

Report to: Events Committee

Report Ref: E1913
Meeting Date: 27th January 2020
Agenda Item: 8
Prepared By: Events Officer

Subject: Bunny Hop



1.0 BACKGROUND

The Bunny Hop is an annual event which has been running since 2014, with the Town Council adopting responsibility for the organisation in 2018. It has traditionally taken place on Easter Saturday and followed the same format with approximately 8-10 cardboard bunnies attached to lampposts and street furniture around the town centre. The bunnies previously had a unique name attached to each bunny; this was adapted in 2019 so that each bunny instead featured a letter to spell out a word, mirroring the aim of the similar Pumpkin Path event held on Halloween. The aim of the event is for families to find the bunnies, write down the letter and its location on the postcard until all of the letters have been found and the hidden phrase can be spelled; the postcards are then posted into the postbox at the Heritage Centre.

There are three prizes for postcards drawn from the entries which are donated by local businesses. There are no road closures for this event which is more leisurely than the Pumpkin Path as the Bunny Hop runs from 10am – 4pm. Various businesses get involved by displaying a 'We are Bunny Hop Friendly' poster in their window, and many of them dress up and give out sweets or other goods to event participants.

2.0 2020 EVENT

It is proposed that the event will run in the same way as the 2019 with each bunny featuring a letter which spells a hidden word or phrase rather than each bunny having a name. The hidden phrase will be associated with Easter, for example the 2019 phrase was 'Easter Egg'. The event will be promoted via social media, the delivery of postcards to local primary schools, posters in participating business's windows, as well as promotion in local press and other channels such as The Knutsford Directory, Knutty Mums and local event groups. The Events Officer will organise the placement of the bunnies around town. The event is in the early planning stages, however many establishments have expressed support including Knutsford Market Hall who are planning to have a face painter and 'Breakfast with the Easter Bunny' morning before the event commences.

A number of the balloons purchased in 2019 for children to take were left behind and so it is suggested this year a character such as the Easter Bunny could roam the town with the balloons and hand them out to children. The character can help children locate the bunnies around the town centre if needed and adds some extra excitement to the event. A good quality costume could be purchased which could be re-used for several years. Additional event features such as an Easter Bonnet competition run with a few of the local businesses and a blind chocolate tasting hosted by Mr Simms are being explored.

Waitrose and Mr Simms Olde Sweet Shop are supporting the event by providing sweets to the local shops at wholesale cost.

The bunnies that were purchased in 2019 to replace the old bunnies are still in good condition and fit for purpose for this event, and as such no replacement bunnies are required this year.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The committee has a budget of £500 with a sponsorship target of £250. The Events Officer has secured one sponsor (Mere Day Nursery) for £150 and is looking for a 2nd sponsor at £100. The design will be carried out again by Bella Design and Marketing who have offered a reduced cost of £125 as an event sponsor which is below market value for the design of all promotional collateral for the event.

The costs of the event will be:

- Print (all posters and postcards) – £133.30
- Design – £125.00
- Balloons – £45.00
- Easter Bunny Costume – £74.20

Total event cost: **£377.50**

The Event Officer recommends that the balance of £22.50 and a portion of any further sponsorship income received is allocated to purchasing chocolate to support the town centre businesses who take part in this community event. The response to the raisins purchased in 2019 was quite negative and most of them were returned to the town council by businesses who were unable to give them away. Though healthy eating should be encouraged sweets are only provided twice a year at events; in a similar way that we secured sweets from Swizzels Matlow to support the businesses for the Pumpkin Path, sweets or chocolates could be purchased to support the businesses for the Bunny Hop as a gesture of thanks for their support with our events.

4.0 DECISIONS REQUIRED

It is recommended that the committee approves the outlined plan and delegates authority to officers to organise the same.

The committee should consider allocating the remainder of the available budget to contribute to sweets for the businesses to hand out as part of the event.