used fencing this year with the aim of alleviating this issue, but the fence had been pulled down and people had still accessed the area this way as the fence was not manned.

Standing orders were reinstated.

The Chairman reassured the members of the public that the committee had already agreed to conduct a review of the event, taking into consideration alternatives to traditional fireworks, any cost implications, benefits to the town and event feedback.

Armistice Day – the event was noted.

Remembrance Day

This was the first year that the council had run this event, taking it over from the Royal British Legion, and working with Crowborough and District Veterans and Supporters Association. The Chairman informed members that staff had conducted a full debrief and review as usually happens following an event. This review highlighted the need for additional staff to manage the rolling roadblock, particularly stationed at the mini roundabouts along Croft Road. It was noted that, as the parade had moved more quickly than anticipated, there was a waiting time at Chapel Green before the commencement of the next part of the event schedule. This was particularly difficult for younger people attending. This will be addressed as part of the planning for the 2022 event.

A Member expressed concern that the use of a rolling roadblock, rather than a full road closure, meant that traffic was still moving along Croft Road, heading towards the parade on the opposite side, as it made its way along the road. The committee discussed the rolling roadblock and whether a full road closure would be beneficial for the next event. It was noted that the review had already highlighted the need for additional staffing which would help in the future. Members considered that a full road closure would necessitate the closure of several roads around the parade route, and require diversions to be put in place, thereby increasing traffic moving down other roads for the duration of the parade.

Standing orders were suspended.

A member of the Crowborough and District Veterans and Supporters Association spoke and thanked the council for its efficiency in taking this on and for the regular communication the Events Coordinator had supplied in the lead up to the event. In answer to a question from the Chairman he stated that the event as previously organised by the Royal British Legion had always used a rolling roadblock as a full road closure necessitated the closure of many junctions, and he did not believe a total road closure was necessary for this event.

Standing orders were reinstated.

The committee agreed that safety was always the main priority and that the Events Coordinator would investigate both a rolling roadblock and full road closure for the 2022 event, and report back to the committee at a future meeting.

Christmas Fair

The event was very well attended. There was a welcoming and festive atmosphere. The lack of celebrity to turn on the lights did not detract from the event, and the Crowborough Players pantomime actors had done a wonderful job in their place. Members discussed whether there was scope for additional stalls due to the slight change in location. It was agreed the Events Coordinator would investigate whether this was possible and what charges would be incurred. It was noted that the new location of Santa's Grotto had meant pedestrian space in Croft Road was limited at some points where the land train passed. It was agreed the Events Coordinator would consider this in planning for the 2022 event.

Three members of the public left the meeting.

Civic Carol Service

The committee discussed the event with particular attention to the civic reception which followed the main service. It was agreed that this should be open to all who are attending, not just invitees. The service was discussed. Members noted that it was appropriate to include the Sussex Carol and requested that other, more traditional, carols are included for the 2022 event.

Members reviewed upcoming events.

Town Conference

It was agreed to ask Sussex Police to provide a speaker for the event as the new police station has opened in town during the past year.

Boundary Walk

The event will follow the usual format. It is not expected that booking will be required this year.

Queen's Platinum Jubilee 'Big Lunch'

Entertainment, food vendors and choirs have been booked. A full report will be available at the next meeting. The Events Coordinator confirmed that picnics will be encouraged as well as food vendors being available.

Sussex Day

The committee had previously agreed to revisit this event. Members discussed how to celebrate Sussex Day in 2022 as it has not been possible to celebrate this event for the past two years. It was noted that the council has additional events planned this year which has increased staff workload. It was agreed to proceed with a low-key celebration to involve the raising of the Sussex Flag, accompanied by a Town Crier. This will take place after school hours to encourage attendance and will be publicised via the council's website and social media.

CrowFest

The Events Coordinator gave a verbal report. This two-day music festival will incorporate the traditional Summer Fair with stall holders, food vendors, kids zone inside the running track, entertainment ring in Area 1, and live music stage. Planning is underway and a full report will be available for the next meeting.

Members discussed the overnight security of the site. The Events Coordinator confirmed that a security firm will provide night security and that fencing will close off the area where required. It was noted that the recreation ground has covenants on it which may preclude closing off part of the land. The Events Coordinator agreed to investigate this and report back to the next meeting. As stall holders will be on site for two days instead of the usual one, the Events Coordinator was asked to contact regular bookers and inform them of this change. The Camping and Caravan Club should also be notified of the two-day event.

An event-specific website has been set up to provide information on the event and regular updates to bands taking part. This has been done to avoid flooding the council's website and social media with CrowFest information updates which may not be helpful to regular followers. The website is currently live at: www.crowfest.wixsite.com/home

The Chairman informed the committee that the remaining 2022 events will be discussed later in the year. The Mayor thanked the Events Coordinator and Operations Manager for their work on the events so far this year which had all been very well received.

POSTER BOARDS CHARGING REVIEW

Members considered the poster board charges. The boards had not been used regularly during the pandemic and were only now receiving new bookings.

9641 **RESOLVED** that poster board charges for 2022/23 remain at the same level as 2021/22

CIVIC AWARD NOMINATION

The Chairman moved this item to the end of the agenda due to the confidential nature of the discussion.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

The report was noted. The committee asked for clarification as to why the monies received for the Mayor's fund had been moved in and then out of the council's account when it understands money is usually paid directly into a separate Mayor's account. It was agreed to ask the Responsible Financial Officer for clarification.

The Income and Expenditure and Earmarked Reserves were noted.

9642 **RESOLVED** that the balance of £214 in Earmarked Reserve 317/906/9039 'Notice Boards' be moved to the General Reserve

URGENT MATTERS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN FOR NOTING

A member enquired about the Eco-Exhibition which had been previously discussed but no date set. It was agreed to put this item on the next agenda. The Events Coordinator will liaise with the councillor to discuss ideas for the event, including a possible presence at CrowFest.

A member enquired about the possibility of reviewing the current microphones in the council chamber as they do not always provide the best sound. It was agreed to place this item on a future agenda.

Three members of the public left the meeting.

CIVIC AWARD NOMINATION

9643 RESOLVED pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to exclude the press and public from the meeting on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reasons of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted and they were asked to leave.

There were no members of the public left in the meeting.

Members considered the nomination. Whilst commendable the committee did not consider an award appropriate in this instance as part of the criteria is a 'significant contribution the residents of Crowborough.' Councillors agreed that the Mayor should write to the nominee thanking them for their work. It was also agreed that the Events Coordinator liaise with the family to discuss a potential visit from the Mayor to the nominee's voluntary organisation.

The meeting closed at 8.50pm.