

Classification: Public

Key Decision: No

Gravesham Borough Council

Report to: Cabinet
Date: 26 June 2023
Reporting officer: Service Manager: Town Centre & Cultural Services
Subject: Review of Events

Purpose and summary of report:

To update Cabinet on proposals for funding and delivering events, following a recent review.

Recommendations:

1. To approve the annual events listing as set out in Appendix I, which would result in an annual saving to existing Council revenue budgets of £103,950.
2. To arrange an increased annual budget provision through the Enterprise Zone Funding of £63,000, as set out in Appendix I.
3. To authorise £99,126 from the accumulated Enterprise Zone fund to be used to offset expenditure on relevant activities undertaken in 2022-23.

Key Implications:	
Item	Implications
Legal	There is no legal obligation to deliver events
Finance and Value for Money	This report proposes a rationalisation of annual events and budget provision, thereby resulting in an overall saving to the General Fund.
Corporate Plan	#2 Place – Connected Community
Climate Change	There are no climate change implications

1. Background

- 1.1 For many years, the Council has delivered a series of public events between a number of teams, including Leisure, Town Centre and Community Engagement.
- 1.2 The current budget provision for event related activity equates to £185,950 excluding indirect staffing costs. £57,000 of this currently comes from income generated from locally retained business rates from the Enterprise Zone, with the balance of £128,950 funded by the General Fund.
- 1.3 With the significant financial challenges the Council faces, it is necessary to review and rationalise discretionary programmes as far as possible. This exercise has identified that, if approved and implemented, the Council could maintain a programme of community focussed events and activities, whilst reducing General Fund expenditure by up to £103,950 per annum, as set out within this report.

2. Enterprise Zone Fund

- 2.1 Gravesham has a history of delivering a programme of events designed to support community cohesion and education as well as growing the sense of pride with place and growing the local economy.
- 2.2 The Council's Corporate Plan Objective #2 Place sets out its commitment to be: a dynamic borough; defined by a vibrant and productive local economy taking advantage of growth in the area, supported by its strong and active community
- 2.3 Gravesham is within an Enterprise Zone – part of the Government's wider industrial strategy to support businesses and enable local growth. Enterprise Zones are single or multiple sites designated for business development which may offer business rate discounts or enhanced capital allowance for new businesses locating on the sites. Enterprise Zones are on sites which would ordinarily not be expected to generate significant business growth nor generate any business rates without incentives and /or dedicated local stakeholder support. Any increase from business rates income which arises from the development of an Enterprise Zone site will not be affected by business rates reform, reset or redistribution for a period of 25 years.
- 2.4 Local authorities responsible for all or part of an Enterprise Zone can use any increase in business rates they collect to support the further development of the Enterprise Zone - to support local economic priorities and lead economic growth within their local area.
- 2.5 The delivery of a programme of events and activities which draws existing and new visitors to the area, and stimulates the local economy through encouraging footfall and dwell time, directly links to these priorities.
- 2.6 Whilst some funding has already been used in this way, the proposal set out in this report is for more of the Enterprise Zone funding to be directed towards these activities; thereby ensuring the continuation of a community events programme, whilst assisting the Council to address its financial position.

3. Proposal

- 3.1 Following a review of the events programme, it is proposed that the Council delivers pre-agreed events and activities each year as follows:
 - 3.1.1 Christmas – delivering a reduced programme of events, but retaining the key light switch on and focussing on events across one shopping

weekend, which would incorporate Small Business Saturday to further support the local economy.

- 3.1.2 St George's Day Parade – retaining the existing funding to enable a town centre event and retaining the nominal financial support provided to the local Scout Group for their parade.
 - 3.1.3 Riverside Festival – continuing to deliver the one-day festival within the Riverside and Fort Gardens, but with a focus on securing additional sponsorship or funding to support and enhance the programme where possible.
 - 3.1.4 Remembrance / Memorial Days – maintaining the programme of Sunday Remembrance Services across the borough, along with the Armistice Day service and Armed Forces Day event on the Community Square. This also retains the provision for General Gordon memorial service.
- 3.2 All other events would need to be funded through an alternative route. This includes the Fireworks event which would continue to require an external sponsor to cover all costs and delivery; the Light Festival which would be externally funded but with match funding provision through the Art & Culture budget; community events such as Big lunches, street parties, Lunar celebration or other such events could be considered through GBC's Community grants scheme, but would continue to rely on external delivery by a community group or partner. The existing community grants scheme should also be reviewed to ensure it remains fit for this purpose.
- 3.3 Whilst the proposal set out in this report is to work towards reducing the financial and resource requirements on the Council of delivering a wide event programme, a small provision has been made for ad-hoc events, which would cover one off activities such as the community square street parties that have been held for momentous celebrations, or for a particular activity that the Council considers would have significant benefit to the community and/or economic growth.
- 3.4 A further provision has also been made for appropriate marketing activity, primarily aimed at potential visitors outside of the borough, thereby stimulating economic growth within the borough.
- 3.5 The proposed events will be delivered in addition to the Council's pre-agreed schedule of flag flying.

4. Financials

- 4.1 As set out in Section 1 above, the Council currently contributes £128,950 towards its event programme (excluding indirect staffing costs). An additional £57,000 is currently drawn down from the Enterprise Zone fund.
- 4.2 As set out in Appendix I, the proposals within this report would result in an agreed, rationalised, programme of events that delivers budgeted savings of £40,950. By drawing down an additional £63,000 from the Enterprise Zone funding annually, the saving to the Council's General Fund budget totals £103,950 per annum.

5. Appendices

- 5.1 Appendix I – Annual event listing & budget requirements

6. Background papers

6.1 Memorandum of Understanding for North Kent Enterprise Zone

[160930 MOU for NKEZ Final 3 \(1\).pdf](#)

Lead Officer: Anita Tysoe, Service Manager, Town Centre & Cultural Services

Email: Anita.tysoe@gravesham.gov.uk

Secondary Implications	
Risk Assessment	N/A
Data Protection Impact Assessment	<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>
	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. No
	b. If yes to question a, have you completed and attached a DPIA including Data Protection Officer advice? N/A
	c. If no to question b, please seek advice from your nominated DPIA assessor or the Information Governance Team at gdpr@medway.gov.uk . N/A
Equality Impact Assessment	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
	b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality? If yes, please explain answer. No
	<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>
Crime and Disorder	There are no implications
Digital and website implications	There are no implications
Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults	There are no implications