

Community, Leisure & Recreation Committee

Title:	Thame Fairs 2023
Date:	31 October 2023
Contact Officer:	Cassie Pinnells, Community Services Manager

Purpose of the Report

1. To receive an update on the 2023 September and October Fairs.

Summary

2. Following the Fair Working Group and Showmens Guild negotiation the one-year Agreement was approved by Full Council in August.
3. The September and October Fairs took place effectively, the partnership with the fire service, employed security firm and the diligence of some councillors', officers and volunteers ensured the event was monitored efficiently.
4. The Community Services Manager will take account of all that follows in detailed planning for the 2024 fairs.

Road Closure Operations / Setup

5. The marking out of the emergency lane on the Tuesday evening for the September Fair was effective for attraction placement and emergency access.
6. The normal regiment sequenced pull on did not take place, which caused additional operational issues. The official Agreement pulling on time is at 6pm, however with the torrential rain, and fair vehicles becoming stuck in the field, some of the Showmens decided to enter the town centre at 5.15pm before the signal was agreed and was cleared of parked cars. The security team worked expertly to get some of the fair vehicles in place at the Upper High Street car park, but by this time the outer routes to the Town Centre were gridlocked causing major issues. This issue will be raised at the November wash up meeting with the Showmens Guild representatives.
7. During the event the professionalism of the security firm who worked with the town centre businesses and residents to enable permitted access was maintained. The dismantling and pull down of the event went according to plan to ensure adequate safety conditions were upheld. There was one issue with taxi drivers parking to pick up fares from outside one of the late opening pub houses.
8. It was the first year that Thame Rotary undertook the monitoring of the car parking at Southern Road, raising over £1,200 for local good causes. Multiple charity groups aided with this requirement.
9. The October Road closure requirements had been changed, as requested by the Showmen, with the car park/side road closure taking place at 9pm on the Wednesday evening, the security team were in place from 4pm which aided this time change.

Event Monitoring / Complaints / Compliments

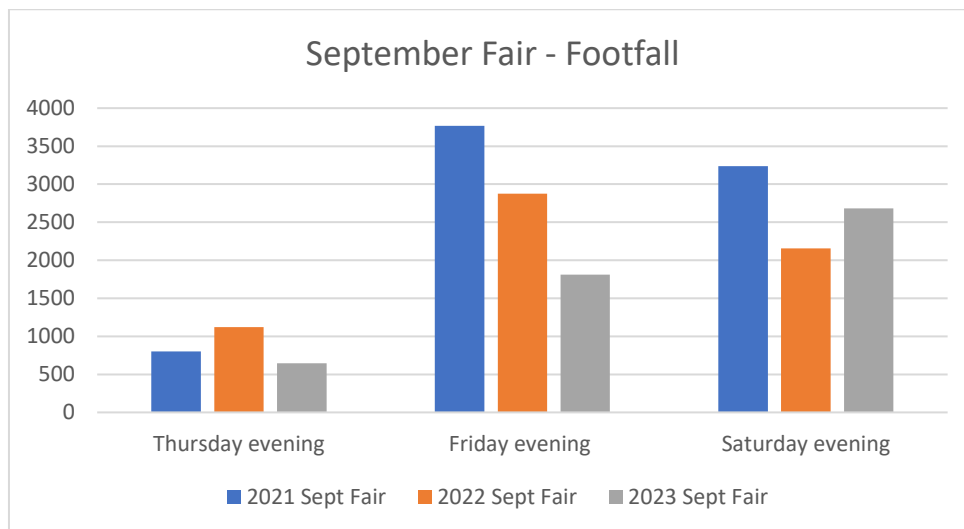
10. The official paperwork for both the September and October fair was late with Officers with the Guild Stewards having to chase individual showmen to obtain paperwork to open each fair. The Fair Co-Ordinator witnessed that the pedestrian crossing by Bell Lane, which is a location for a generator lorry,

prevented a partially signed persons guide dog to cross with no obstruction and a disabled person who required a disability ramp to cross to the other side of the road.

- 11. The security team supported the police with a couple of issues on Friday and Saturday evening. The police had to deal with an issue raised where an imitation weapon was being carried in a defensive way. The result was that all Fair stall holders were asked to remove this prize from their attractions.

There was an incident recorded on the outskirts of the Fair ground with the police are investigating with CCTV operational assistance.

- 12. The contracted medical company on site for the September Fair dealt with the following: Head injury laceration by a worker on the Waltzer, minor head injury from the Walzer, Panic attack, minor scratch, a child who fell out of the pram and a few plasters given out.
- 13. Reduced noise control was undertaken, with no warnings raised. It was disappointing that Councillors who had agreed to undertake an hour time slot were not able to undertake their allocated shift, which caused a slight issue. Thank you to those Councillors and volunteers that helped with this event, as raised by a lone Councillor, this duty will be undertaken in pairs for future events.
- 14. One compliment was received regarding the helpfulness of a security guard. In total ten complaints were received expressing different reasons such as, bad traffic management (pull on) with the roads gridlocked (people missing appointments), independent businesses loss of trade, a person tripping over and a security guard being unhelpful by not allowing a person to park in the Upper High Street Car Park during the notified/advertised closure time.
- 15. During the September Fair event footfall was monitored by the Security Firm. Results recorded the peak number of event goers within the fairground on from 2021,2022 and 2023:



- 16. The Fair Working Group will reconvene a meeting in November to undertake a wash up of both the September & October Fairs with the Showmen’s Guild and to commence negotiation for a new agreement.

Recommendation:

The Committee is asked:

- i) To note the report.***