

ABINGDON-ON-THAMES TOWN COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

TUESDAY 21st MAY 2019

REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK

Agenda item 10 – Market Place and Summer Events

Abingdon Pride Festival

The Committee is requested to consider a proposal from Members to work with interested groups within the community to host an Abingdon Pride Festival on the Market Place on 22nd June 2019.

In anticipation of this proposal an initial meeting has taken place between myself, the Leader and a member of the public who is willing to assist.

The Market Place has been booked for Saturday 22nd June and it is proposed that an event takes place between 10am and 4pm. This event will comprise a festival which will include live music, dance and some stalls. In relation to the stalls it is proposed that these be a mix of food / drink and information stalls. There would potentially be some children's fair type amusements. We are also exploring possibilities for events which would follow on from the Market Place event.

The proposal is that the Town Council would organise the event but with limited staff resource implications, working primarily to co-ordinate matters and provide support but with the community delivering the festival. A meeting with those who could assist in this regard is planned. However notwithstanding the community input and costs being defrayed by stalls, I would recommend that the Committee allocates a modest budget of up to £1,000 to cover costs such as equipment, publicity etc. It is recommended:

- That the Town Council organise, in partnership with others, the Abingdon Pride Festival on 22nd June 2019;
- That a budget of £1,000 be set aside for this purpose.

I shall report back further at the meeting.

Market Place Events, June to August 2019

Members have asked that the Town Council look to facilitate events on the Market Place for any Saturday in June, July and August where there is not already an event on the Market Place.

I am pleased to report that the Market Place is busy with events during this period and there are just two Saturdays where no bookings have hitherto been made, these being Saturday 10th August and Saturday 31st August. With some lead time before these dates it should be possible to facilitate events which again I would suggest should be ideally with a limited council resource input. I shall report further at the meeting.

Occasional Markets

The Town Council owns the Market Place and activity on the Market Place is governed by the Market Place Act 1978. That Act controls trading on the Market Place, allowing it only in certain circumstances. These circumstances include the sale of readily consumable food and drink, trading for charitable/ not for profit purposes and as part of a market. The Council is also in law the market authority for Abingdon, giving it powers to control and create markets. Markets can be created on an event-by-event basis ahead of the event.

The Oxfordshire Barbecue Festival takes place on the Market Place on Saturday 25th May 2019. Whilst the majority of the stalls are selling readily consumable food and / or drink, 7 of the 21 stalls are selling items which are non-food items and would need to be part of a market. Consequently I have taken the decision an occasional market should be created in relation to this event and I would ask that the Committee endorse this decision. I would also request that in addition to the occasional markets already approved the following dates are approved for occasional markets on the Market Place:

- Saturday 22nd June 2019 – Abingdon Pride (see above; this would allow for a small number of stalls not selling readily consumable food or drink to be part of the event).
- Saturday 17th August 2019 – Oxfordshire Chilli Festival (created to allow stalls not selling readily consumable food or drink to be part of the event).

By approving occasional markets, this does not set a precedent for the future.

The Committee is requested to create the above occasional markets.

The other occasional markets which have already been approved for the remainder of 2019 are as follows:

- Local Excellence Markets: 29th June, 28th September and 23rd November 2019.
- Craft Markets: Saturday 27th July and 7th December 2019.

Note also that the Council has two established markets; the Monday Market (retail market) and the monthly Friday Market (Farmers' Market) on the third Friday.

Nigel Warner
Town Clerk
17th May 2019.

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Agenda item 11 – Communications

Members have requested that the Council book a slot for door-to-door mail delivery of a communication such as the Town Crier this autumn.

The Town Crier is a magazine/ newsletter published by the Council and delivered to every household in Abingdon from 1995. The Town Crier was last published in 2016. There have been a total of 55 Town Criers published so far.

I will report to the meeting with some potential dates for the proposed autumn edition.

The print media budget of 2019/20 is £4,000; the printing and distribution costs for the last issue in May 2016 amounted to £3,361. Therefore the budget allows for printing and distribution of the publication, either as a Town Crier or another printed publication.

The autumn Town Crier (or similar) could include details of the following:

- The Council's vision and objectives;
- Details of Councillors and how to contact the Council;
- Details of the Council services and the services operated by other local authorities with contact details etc.
- Any consultation which the Council may wish to undertake in relation to developing its vision / objectives and services.

Members have also asked that the Council should decide a timetable for door-to-door delivery as part of the Communications Review. It is suggested that the Committee initiate this review at its meeting this evening and that this review should include within its scope a review of printed communications, website, social media and any other matters which the Committee wishes to be considered. A mechanism for the review needs to be established (including membership), and a timescale.

The Committee is requested to resolve the above two matters:

- to agree to publish a publication such as the Town Crier in the autumn;
- to undertake a communications review.

Nigel Warner
Town Clerk
17th May 2019.