

Community Services Cabinet Committee

Monday, 25 November 2019

7:30pm

Present:

Cllr Shane Mochrie-Cox (Chair)
Cllr Sarah Gow (Vice-Chair)

Cllrs: Brian Francis
Christina Rolles
Lyn Milner
Ejaz Aslam
Les Hoskins
Bob Lane
Jordan Meade
Harold Craske

Simon Hookway	Assistant Director (Communities)
Anita Tysoe	Service Manager (Customer & Theatre Services)
Adrian Hickmott	Leisure & Resilience Manager
Danielle Lock	Sports & Recreation Officer
Ben Clarke	Committee & Scrutiny Assistant (Minutes)

16. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Gurjit Bains, Cllr Aaron Elliott, Cllr Baljit Hayre, Cllr Tony Rana and Cllr Peter Scollard. Cllr Les Hoskins, Cllr Bob Lane, Cllr Brian Francis, Cllr Sarah Gow and Cllr Lyn Milner substituted respectively.

17. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on Thursday, 26 September 2019 were signed by the Chair.

18. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

19. Outdoor and Town Centre Events Programme

The Committee was provided with an overview of the Council's major outdoor and Town Centre events programme that had taken place since April 2019, giving an indication of the scale of commitment that the Council makes to the programme.

The Leisure & Resilience Manager advised that the section on Community Engagement events had been removed and submitted to the Committee as a separate agenda item.

The Leisure & Resilience Manager directed Members attention to section two and three of the report which briefly summarised all of the outdoor events and Town Centre events that

had occurred within Gravesham during 2019; pictures of the events were attached at appendices two and three to the report.

A short video of the 2019 Riverside Festival, organised by the Council and in partnership with local groups and organisations was shown to the Committee.

The Committee discussed and praised the following events:

- The fireworks down at the Promenade attracted ten thousand people and was very popular with the public
- The war memorial Remembrance services were well attended, even more so than the previous year and it was positive to see a great turnout at Cascades for the first RAF memorial service held there

The Committee raised the following points for consideration:

- The Cascades memorial service needed to be built upon for future years; the event encountered a few problems due to the short notice given and would need further Council support to make it a more popular event
- A balance would need to be found with the different memorial services so that one event did not detract from another; some events could be held on a different day to Remembrance Sunday
- St John's Catholic Secondary School had taken over the running of the Denton Memorial Service from the elderly residents and currently had no financial support from the Council; the Assistant Director (Communities) advised that the Council had not been approached for funding.

The Assistant Director (Communities) added that there were many memorial services in Gravesham and he had to be careful not to overstretch his team with so many events out of normal working hours. It is always beneficial when other organisations take a lead on arrangements for a number of the memorial events.

A short discussion was had on the Veterans Hall on Clarence Place; it was accidentally shut on Remembrance Sunday and the keys couldn't be located to unlock it due to the regular key holder being on leave. This was not seen to be a problem that would occur again in the future.

Members all agreed that the work carried out by the Leisure Team was of a very high standard and the Chair asked that the Committee's congratulations and thanks be minuted for all officers involved with the Events Programme.

Members noted the range of larger scale events organised by the Council and in partnership with others.

20. Summer Fun 2019

The Committee were provided with the outcome of the Summer Fun Programme 2019.

The Sports & Recreation Officer outlined key headlines from the report to Members informing them of the activities that occurred during the Programme and the positive feedback from those who took part.

The Leisure & Resilience Manager added that there were a mixture of activities that were directly managed by the Council and other local agencies and the main thrust of the Programme was encouraging the use of public parks. There were full event days at Gordon Promenade, Cascades Leisure Centre, Higham Recreation Ground and Camer Park, between 11am and 3pm which families were able to attend.

In a response to a query about the exclusion of Woodlands Park, the Sports & Recreation Officer advised that the site was used in previous years but it became too big; Dashwood Road became congested with parked cars and the public did not utilise the parking that was made available at St George's Secondary School on the day. As such, it was deemed necessary to move the event to Cascades, not too far away, as it had plentiful parking and a bus service from the Town.

Members noted the levels of participation in this year's Summer Fun programme.

21. Community Engagement Events & Activities 2019

The Committee were provided with an overview of the Community Engagement events and activities that happened during 2019.

The Service Manager (Customer & Theatre Services) directed Members attention to section two and three of the report which summarised all of the Events & Activities and the Gravesend Market Events that occurred within Gravesham during the course of the year; pictures of the events were attached at appendix two to the report. Members were advised the Market items would be taken out and put into a separate report next year.

The Service Manager (Customer & Theatre Services) referenced table 2 in the report correcting an error; the estimate total people in attendance was 5500.

The series of outdoor summer cinema screenings held on the Community Square were planned at short notice as the opportunity arose to have them on the screen that was hired to be used at the Riverside Festival. The films chosen to be screened were very popular, drawing large crowds, outlined at 2.10, even when it was raining on one of the event days. Local businesses were worked with in the adjacent area to promote their own businesses and encourage the public to stay in Gravesend after the films had finished. Due to the popularity of the outdoor cinema events, further screenings are planned to be held next year.

Members were appreciative of the plan for further screenings being held next year and queried whether The Woodville's cinema had achieved any further attendance from the screenings and if it could be promoted as part of next year's events.

The Service Manager (Customer & Theatre Services) explained that there hadn't been any increased attendance to the Woodville's attributed to the outdoor screenings, but the team were keen to ensure that there wasn't any conflict between the events and The Woodville Cinema. The Woodville's had a primary commercial focus and the outdoor screenings were free and only showed films that had already been previously screened at The Woodville's. However, various people did go into the Civic Centre for refreshments and use of the

facilities. The Service Manager (Customer & Theatre Services) advised that promotion of The Woodville Cinema could be tied into the Outdoor Cinema events next year.

It was pointed out by a Member that the 'North West Kent Muslim Association' listed at 2.7 was incorrect; the correct title was 'Gravesend and Dartford Muslim Association'. The Service Manager (Customer & Theatre Services) apologised and to the wording would be amended.

The Committee expressed their thanks to officers for their hard work organising the Community Engagement events and asked that Kirsty Gaunt be made aware of the Committee's thanks for her role in organising the Community Litter Picks.

Members noted the range of events and activity undertaken to engage and develop a more cohesive community.

22. Gravesend Borough Market Research & Member Working Group

The Committee was asked to set out:

- headline findings from the research exercise
- terms of reference for a proposed Member Working Group

The Service Manager (Customer & Theatres Services) directed Members attention to the summary of findings on page 42 outlining key information. Members were also informed of the research that looked at six specific areas within the Market and drew out what was working well and potential areas for consideration. Those six areas are listed below and elaborated further on pages 43-45 of the report:

1. Identifying consumer attitudes and behaviours towards markets and in particular Gravesend Borough Market
2. Gain an understanding about what consumers want from Gravesend Borough Market and how to meet the needs of varying demographics
3. Recognise the impact and appeal of pop-up markets and events
4. Explore thoughts and behaviours surrounding the food court
5. Establish the most effective and engaging methods of promoting and advertising the market and its offerings
6. Summarising the unique offering for Gravesend Borough Market traders

The Committee was reminded that at the Community & Leisure Cabinet Committee in June, it was requested that a Member Working Group was set up to review the research information. On consultation with the Chair of the Cabinet Committee, the attached Terms of Reference were developed and attached at appendix two to the report.

In response to a Members query about the formation of the Committee, the Chair advised that:

- There will be a politically balanced split of Members on the group from Labour, Conservatives and Independent
- Upon approval of the Terms of Reference, the membership will be decided by the Chair and the first meeting will be held before Christmas; as stated in the TOR, there was to be a maximum of three meetings held before a report is submitted to the meeting of Community & Leisure Committee on Wednesday, 26 February 2019
- The meeting did not need to be advertised as it was an internal sub-group meeting
- The Service Manager (Customer & Theatre Services) had already conducted a vast amount of work into the consultation and Market research which Members would be able to review
- The in depth report laid out the key findings and offered solutions to increase the popularity of the Market such as longer opening hours so that young people would be enticed to visit later in the evening. The report also included various representations from the traders within the market, the people that visited it most frequently and people that didn't regularly use it
- How to get further organisations to utilise the spaces at Market such as the 'snug'; some groups with Gravesham already hire out the 'snug' area and provide footfall to the food traders. The intention is that organisations use parts of the Market for meetings which promotes the Market as a friendly meeting space while also promoting the traders within

Concern was raised by a Member that there were only positive reviews and outlooks with no consideration given as to why the public weren't going into the market and no details on policing of the market.

The Service Manager (Customer & Theatre Services) advised that there was wider work being carried out to improve the economy of the Town Centre and the consultation purely looked at the operations of the market and how to improve the footfall based on the consultation research.

The Assistant Director (Communities) added that the market was in a prime location alongside the redevelopment planned in the Town Centre by Reef which would be completed within the next five years. That development will include new residential units which will bring more people to live in the Town Centre, leading to increased footfall. Lots of positive promotion will be carried out during that development to change the public's perception of the Town.

Members agreed to the terms of reference attached at appendix two and for a meeting of the Member Market Working Group to be held before Christmas.

Close of meeting

The meeting ended at 8:20pm.