



B O S T O N

B O R O U G H C O U N C I L

REPORT TO:	BOSTON TOWN AREA COMMITTEE (BTAC)
DATE:	5 AUGUST 2020
SUBJECT:	BTAC REPORT: REVIEW OF 2020/21 EVENTS AND LOOKING FORWARD TO 2021/22 EVENTS PROGRAMME
REPORT AUTHOR:	HEAD OF PLACE AND SPACE
EXEMPT REPORT:	No

SUMMARY:

The BTAC budget incorporates a variety of services for the residents of Boston including the delivery of an events programme, throughout the financial year.

This report provides an update on the 2020 programme for the Committee to note, proposals for an enhanced Christmas 2020 event and options for a planned events programme for the 2021/22 financial year. The report includes budgeted financial breakdowns covering both financial years, to support the Committee in its deliberations.

The baseline for the events budget annually is £41,500. BTAC last received a report on events at its 2 October 2019 meeting, where Members agreed the events programme for the 2020/21 financial year. At its 2 October meeting, BTAC agreed to increase spend by £27,000 for the 2020/21 financial year and this decision received Cabinet approval at its 4 December meeting.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That this committee:

- i) Notes the outcomes of the 2020 events programme;
- ii) Reallocates existing budget to the Christmas 2020 event increasing the budget from £14,500 to £22,000, to enable a 4 day Christmas event;
- iii) Reallocates £13,500 of existing budget to an Illuminate Fire Garden for the Christmas 2020 event;
- iv) Reallocates £5,500 of existing budget to a Letters to Santa projection (Appendix F);

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| v) | Considers the planned programme of events for 2021/22 as detailed in the report; and selects either Option 1 – an increase in budget of £22,000; Option 2 - an increase in budget by £9,700; or Option 3 – in budget. |
| vi) | Recommends to Cabinet if recommendations Option 1 being over £10k is determined. |

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To ensure the necessary timescales needed for the planning and development of an events programme for 2020/21 within the Borough, approval of a programme, is sought at this early stage.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

- To limit the events programme to existing budgets.
- To stop delivering events.

REPORT:

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The BTAC budget incorporates a number of services for the residents of Boston including event delivery.

2.0 Event Delivery 2020 Financial Year

- 2.1 BTAC last received a report on events at its 2 October 2019 meeting where Members agreed the events programme for the 2020/21 financial year. It was agreed to increase spend by £27,000 and this received cabinet approval at its 4 December meeting.
- 2.2 The Events Team consists of 1.5 Full Time Equivalents (FTE's), and in the delivery of the current events programme is working at full capacity. To deliver additional events safely going forward would require additional resources.
- 2.3 BTAC policy set in 2017/18 determined that the events programme be focused on BTAC residents and the corresponding programme to date has generally comprised of a mix of community-based events that provide families with opportunities that may not otherwise be easily affordable.
- 2.4 The Events Programme as presented to the October 2019 BTAC meeting is appended, for reference (Appendix A). This report has had additional columns added for actual spend and actual income as Covid has of course affected events due to be held in 2020.

- 2.5 Covid 19 has hit the Events industry, as many other sectors, hard and it has not been possible to run events from March 2020 to date. Officers are currently planning events from September 2020 onwards and are working closely with partners through the Safety Advisory Group, Lincolnshire Event Safety Partnership and are monitoring government guidance in order to seek further clarity on the ability to deliver future events in the programme.
- 2.6 Boston Big Local (BBL) continues to be a key supporter of events for Boston residents and its funding has enabled additional community based events in previous years for 2019 & 2020 their funding totalled £42k. Officers will be applying to BBL in early 2021, in hope we are successful to continue working with them and hosting some events in partnership with them.
- 2.7 The Christmas Market & Lights Switch on event each November has for the past two years been funded through the Controlling Migration Fund and with funding coming to an end in 2019, the 2020 event was to be incorporated into and funded by BTAC events programme for the first time.
- 2.8 During the financial year, the Events Team and the Safety Advisory Group have also provided advice and support to a number of events within Boston that are run by external providers. These events include:
- The Boston Bike Night
 - Central Park Fun Fair

3.0 2020 Christmas Event

- 3.1 Following the cessation of the BTAC events programme during lockdown, it is proposed that budgeted funding unspent to date, is reallocated towards increasing the appeal of a seasonal Christmas 2020 event, by increasing the allocated budget from £14,500 to £22,000. This would enable a four day Christmas event in the Bargate Green car park starting on the day of the Christmas Lights Switch on event. This will be run in alpine wooden huts and Officers have already had a lot of interest in such an event following some soft market testing. A small fairground ride would be included and food & drink plus an area for live music would also be available. All bookings for the event would have appropriate terms and conditions to cover a second covid 19 outbreak and should such event not happen due to government advice, bookings would be able to transfer a 2021 event. £2,000 of the reallocated budget would be used to retest the County Council lighting columns for the next two seasons, in preparation for hanging the Christmas lights in partnership with the Christmas In Boston Group and their efforts of lighting the Town.
- 3.2 It is also proposed that £13,500 of budgeted funding unspent to date, is reallocated for an Illuminate Fire Garden for the 2020 Christmas event. In 2019 Transported in partnership with Boston Borough Council delivered a hugely successful fire garden located on Bargate Green car park as part of

the Christmas Market and Lights Switch on event. There is an opportunity to deliver this again on a larger scale in Central Park and the Council are working with Transported and the wider Pilgrim Roots group to develop a campaign of #onesmallcandle. Where every household will be encouraged to place a (non-flammable) candle in their window as a sign of hope and celebration of Illuminate 2020, alongside 1620 lanterns displayed in locations across the Town, to replace the parade for this year.

- 3.3 Authorise spend for Letters to Santa projection (Appendix F) of £5,500; The Events Team has being provided information about projections for one night and details on this are enclosed in Appendix F. This idea has been brought to the Event Team's attention by one of the Borough's Elected Member's.
- 3.4 Officers are able to deliver the above proposed changes to the programme within the existing events budget set by BTAC for 2020/2021.

4.0 Options for 2021/22 Financial Year

- 4.1 Members of BTAC in March 2019 suggested that going forward; the Committee should now try to take steps to hold major events in Boston that attract people from further afield. It was also reported that the current capacity within the Events Team was sufficient to deliver the programme; however, any ambition to expand the events programme further than the annual £40,000 base expenditure budget was likely to require additional resource or a reduction elsewhere in the programme. BTAC at its 2 October meeting subsequently agreed to increase spend by £27,000 for the 2020/21 financial year.
- 4.2 Outlined below are three options for delivering an events programme during the 2021/22 financial year as a single year pilot to test the way forward in developing larger scale events, within a manageable programme.
- 4.3 All three options outline a community based Boston Show; with Boston Borough Council officers working in partnership with the Bike Night organisers; classic car show organisers and the Christmas in Boston Group to create a 4 day Summer show in Boston.
- ✓ The event would begin on Thursday 1 July with Boston Bike Night funded and self-contained by themselves
 - ✓ Friday 2 July – daytime activities for pre-school children – timings to be confirmed around set up for the weekend's events.
 - ✓ Saturday 3 & Sunday 4 July, the roundabout area in front of WH Smith would showcase classic cars for people to enjoy. The Park would be filled with activities for families to enjoy, exhibition ring, bouncy castles and provide businesses an option to attend to showcase. The Christmas in Boston Group would organise an electric and EV based Car Show.

- 4.4 All three options also include the 2020 postponed 'Party in the Park' event due to take place on Sat 25 July 2020, but now re-arranged for Sat 24 July 2021. The Council has provided the opportunity to people to transfer their tickets to the new date and moved all 2020 bookings to this revised date.
- 4.5 Option One incorporates some larger scale events in addition to the existing community based events. This option aims to keep all the free community events, which people have enjoyed in 2019 but adds/combines some of the existing larger scale events, some of which would have or could have a charge on entry. A major cost for the 2020/21 budget was the return of the Christmas Market & Lights Switch on event (not including the provision of lights) within the budget. Officers have included the expansion of that event into a 4 day Christmas Market on Bargate Green car park. This report in 3.1 above, proposes a trial for the 2020 Christmas event and if successful could be repeated for the 2021 event.

Option One, would cost BTAC an additional **£22,000** for the 2021/22 financial year and a breakdown of this programme is appended (Appendix B), (the annual baseline budget for events in 2021/22 is £41,500).

- 4.6 Option Two focuses on larger scale events within the BTAC funded events programme with a more limited programme of smaller scale community focussed events delivered principally through the BBL funding stream. This plan does not include the extended 4 day Christmas Market.

Option Two could be delivered with an additional **£9,700** for the 2021/22 financial year a breakdown of this programme is appended (Appendix C), (the annual baseline budget for events in 2021/22 is £41,500).

- 4.7 Option Three retains the existing BTAC budget at £41,500 and the programme is reduced to retain current spending as shown in (Appendix D).

This option focuses on some larger scale events within the BTAC funded event programme, but does not provide any free community events or support for BBL events if we are successful with a funding application to them. This would be delivered within the £41,500 budget.

- 4.8 The events team currently seeks sponsorships through networking events and meetings where it is feasible to do so within existing resources. To continue to support the BTAC programme, a Member Working Group may wish to seek additional sponsorship for events, in order to offset the BTAC expenditure budget.

Major sponsors could support the following events:

- Boston Show
- Party in the Park

Potential further sponsorship details and options to generate an income are appended for a future BTAC working group to debate and consider (Appendix E).

5.0 Prosperity of the town

5.1 The Events programme has led to wider benefits to the wider Town Centre with businesses seeing an increase in their footfall whilst events are being held, and businesses are starting to support the development of the events programme through sponsorship and advertising.

6 Conclusion

6.1 Following the increase in the number of events and breadth of the programme in recent years, Boston is developing into a town more noted for its events; with a wide mix of family oriented and more commercially focused events.

6.2 The Events Team will continue to establish new relationships with businesses to create further sponsorship opportunities, where feasible, to support the costs of running events. Support from a Member Working Group could also enhance this work towards securing sponsorship.

6.3 The current capacity within the Events Team is sufficient to deliver a 2021/22 programme. However, any ambition to further expand the events programme in the future will require additional resource in order to ensure it is delivered safely. This also includes additional requests from external parties wishing to hold events on Borough Council land.

6.4 This report request that BTAC continues to support the Events programme and Members consider the options to increase the budget to allow continued delivery and development of the programme.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The current Events budget outline is appended (Appendix A).

The proposed 2021/22 events budget outlined, is currently showing a shortfall of **£22,000** (Appendix B)

The proposed 2021/22 events budget outlined, is currently showing a shortfall of **£9,500** (Appendix C)

Should additional resources be considered appropriate for the programme, it is proposed that these be funded from existing unallocated reserve.

Spending from reserves is obviously a finite sum, and future years will need to consider the level of support to events alongside the remainder of BTAC's spending allocations.

LEGAL & EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

The Council is required to conform to the requirements of the EU Procurement Directive and its own Contract Procurement and Procedure Rules Part 4 (H) of the Constitution.

The Council uses its powers to encourage tourism within the Borough through the Local Government Act 1972, section 144.

There are no equality implications within this report, any equality implications arising from an individual event are identified and managed through individual event planning processes and risk assessment.

ANY OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None

CONSULTATION

- Members of the public at events prior to the Covid 19 pandemic.
- Businesses who have supported the events programme.
- Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Events.

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Events review – current status
Appendix B – Option 1 proposed Events Budget 2021/22
Appendix C – Option 2 proposed events budget 2021/22
Appendix D – Option 3 proposed events budget 2021/22
Appendix E – Sponsorship support

BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers as defined in Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the production of this report.

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF THIS REPORT

A report on this item has not been previously considered by a Council body.