

Classification: Public

Key Decision: No

Gravesham Borough Council

Report to: Community & Leisure Cabinet Committee

Date: 11 November 2021

Reporting officer: Director (Communities)

Subject: Christmas Programme 2021

Purpose and summary of report:

To provide an overview of the Christmas programme planned for Gravesend Town Centre for 2021.

Recommendations:

1. That Members note the contents of the report and comment on the Christmas programme.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Following disruption to the Christmas Programme in 2020 due to Covid-19 restrictions, plans are in place to reinstate Gravesend's traditional Christmas events in 2021. This is especially important in support of Town Centre businesses as they re-establish trade during what is for many the most important shopping time of the year.
- 1.2 The theme for this year's programme is *Gravesham's Christmas Together* to celebrate the safely coming together of the community to celebrate Christmas.
- 1.3 This report outlines the programme of Christmas events which have been planned by a team of Council officers and its partners.

2. Christmas Programme 2021

Christmas Lights Switch-on

- 2.1 The Christmas Lights Lantern Parade, involving hundreds of school children in the switching-on of the Christmas will start from Community Square at 4.30pm on Friday 19 November. Organised by Cohesion Plus, working in partnership with the Council and Kent Equality Cohesion Council, entertainment will start in the Town Centre at 3pm with bands and street performers, including a living snow globe.

- 2.2 The parade will finish with the lighting of the Christmas tree on Community Square.

Christmas at Gravesend Borough Market

- 2.3 Gravesend Borough Market will be the focus for a programme of pop-up markets and craft sessions planned for the weekends up to Christmas:

26 November - Twilight Christmas Market

27 November - Christmas Market /Children's Crafting Sessions

3 December - Twilight Christmas Market

4 December - Children's Crafting session/Christmas Market

5 December - Christmas Market/Adult crafting workshop

10 December - Twilight Christmas Market

11 December - Christmas Market/Children's Crafting Sessions

17 December - Twilight Christmas Market

18/19 December - Christmas Market

- 2.4 Specialist Markets include:

Sunday 21 November - Chilli Market

Sunday 28 November - Flower Market

Sunday 12 December - Railway and Die cast Market

- 2.5 Musicians and choirs will perform at a number of these events.

- 2.6 A Father Christmas Post Box (26 November to Sunday 24 December) and a walk-through Christmas Selfie Experience (1-24 December) will be accessible throughout December.

Pop-Up Cinema

- 2.7 Two festive Christmas films are being shown in the Borough Market:

2.7.1 Home Alone – Wednesday 1 December

2.7.2 Elf – Wednesday 8 December

- 2.8 These are bookable via The Woodville website (www.woodville.co.uk).

Nativity Live

- 2.9 Gravesend's annual telling of the Nativity story returns on Saturday 11 December.

- 2.10 Filming has taken place this year in and around the Borough to also create a video version of the story to share more widely. This has been made possible with the help of Meopham Vineyard and Gravesham Churches Together.

Santa Trail

- 2.11 An Augmented Reality Santa Trail will take place with 10 special festive animal characters located throughout the Town Centre.

Santa Selfie Experience

- 2.12 A visit to Santa's Selfie Experience will be hosted at Unit 33 in St George's Shopping Centre on Saturday 27 and Sunday 28 November.

3. The Woodville Panto

- 3.1 Gravesend's panto will take place again this year at The Woodville and Wicked Productions will be staging Robin Hood.
- 3.2 The show runs from Friday 3 December to Monday 3 January.

4. Winter Light Festival

- 4.1 Last year's plans to light up the Town post-Christmas had to be deferred to the evenings of Saturday 29 and Sunday 30 January.
- 4.2 The Council is working with Strange Cargo, 8Point3 LED, and local artists to light up historic buildings and create feature lit sculptures around the Town Centre.

5. Communications

- 5.1 The Christmas programme is being publicised in the Winter edition of Your Borough, via www.visitgravesend.co.uk and through the Council's social media channels. Press releases are also being issued to local media.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

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	No direct implications.
Finance and Value for Money	The Christmas programme is budgeted from the Christmas Events budget. The winter lights festival is funded from commitments made to decorate the Town Centre.
Risk Assessment	Risk assessments are prepared for each event and will include a health and safety risk assessment.
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.</p> <p>b. If yes to question a, have you completed and attached a DPIA including Data Protection Officer advice?</p> <p>c. If no to question b, please seek advice from your nominated DPIA assessor or the Information Governance Team at gdpr@medway.gov.uk.</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</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, the Christmas programme is designed to appeal to all sections of the Gravesham community.</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	#2 Place
Climate Change	Consideration has been given to the Council's net zero carbon commitments. LED lights are used throughout the Christmas lights scheme.
Crime and Disorder	Event Management Plans in place for all major events, including risk assessments, licencing involvement and Police/Safety Advisory Group support/guidance where required..
Digital and website implications	The Christmas programme are being promoted via the digital and website channels available to the Council.

Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults	The importance of safeguarding children and vulnerable adults is demonstrated in the design and oversight of the events programme. Events are risk assessed, any 1-2-1 interacting events require staff to be DBS checked and photo consent forms are carried out where necessary.
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