

Community, Leisure & Recreation Committee

Date:	8 July 2014
Title:	Christmas Event
Purpose of the Report:	To provide an update on the Christmas Light Switch-on 2014
Contact Officer:	Cassie Pinnells, Community Services Manager

Background

1. The Christmas Event will be held on Friday 5 December 2014 and will take on the theme of 'A Santa Convention', as previously approved by the Committee. Residents and visitors will be invited to attend the event in a Santa costume in a bid to create a mass of festive characters around the town. 500 Santa hats are being donated by Wallingford-based costume company Rubies Masquerade to assist achieving this.
2. The event area will be the same format as last year with a road closure of the Upper High Street e between 12noon and 10pm. Market stalls will be situated around the Town Hall and Cornmarket with a space set aside for Twinning. 18 stalls from 2013 have requested to return this year so a healthy income from stalls is expected.
3. A lantern parade in collaboration with the local schools will take place again this year. Due to the versatility of the materials used, it is hoped that lanterns can be created to tie in with the Santa Convention theme and a more ambitious display achieved. This will be subject to how well the schools can accommodate the workshops into their timetable. The timings and locations of the workshops will be confirmed later in the year when the schools are beginning to coordinate their plans for the Christmas term. Contact has been made with the workshop leaders and a meeting to begin coordinating the parade has been scheduled.
4. Funding for the workshop leaders will be sought from the SODC Arts Development department as in 2013. The Town Council will be responsible for purchasing the necessary materials needed for each workshop and distributing them accordingly. Funding for this will be sought via business sponsorship and any shortfall will be allocated from the budget.
5. Attractions for the event are currently being investigated and include an inflatable Christmas pudding, rodeo reindeer, and steam train. Discussions are taking place with the Siberian Husky Club of Great Britain regarding a husky dog attraction where members of the public can meet, pet and learn about the animals. This will be subject to a risk assessment and the Club having the necessary insurance in place.
6. Contact has been made with Aylesbury Waterside Theatre who has preliminarily agreed to provide us with a celebrity to switch on the lights providing the event does not clash with their rehearsal schedule.
7. Another trail will be run in the lead up to the event to encourage residents and visitors to circulate the town, the item to find will be in keeping with the theme of the event (e.g. Santa hat). Alternative locations to display the trail to last year will be approached for variety and they will be more closely monitored to ensure each item is correctly displayed for the duration of the competition. Prizes will be sought from local businesses.

8. The Council has been investigating a collaboration with Florence Nightingale Hospice and Thame Lions as they are both seeking to conduct a 'Santa Dash' on the following Sunday (7 December). It has been proposed that the Christmas Event could be marketed as a 'warm-up' to the fun-run and an opportunity for those taking part to register and don their costumes in preparation. Discussions are ongoing between all three parties and it is hoped that plans will be secured over the coming weeks.

Programme of Events

3.30pm	Stalls/attractions open
4.30pm	Mayor's walkabout
5.00pm	Lantern Parade
5.45pm	Stage acts start, to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community/schools singing • Thame Players • Santa's sleigh • Christmas trail winner • Light switch-on
7.00pm	Stage acts end

Resource Appraisal

The budget for the 2014 event is £1500. Extra revenue is hoped to be obtained from market stalls and event sponsorship.

Income Estimated		Expenditure Estimated	
TTC funding - event	£2000	Publicity (flyers/posters etc.)	£375
TTC funding - Christmas Tree	£685	Lantern Parade materials	£1000
Stalls (18 @ £25 per pitch)	£450	Lantern Parade artist support	£700
SODC Funding	£350	Christmas tree	£750
Sponsorship	£1,000	Thame Concert Band	£150
		Attraction 1	£750
		Attraction 2	£750
Total	£4485	Total	£4475
Estimated Surplus	£10		

Risk Assessment – Appendix 1

Legal Powers:

The Local Government Act 1972 s145, power to provide entertainment and s144, to attract tourists and visitors.

Recommendation that:

- i) The report is noted.*