

REPORT TO EVENTS AND TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

EVENTS UPDATES AND FORWARD PLANNING

Report Reference E-22-01
Meeting Date 13th June 2022
Agenda Item 8
Prepared by Events Officer



1.0 FOOD & DRINK FESTIVAL

Plans for our new food & drink festival are starting to come together. Branding for the event has been agreed and posters have been produced, with some already up around the town. Large posters will replace music festival posters around the town and a full guide to the day will be produced. Social media accounts have been set up to promote the event and some have already attracted a good following in just a few weeks.

Currently five town centre hospitality businesses are signed up to host masterclasses/taster sessions/other events during the festival, with more to be recruited. A Taste Knutsford tour has been scheduled to take place on the day, and the August Al Fresco Dining evenings will also coincide with the event (subject to their approval at this meeting).

Plans for the indoor and outdoor markets are also progressing with traders signed up for both markets and arrangements made (or in progress) with the venue owners. Entertainment has been booked for the outdoor market to run from 12-7pm which will be the bulk timings of the event.

2.0 PUMPKIN PATH

Plans for the 2022 Pumpkin Path will soon begin, following along similar lines to the 2021 event which reverted back to the 'original' event style of a three-hour event on King Street on Halloween evening. The 2021 event was very well attended and feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Some comments suggested that the trail element might work better over a longer period, such as the 2020 set-up of the event where the trail was held across a week, however that the other elements of the event such as the various forms of entertainment are what drive most people to the town to the event.

It is proposed a small charge be introduced in 2022 to help cover costs of the event, this has been included in the event budget for this year. A small cost of £1 per entry form with the option to buy forms in advance, will supplement the budget and help to cover the rising cost of services. In 2021 we took 388 completed entry forms on the night which would be £388 income toward the event following these figures, however a large number of forms are given out in advance so it is expected that this number would be higher factoring this in.

The event has been free since its inception, whilst it is fantastic to offer a free event which brings so many people to the town, we usually receive generous donation amounts and many attendees attend the event expecting to pay for the entry forms, so it is expected that a small cost of entry would not be met with huge resistance.

The date set for the 2022 event is Monday 31st October with times set as 4-7pm. Plans for the event

include live singing and dancing performances, themed character actors and themed sets in Wallwood, with the trail consisting of pumpkins hosted in the business windows.

3.0 CHRISTMAS MARKET

Plans for the 2022 Christmas Market will begin in earnest at the end of June. Dates set for this year's Christmas Market are 3rd and 4th December. The Saturday market as always will include the Christmas Light switch on and Santa Parade, with some smaller live entertainment on the Sunday market. A Santa's Grotto of some kind will return to the event this year.

Tendering has been completed for the event contractor costs for the switch on event and Christmas Market which will result an increase in costs of approximately £4,000 (dependent upon the exact size of the market).

It is recommended that a £5 increase to the 2021 stall fees is agreed, this will generate approximately £900 of additional income to contribute towards the increased costs. A sponsor for the event is also being looked into.

4.0 RE-FRESH KNUTSFORD

Re-Fresh Knutsford is currently set to be held again on Saturday 10th September, however due to one venue not having the full space available this date will likely be moved and will be confirmed to the committee once it has been re-confirmed.

The event will run as per 2021, with reps from local clubs, groups and classes invited to have a stand to promote their services to local people as a way to engage the local community with leisure and volunteering opportunities available in Knutsford.

5.0 YOUNG ARTIST OF THE YEAR

The Young Artist of the Year competition will launch on 31st July, marketing collateral for this is currently being designed to promote the event. Promotion will be distributed to all schools in advance of the summer holidays to invite young artists to submit work to the competition.

Entries will close during October half term and a judging panel, to be comprised, will create a shortlist of entries who will be invited to attend an awards evening where winners will be announced and presented with prizes.

The date for the awards evening has been set as 17th November, to be held at Vermilion Galleries on Stanley Road Trading Estate; the gallery are sponsoring the event by offering the venue for use for the event free of charge.