

AGENDA ITEM No. 13b

NOTES OF THE GOOSE FAIR OPERATIONAL MEETING held in the Council Chamber, Drake Road, Tavistock on **Wednesday 26th May at 2.00pm**

PRESENT

Via Zoom

- Carl Hearn, Tavistock Town Council, Town Clerk
- Guy Petherick, West Devon Borough Council
- A Kidby
- Martin Hall, Tavistock Lions
- Janna Sanders, Tavistock BID
- Stuart Gardner, AA Signs
- Honey Foskett, West Devon Borough Council
- Louise Crocker, Devon and Cornwall Police
- Christie Wilkins, St Johns Ambulance
- James Coole, Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service

In Person

- Wayne Southall (Chairman), Tavistock Town Council, General Manager
- Rebecca Rowe, Tavistock Town Council, Town Hall & Events Manager
- Councillor Barry Smith, Tavistock Town Council
- Councillor Harry Smith, Tavistock Town Council
- Councillor James Ellis, Tavistock Town Council
- Graham Bailey, Stagecoach
- William Bushall Crane, Stagecoach
- Jenny Mashford, Devon and Cornwall Police
- Rob Walsh, Devon & Cornwall Police
- Roger Hann, Raynet Communications
- Robert Kefford, The Showmens Guild
- Alan Wroath, Tavistock Lions
- Tim Randell, Tavistock & District Business Chamber of Commerce

1. APOLOGIES

- Town Mayor, Councillor Andy Hutton
- Councillor Mandy Ewings
- Joy Clarke, Plymouth Tamar Lions
- Mike Ayres, National Markets Traders Federation
- Alan Jenkins, The Showmens Guild
- Tim Beckett, South West Ambulance Service

2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

a) Not applicable (2020 Goose Fair cancelled due to the COVID19 Pandemic)

b) Matters arising

The General Manager welcomed all present and provided a precis of the Town Council's current position reference the feasibility of Goose Fair 2021, in light of the ongoing COVID19 pandemic. In summary due to the latest Government guidance and progression with the roadmap / easing of the national lockdown it is currently anticipated Goose Fair will take place this year on Wednesday 13th

October and so the Event Management Team are proceeding with operational arrangements.

It was noted the delivery of the event would be subject to Government guidance / restrictions at the time it is due to take place in October and the Council's capacity to fulfil any additional safety measures which may be imposed.

Whilst the Council will take a similar approach to 2019 reference the organisation of the event, it was stressed to stakeholders there will be material changes pertaining to the allocation of pitches, goods sold, exhibitor crossover, traffic management, the events environmental footprint etc. in order to meet with public health safety measures as well as the events core aims and values.

3. PROCESSES / UPDATE

The Town Hall & Events Manager advised a full review was underway reference the event with the aim of identifying mitigating safety measures for public health as well as areas in the processes and procedures where there is room for development.

In summary, the key changes to date include reviewing the exhibitor trading list, requesting existing exhibitors re-apply for the event to ensure full transparency and understanding of their respective offers prior to allocating a pitch, reviewing and amending where applicable exhibitor documentation, enforcing a ban on all drug related paraphernalia goods, reviewing the layout of Market Road and the incorporation of the new Guildhall Car Park, as well as investigating the feasibility (in light of COVID19) of introducing more environmentally friendly measures e.g. a free communal water hub which allows visitors to refill their water bottles with the aim of reducing single use plastic.

Questions were raised as to why existing Exhibitors were required to re apply for the event this year to which the General Manager explained due to the long standing issues reference subletting and perception of crossover of goods e.g. catering units, the Event Management Team felt it was necessary to make these fundamental changes to the application process in order to achieve full transparency, compliance to the rules and regulations as well as providing an opportunity to review the offer to ensure a vibrant and diverse event is delivered. It was noted over the last few years Goose Fair had experienced a steady decline in visitor footfall and so for the benefit of all involved the Council feel it is their responsibility to constantly review and enhance Goose Fair. In addition to the above, the General Manager re iterated due to the ongoing COVID19 situation, planning and organisation had to be modified this year and that includes exhibitor pitches and allocation to ensure mitigated safety measures are implemented.

The Town Hall and Events Manager reported a disappointing number of completed applications had been returned and it was noted exhibitors had to follow this process if they wished to return to Goose Fair this year. The General Manager explained the administrative process for the event is significant with this year pressure increasing due to the additional work involved.

It was noted the Town Hall and Events Manager is working on rebranding / re marketing the event to refresh the offer in order to proactively ensure Goose Fair's

long-term sustainability as an annual event for Tavistock to attract visitors from near and far.

A question was raised regarding the inclusion of local traders / retailers to which the General Manager explained the event is attended by local businesses and more would be welcomed however historically there have been issues with local traders not wishing to engage in the event.

It was reported the Town Hall and Events Manager was working with the BID Manager on initiatives to actively engage the local business community, which includes the BID Manager informing members that the application process was open. Discussions ensued reference local traders being offered a reduced pitch fee of which the General Manager explained this was not a feasible option due to the divide it creates with long standing exhibitors as well as the event costs being disproportionate to income.

The General Manager asked Tavistock BID whether the option of BID subsidising pitches was possible, a similar scheme took place previously in Butchers' Hall. Further updates will be provided reference increasing local business engagement once a strategy has been finalised.

4. EMERGENCY PLANNING DOCUMENTATION

The General Manager confirmed the emergency planning documentation would be re-circulated, once amendments had been made in light of the possible changes that would need to be made to the event this year, of which the Events Management Team were still working on.

It was noted a separate meeting would be held between the Fire Service and Town Council reference access to the Bedford Hotel Car Park, and Guildhall as well as to review the current traffic management plan / emergency access routes.

5. PARK AND RIDE ARRANGEMENTS

It was noted the use of Harford Bridge was no longer available as a park and ride site, with Tavistock Lions suggesting two other possible locations of which the Town Hall and Events Manager will investigate. The use of the 2019 Gulworthy site has yet to be confirmed and so discussions will ensue.

The park and ride bus service providers, Stagecoach advised they are on board to assist wherever possible with Goose Fair this year, advising the current double decker capacity is 60/75 with social distancing measures.

It was noted an increase in signage would be required, in particular for Gulworthy due to issues at the last event.

6. ACTION PLAN (Event Management Team)

- To ensure Councillors are fully apprised of operational challenges pertaining to exhibitors on the day i.e. subletting.
- To organise a separate meeting with Tavistock BID reference advertisement.
- To organise a separate meeting with the Fire Service.
- To investigate alternative park and ride sites.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chamber of Commerce confirmed they will continue to support the annual town event.

It was noted the Tavistock Lions representative and Councillor Ellis personally thanked the Events Management Team for reviewing and refreshing the event and tackling the longstanding drug paraphernalia issues.

The Showmens Guild Representative confirmed the Showmen will support the event regardless of any cancelled events prior or post Goose Fair (subject to Government restrictions at the time).

Devon & Cornwall Police, Raynet Communications and AA Signs expressed their support for the event and it was noted Raynet Communications would be able to pull in more volunteer resource from the "4x4 Response Group", which was welcomed by the Town Council.

The Chair thanked all participants for attending the meeting. The meeting closed at 3.30pm.