

# ABINGDON TOWN COUNCIL

<b>Report to</b>	<b>Community Committee</b>
<b>Meeting date</b>	<b>23 May 2023</b>
<b>Report author</b>	<b>Victoria Moore</b>
<b>Agenda item</b>	<b>11</b>

## REPORT OF THE PROPERTIES OFFICER

### 1. **Purpose of the Report**

1.1 To update members on a review of Fun in the Park and Bun Throwing.

### 2. **Summary**

- 2.1 Bun Throwing
- 2.3 Music in the Park

### 3. **Action required**

3.1 Members are asked to note and approve events review.

### 4. **Link to strategic plan and objectives.**

4.1 KO3: To manage the Council's assets efficiently and effectively to meet for the needs of the community now and in the future.

### 5. **Key information and options**

#### 5.1 **Fun in the Park**

- Overall, the event went extremely well. The weather was on our side, which brought out a much bigger crowd than originally expected. It is estimated that there were approximately 1,500-2,000 people present in the park at any one time and over 3,000 people throughout the day.
- Families brought picnics which were numerous throughout. All hands-on activities were free to children from toddlers to teens. The bouncy castle charged £3 for 10 minutes or £10 for wristbands with unlimited access – this was also a great success and was very popular with families.

- Oxford Security did a great job at maintaining the Abbey Close Road closure and ensuring the safety of all persons near the river end of the park. Communication was consistent throughout with the head of Security, Matthew Collier, Tim Badcock Outdoor Services Manager and Victoria Moore Property & Events Officer to ensure a safe and smooth running of the event. However due to running two events (Fun in Park & Bun Throwing) Staff did feel slightly detached from the park event by having to be in two places at once. It is felt that a staff presence at Fun in the Park would have been beneficial to attendees. This will be taken into consideration when planning another joint event.
- Shield bins provided waste collection and litter picking throughout. They ensured the site was litter picked throughout the day and tidied up after. All waste was removed by skip - waste was sorted into recyclables at the waste station.
- Catering was supplied by Soleuna Pizza selling a range of pizza to include vegan and gluten-free options, which was well received. It was noted that there were no vendors selling hot drinks. This has been noted by the Property & Events Officer when planning the next event. Persons seeking a hot beverage were directed to the Market Place to support the town's local coffee shops.
- Fun in the Park attracted media coverage from BBC Radio Oxford who aired live reports throughout the day with interviews from attendees and the Property & Events Officer.

## **5.2 Coronation Bun Throwing**

- Overall, the Bun Throwing event went extremely well. Crowds attending were the largest seen at a bun throwing event. This may have been due to the Fun in the Park happening earlier in the day, good weather, advertising, and media coverage.
- It is estimated that 3,500-4,000 people were in attendance at one time.
- The Bun Throwing received multiple local media attention: Oxford Mail, Abingdon Herald, BBC Radio Oxford and ITV Meridian News. All of which publicised and aired coverage of the event.
- Throwing of the buns was preceded by music from Abingdon Concert Band, Mister Hemming's Morris Men, ASHNAH ATS traditional dancers and Abingdon Traditional Morris Men. It must be noted after some confusion on behalf of the Property & Events Officer that the 'incorrect' Morris men were booked to perform. There is no official policy on this. It did create some upset with Mr Hemmings' Morris Men. After discussion between members, it was decided and agreed that both groups of Morris Men were invited to dance at the celebrations.

- Event security did a great job of staffing road closures and crowd control. Roads affected were Stert Street, Market Place, High Street and Bridge Street. Roads were closed at 16.10 and reopened at 18.40. No complaints or traffic incidents relating to road closures were received. It must be noted due to the huge crowd there was a slight surge to the County Hall steps, reducing the amount of space for performers. We have advised to tape / barrier off this area at the next Bun Throwing to prevent this space being overcrowded and give a safe space for performers.
- Enquiries received approximately 10 complaints from members of the public regards the Bun Throwing. The complaints were in relation to:
  - Start times. The Bun Throwing was advertised to start at 4pm. Buns were not thrown until 17:15. This is due to entertainments preceding the Bun Throwing. The Property & Events Officer has noted the confusion with the timings and has made a note to be more specific to avoid confusion to attendances.
  - Past Mayors' viewing area. An area was cordoned off and marked for Pushchairs, Wheelchairs, vulnerable Adults/Children and Past Mayors. It may be that past Mayors may not have seen this area due to the large numbers in attendees.
  - Viewing / sound. Persons standing at the back of the marketplace could not hear or see the preceding entertainments. A stage and sound system option has been noted when planning the next Bun Throwing.
- Two protesters attended the Bun Throwing with 'anti monarch' placards who positioned themselves at the base of the County Hall Museum looking out onto the crowds. It was a very peaceful protest and ignored by attendees celebrating the event.

## 6. Financial/budget implications

### 6.1 Bun Throw Total Costs

Security	£1,320.00
EMS	£971.00
Barriers	190.00
Photographer	£80.00
<b>Activities</b>	
Buns	£2,750.00
Band	250.00
<b>TOTAL SPEND</b>	<b>£5,561.00</b>

## 6.2 Fun in the Park Total Costs

<b>Utilities</b>	
Barriers	£310.00
EMS	£971.00
Security	£1,452.00
Event Licence	£1,250.00
Toilets	£2,620.00
Refuse	£1,899.50
Advertising	£337.00
Town Coronation Flags	£4000.00
<b>Activities</b>	
Activity 1 (ssd)	£485.00
Activity 2 (fp)	£350.00
Activity 3 (tom)	£280.00
Activity 4 (ori)	£300.00
Activity 5 (b)	£440.00
<b>TOTAL SPEND</b>	<b>£14,694.50</b>

## 6.3 Fun in the Park Income

Soleuna pizza	£165.00
Ice Cream Man	£130.00
Bouncy Castle	£300.00
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>£595.00</b>
<b>TOTAL OVERALL SPEND INC. INCOME</b>	<b>£14,099.50</b>

Victoria Moore  
Properties Officer  
16 May 2023