

Classification: Public

Key Decision: No

Gravesham Borough Council

Report to: Community & Leisure Cabinet Committee

Date: 25 November 2019

Reporting officer: Service Manager (Customer & Theatre Services)

Subject: Community Engagement Events & Activities 2019

Purpose and summary of report:

To give an overview of community engagement events & activities in 2019

Recommendations:

1. That the Committee notes the range of events and activity undertaken to engage and develop a more cohesive community and makes known its priorities for consideration in future planning.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Each year a number of community events and activities are delivered by the council's Community Involvement team. These aim to promote cohesion, equality, inclusiveness, celebration and improvement of our environment.
- 1.2 The council's community engagement events activity is aligned with the strategic objectives of the Corporate Plan relating to Objective #2 Place – *A vibrant economy and connected community*, and specifically commitments *to improve resident well-being, develop a cohesive and resilient community, enhance the borough's cultural offer and promote Gravesham's arts and heritage.*
- 1.3 The council has a duty to demonstrate an active promotion of the equalities agenda and the council's community involvement activity is a core element in that work.

2. 2019 Events & Activities

Holocaust Memorial Day, Monday 27 January 2019

- 2.1 The Council recognised Holocaust Memorial Day with a series of promotions. 2019 also marked the 25th anniversary of the Rwandan Genocide and a screening of the film Hotel Rwanda was arranged to mark this occasion.

Chinese New Year, Tuesday 12 February

- 2.2 The event commenced with a lion dance and parade on Community Square before moving into The Woodville for speeches and a programme of traditional entertainment. The event was jointly organised by the Council and the Ying Tao Chinese Association. Both Dartford Boys Grammar School and Bronte School provided performances to a packed Woodville. Twin Dynasty restaurant sponsored the buffet reception for the guests.

Commonwealth Day, Monday 11 March

- 2.3 Schools and dignitaries assembled on Community Square to raise the Commonwealth Flag with entertainment from Bronte School Choir.

Great British Spring Clean, 22 March to 23 April

- 2.4 31 litter picks took place across Gravesham as part of the national campaign - an increase of 17 from the previous year. 177 volunteers including businesses and children participated.

Community Litter Picking

- 2.5 So far in 2019 50 litter picks have been delivered. There are now over 40 volunteers who regularly clean their local area.

Black History Month, October 2019

- 2.6 The council has supported and delivered a broad programme of events during Black History Month. An exhibition was created by the African-Caribbean Forum held in the Blake Gallery celebrating the achievements of people from the black community. An African and Caribbean extravaganza was held in Gravesend Borough Market with food, dancing, music, head scarf tying, crafts and stalls. Genealogist Adrian Stone provided a presentation on tracing his Caribbean roots. City Praise and Emmanuel Baptist held events; The Woodville organised hip hop artist Breis to work with 3 local primary schools and Cohesion Plus and North Kent Caribbean Network delivered an evening of entertainment, music and food in the Council Chamber on Friday 25 October.

Eid on Community Square, Saturday 29 June

- 2.7 Working with North West Kent Muslim Association, Kent Equality Cohesion Council and Westcourt Muslim Cultural and Educational Centre, a celebration was held on Community Square with speeches, entertainment, information stalls and food. The event included the raising of a flag with faith leaders from across the local area present. 800 meals were prepared by the community and distributed at the event.

Armed Forces Day, Monday 24 June

- 2.8 The Mayor, the Deputy Lord Lieutenant and elected members joined cadets, veterans and ex-service organisations on Community Square to raise the flag to show support for the men and women who make up the Armed Forces community.

Thurrock100 Walk Gravesham, Friday 19 July

- 2.9 Working with Kinetika and partners from Thurrock, Southend and Swale, the council worked with the Thames and Medway Canal Trust to organise a community walk from Higham Train Station to Gravesend Borough Market for a packed food market with entertainment.

Outdoor Cinema Screenings on Community Square

- 2.10 A series of summer cinema screenings were held on Community Square as follows: 5 July - *Mamma Mia* - 350 participants; 23 August - *Bohemian Rhapsody* – 400 participants; 6 September - *Greatest Showman* – 450 participants.
- 2.11 Feedback questionnaires were undertaken at the outdoor cinema, receiving a very positive range of responses. Similar approaches can be undertaken in respect of wider events activity.

Boundary Walk – Saturday 2 & Sunday 3 October

- 2.12 40 walkers joined the Mayor of Gravesham to carry out the ancient tradition of “Beating the Bounds” of the borough over 2 days and raising money for the Mayor’s Charity.

Diwali Saturday - 2 November

- 2.13 The council provided support to a Diwali event, including lantern making on Light Vessel LV21, a service at St Andrew’s Arts Centre with music, dancing and storytelling followed by a public parade to the Mandir in Manor Road.

Inter-Faith Week – 10 to 17 November

- 2.14 Working in partnership with the North Kent Council for Inter Faith Relations, a Faith Walk was held on Saturday 16 November visiting 3 places of worship within Gravesend. Gravesend Mosque and the Mandir will be open for the public to visit during the week.

Table 2 – Community Involvement Events

Activity	Child Attendance	Adult Attendance	Business Support	Total Attendance
Chinese New Year	250	350	2	602
Commonwealth Day Flag Raising	30	30		60
Great British Spring Clean				145
Community Litter Picking	30	254	3	287
Eid on Community Square (estimate)	300	500		800
Armed Forces Day				80
Thurrock 100 Food Walk		18		18
Outdoor cinemas				1200
Boundary Walk		40		40
Black History Month – Exhibition launch event	10	20		30
Knitted Poppies				

Black History Month – Market Celebration (footfall from 11 to 5)				2000
Black History Month School's Workshops	120			120
Diwali (anticipated workshop and St Andrews))				150
Inter – Faith Week (events on 15 and 17 Nov) anticipated numbers	10	40		50
Estimated Totals	750	1254	5	4382

3. Gravesend Market Events

- 3.1 An extensive programme of events has been delivered at Gravesend Market to drive footfall and support trading in the Market throughout the past 12 months. A breakdown of each event including average footfall can be found in Table 3.
- 3.2 Gravesend Market is part of the Interreg European Funding project GO Trade. The project aims to increase sustainability of markets and increase overall footfall to the markets and towns overall. Many of the events listed below have been delivered through use of the GO Trade funding.

Table 3 - Gravesend Market Events October 2018 to October 2019

Date	Event	Average Overall Footfall
21 Oct 2018	Youth Market	943
24 Oct 2018	Gravesend Halloween	1196
25 Oct 2018	Gravesend Halloween	1397
16–18 Nov 2018	Light Switch on, Sat & Sun market	6330
23-25 Nov 2018	Fri Evening, Sat & Sun Market	7514
8 Dec 2018	Christmas Market	2556
15 Dec 2018	Christmas Market	2090
16 Jan 2019	Business Breakfast	100
24 Jan 2019	Vegan Day	848
25 Jan 2019	Twilight Market Health & Wellbeing	1337
22 Feb 2019	Pet Event	1691
3 Mar 2019	Handmade Fair	1364
29 Mar 2019	Twilight Market – House and Home	1701
10 Apr 2019	Half Term activities	50
18 Apr 2019	Pet event	1998
28 Apr 2019	Vinyl Record Fair	1343
30 May 2019	Pet Event	1784
31 May 2019	Fashion Show	120
15 Jun 2019	Fusion Event (Town Centre and Market)	1626
21 Jun 2019	Twilight Market – Wellbeing & Pamper	1399
7 Jul 2019	Gaming Market	1068
14 Jul 2019	Gaming Market	845
19 Jul 2019	Food & Music Twilight with entertainment	1933
21 Jul 2019	Gaming Market	919
28 Jul 2019	Vinyl Record Fair	1376

10 Aug 2019	Dino Day	1555
17 Aug 2019	Superhero Day	2569
12 Sep 2019	Business Breakfast	100
19 Sep 2019	Evening Book Signing	30
22 Sep 2019	Handmade Fair	1080
5 Oct 2019	Altogether Stronger African & Caribbean themed	2340

4. Community Expectations

4.1 Consultation on the Corporate Plan elicited views on the contribution that community involvement events make to strengthening community cohesion, as follows:

- I think the more the council get people together the better as people can feel very isolated.
- Gravesham council have really stepped up the community spirit especially events in the market and the square, I have found the events welcoming for all ages.
- The council is better than other nearby towns such as Dartford at developing the community and building a sense of civic pride. It can certainly do more, the effort and expenditure is worth it.
- Other Community events held throughout the year encourage visitors to the town, bringing in revenue, combat loneliness and isolation, increasing wellbeing thus reducing visits to health services.
- We need to develop an understanding between the youth of today and have better events for them to keep them off the streets.
- I would like to see community groups involvement in projects and celebrations especially of minority groups which are not taken into consideration.
- I would like to see a celebration of Gravesham's many cultures and minorities, such as the Polish and Balkan minorities for example.
- The well-being and social cohesion of the town population is critical in ensuring the long term success and prosperity of the town. Although some may feel that these activities waste money, they save money on the long run by reduction of crime and health problems.
- One of the things that is so positive about the borough is the fantastic work that takes place to promote community cohesion through regular community events organised in partnership.
- We all need to work together to make this place a better, friendly and safe one.

5. BACKGROUND PAPERS

5.1 There are no background papers pertaining to this report.

Anyone wishing to inspect background papers should, in the first place, be directed to Committee & Electoral Services who will make the necessary arrangements.

IMPLICATIONS	APPENDIX 1
Legal	<p>Management Plans are put in place for all events activity and where appropriate reported to the Police/Safety Advisory Group for support and guidance.</p> <p>There is no legal requirement to deliver community events, but the overall benefits of cohesion, engagement, involvement and improvement of the area make these a valuable contributor to the area.</p>
Finance and Value for Money	<p>Community engagement has a specific budget G094/34504 £11800 which is used to deliver these events.</p> <p>Market events can be reclaimed through the European Go Trade Interreg funding.</p>
Risk Assessment	<p>Risk assessments are undertaken for all event activity.</p>
Data Protection Impact Assessment	<p><i>A data protection impact assessment (DPIA) should be carried out at the start of any major project involving the use of personal data or if you are making a significant change to an existing process.</i></p> <p>a. Does the project/change being recommended through this paper involve the processing of personal data or special category data or criminal offence data? A definition of each type of data can be found on the Information Commissioner's Office website via the above links. N/A This report is for information only</p> <p>b. If yes to question a, have you completed and attached a DPIA including Data Protection Officer advice? N/A</p> <p>c. If no to question b, please seek advice from your nominated DPIA assessor or the Information Governance Team at gdp@medway.gov.uk. N/A</p>
Equality Impact Assessment	<p>a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community? If yes, please explain answer. No. EQIAs for events are completed before each event as part of the event management plan</p> <p>b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality? If yes, please explain answer. Yes.</p> <p><i>In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above</i></p>
Corporate Plan	<p>Objective #2 Place – <i>A vibrant economy and connected community</i></p>
Crime and Disorder	<p>No Implications.</p>

Digital and website implications	Use of social media and website are key to the promotion of all council events for pre-promotion and live updates.
Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults	All major events are risk assessed, all 1-2-1 interacting events require staff to be DBS checked, photo consent forms are carried out where necessary, all large scale events will have a lost children point and nominated member of staff.