

REPORT TO FULL COUNCIL

TOWN CENTRE BUNTING

Report Reference C-22-31
Meeting Date 6th March 2023
Agenda Item 9
Prepared by Town Clerk



1.0 BACKGROUND

In 2012, the Town Council requested that the Knutsford Royal May Day Committee keep their bunting up for an extended period to cover the Jubilee celebrations and Olympics. This was agreed subject to the council reimbursing the committee the cost of any damaged bunting. The arrangement continued in 2013 and 2014 as the council felt bunting added an air of celebration to the town for the summer. This arrangement ended in 2015 and subsequently the Town Council bought its own bunting in 2016 and replaced it in 2020. Until 2022, the Knutsford Royal May Day Committee installed their bunting in May, and the Town Council installed its bunting once the KRMDC bunting was taken down. In 2021 the KRMDC asked if the council bunting could be installed a week prior to remove the duplication of cost and effort (the committee having relied on volunteers to install the bunting and being concerned about the health and safety implication and cost of this), therefore for 2022 the Town Council bunting was installed for May Day. Bunting weathers, and it is necessary to buy replacement bunting for the next season. Provision for this had been included in the draft 2023/24 budget.

The budget of £3,000 (£1,800 installation and removal, £1,200 for replacement bunting) was removed from the budget by the Finance Committee in its recommendation to Full Council for the budget. The Knutsford Royal May Day Committee has expressed concern that there may be no bunting and that it is unlikely to be in a position to install any. A number of the town centre businesses wrote to councillors expressing disappointment that the town will have no bunting, both for the coronation year and for the positive impact it has on the town centre. The Town Mayor therefore requested that the Events and Town Centre Management committee consider the plans not have bunting for 2023 with a view to making a recommendation to Full Council should budget be required.

The Events and Town Centre Management Committee on the 6th February noted the importance of installing bunting in the town centre. It was agreed to recommend to Full Council that it provides budget and tasked the Town Clerk with identifying further underspends or suitable budgets for reallocation in the 2023/24 budget. Subsequently, the Town Centre Manager secured a sponsor for part of the cost of the purchase of replacement bunting.

2.0 BUDGET UNDERSPEND / REALLOCATION

The Environment Committee held a budget for a project to improve the garden area behind Booths; a budget of £2,500 had been allocated to this. The project was agreed in previous years but delayed due to investigations into redundant electric lighting within the space.

Due to the time that had passed since the original budget was allocated, the cost of the clearance works has exceeded the allocated budget (revised quotes obtained in late 2022/early 2023). To enable the project to proceed, the Town Clerk has submitted a grant application to Awards for All; if successful this would fund the necessary clearance works and the costs of creating the new garden (decision

expected in April). In the event this application is unsuccessful the project will be revisited by the committee during the next financial year.

This enables the £2,500 held in the External Contractors / Environment Projects current (2022/23) budget to be released. This budget can be allocated to the provision of bunting for 2023/24.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that council approves an amendment to the draft budget to provide a budget of up to £2,500 for the provision of Town Centre bunting from May 2023.

The precise allocation will be determined once the order for replacement bunting is placed¹.

¹ Noting that costs have increased since the original budget allocation was identified. The existing bunting requires inspection to ascertain which strings can be reused; this will be undertaken should council approve proceeding with the bunting provision.