

# ABINGDON TOWN COUNCIL

<b>Report to</b>	<b>Community Committee</b>
<b>Meeting date</b>	<b>28 November 2023</b>
<b>Report author</b>	<b>Victoria Moore</b>
<b>Agenda item</b>	<b>8</b>

## REPORT OF THE PROPERTIES & EVENTS OFFICER

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

- 1.1 Abingdon Michaelmas fair contract between Abingdon Town Council and Bob Wilson Funfairs Ltd.
- 1.2 Mayor of Abingdon's Over 70's Christmas party
- 1.3 Report on Music in the Park

### 2. **Summary**

- 2.1 Report on the success of the 2023 Abingdon Michaelmas fair
- 2.2 Update on upcoming Over 70's Christmas party
- 2.3 More detailed report on Music in the Park 2023

### 3. **Action required**

- 3.1 Members are asked to approve points 5.2 and 5.3
- 3.2 Members to note points 5.1, 5.4 and 5.5

### 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 Abingdon Michaelmas Fair**

The 2023 Michaelmas Fair was a huge success with thousands of people attending on both Monday and Tuesday. The Fair service received many residents to listen and join in with the service, so much so the carousel offered two free rides!

There were only two incidents which were attended to by our on-site medical team; both patients were treated on site and made full recovery. There were no incidents reported to us from Thames Valley Police or the Abingdon Fire Brigade.

The Outdoor Services Team worked in conjunction with the Fair, Biffa waste team, Oxford security and Thames Valley Police in ensuring that all the road closures were re-instated and the streets thoroughly cleansed and swept after the fair's departure in the early hours of Wednesday morning – a big thank you to all.

Mr and Mrs Wilson of Bob Wilson Funfairs Ltd were very happy with the organisation and assistance from council members and staff for their hard work in making this year's fair a pleasurable one.

Costs to Abingdon Town Council in organisations for this year's Michaelmas Fair as of 21.11.23:

Total income	£18,321
ATC Expenditure (does not include works team recharges)	<u>£20,814</u>
Net income over expenditure	£2,492

**5.2 Abingdon Michaelmas Fair 10 year contract**

Members are asked to approve the fair agreement between Abingdon Town Council and Bob Wilson Funfairs Limited to allow the town to continue to host the Abingdon Michaelmas Fair. The Oxfordshire Act 1985 requires the council to hold the "Fairs customarily held at the commencement of this Act." This includes the Michaelmas and Runaway Fairs. By law, the Michaelmas fair must take place annually on the Monday and Tuesday falling first before the 11 October in the centre of Abingdon-on-Thames, covering Ock Street, High Street and the Market Place.

Prior to 2022, the fair organiser, Bob Wilson Funfairs Ltd paid the Council a lease sum of £14,100 for the right to organise the Fair. At a meeting held with Mr & Mrs Wilson and the Town Clerk in 2022, all parties agreed that the lease fee could increase by 25% to £17,500. This increase covered costs that previously would have been picked up by Abingdon Town Council. This fee approval can be found in the minutes of Community Committee, Tuesday 6 September 2022, C48/22.

A meeting was held in September 2023 with the Properties and Events Officer, Interim Town Clerk and Mr & Mrs Wilson to discuss the 10 year Fair Agreement. All present at the meeting were in favour of approving the agreement subject to the following clauses:

- Every three years, Abingdon Town Council review the rental costs to bring in line with the current interest rates.
- Abingdon Fair Service timings

Mr & Mrs Wilson agreed to the clauses and stated that they would be happy for this to be included in the agreement.

### **5.3 Abingdon Fair Service 2024**

At the Community Meeting held on 6 September 2022 and meeting held with Officers and Town Clerk in September 2023, Mr & Mrs Wilson have requested that the Michaelmas Fair Service be brought to the earlier time of 4pm as opposed to 7pm in previous years. This would be more inviting to families, especially those with younger children and would most likely bring out more residents of the town. After the service it was proposed to open the fair from 4pm until 8pm.

These requests were noted by the Properties and Events Officer and were raised at the Abingdon Michaelmas and Runaway Fair's multi-agency meeting on 15 September 2023. Participants of the meeting included.

Victoria Moore	Properties & Events Officer
Tim Badcock	Cemeteries and Outdoor Services Manager
Cllr Oliver Forder	Abingdon Town Council
Mr & Mrs Wilson	Bob Wilson Funfairs Ltd
PS Kevin Hickman	Thames Valley Police Abingdon Team
SM Ben Bishop	Abingdon Fire Station
Matthew Collaire	Oxford Security
Adrina Lear	Vale of White Horse District Council
John Barrett	Conduit
Kevin Flannigan	Oxford Bus Company
Nick Brown	Oxfordshire County Council

The Properties and Events Officer asked if anyone present at the meeting had any objection to the Fair Service being brought forward to 4pm, there were no objections by any party.

The Properties and Events Officer asked if anyone present at the meeting had any objection to the Fair starting at 4.30pm to 8pm, there were no objections from any party.

All persons agreed that all the road closures, diversion routes, policing and security would already in place so would not have adverse effects on the town

or staffing. All attendees at the meeting were in favour of allowing the Fair to open on the Sunday, but to stay within the designated hours – 4pm to 8pm.

The fair, in line with the Fair Agreement, would continue to operate between the hours of 12 noon and 10pm, Monday and Tuesday.

Members are asked to approve the earlier Sunday Fair Service start time of 4pm followed by rides operating from 4.30pm to 8pm.

#### **5.4 Mayor's over 70's Christmas party**

This year's party is kindly being hosted by the Hilton Garden Inn Abingdon free of charge. The hotel will be putting on an afternoon tea for 80 guests, which is free for residents of Abingdon. Tickets are given out on receipt of a name and address of the Abingdon residence. Currently, reception does not ask for proof of address. A quiz, raffle, show from 'The Mummies' and a band have been organised. Each guest will receive a party bag at the end of the event.

#### **5.5 Abingdon Music in the Park 2023 items to consider.**

Adult individual tickets were priced at £18.45 with a booking fee of £1.55, totalling £20.00. It has been noted that this ticket price was too expensive and may have had an impact on attendance at this year's event. It has been noted by the Properties & Events Officer that a review of ticket prices for future festival events be taken into consideration which might encourage more ticket sales.

Entry to Music in the Park 2023 was on production of a paper ticket purchased online. Tickets were barcoded for scanning but were not scanned upon entry to the park. This is because the software would need to be downloaded to staff and security own mobile phones to enable ticket scanning. It was felt that some staff or security would be uncomfortable downloading software to their devices. Ticket scanning was also fully dependent on a 4G connection. It is possible that some tickets may have been duplicated. However, head counts from security on the numbers in attendance on the day were in line with the number of tickets sold.

Historically, Fun and Music in the Park has run as a combined event, the reason for separation in 2023 being the Coronation Bun throwing. Fun and Music in the Park were scheduled on different dates as running three events on one day would have been too much to organise. Fun and Music in the Park can be combined in 2024.