

Agenda item 4

For information – an update on the role of the Marketing & Communications team with regards to events

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Summary

This final quarter of 2018 has been largely taken up by events for the Marketing and Communications team. This update reflects that and highlights the amount of work that events create and notes that events are now reflected in the draft work programme for 2019/20 and identifies their need as highlighted in the Marketing and Communications Strategy.

Discussion

Since October and our last Marketing and Communication update, the team have had to focus on promoting and delivering meetings and events. To this end, this report looks at what we have been up to, several key events that we have supported and reiterates the strategic objectives behind our support. As well as the well-trodden path of Council Meetings, Town and Council Matters meetings, PAG, Business Breakfasts and Discuss and Do we have a full and varied calendar of town events and meetings all of which need promotion in a timely and appropriate fashion.

The Town Hall and our parks and open spaces are obvious assets that enable us and others to host public meetings and events to engage with the residents of Frome. Increasingly, there is a role to be played in the timing of events to ensure an even spread of work and so that they don't compete for space in the media, websites and the noticeboards. These past few months has been particularly busy with several public meetings and events at both the Town Hall and open spaces such as the Rubbish and on street parking meetings, Apple Day celebrations and People's Budget activities at Tower View and Packsaddle. These events delivered on several objectives: getting people outside appreciating our parks and open spaces, engaging people in participatory democracy to decide how money is spent.

November saw three big events for the Frome: Frome Fireworks, Frome Remembrance Service and the Christmas Lights Switch On. It is important to get these right both in terms of safety but also reputationally. All three were successful, accessible and inclusive community events.

Frome Fireworks on the Old Showfield was part funded through the People's Budget, organised by Frome Rotary Clubs and really popular with all sectors of the community. We supported the Frome Rotary clubs in promoting the event with a varied campaign of posters, press, and social media, leafleting all school children in Frome, engaging a photographer and then we were there as a team to support the event. Whilst there were lessons to be learnt around safety if the event is staged again next year, the Old Showfield was an excellent space with most people walking to it. It also appeared to reach all parts of the community.

We were also able to support the British Legion with the Remembrance service and the Armistice centenary by producing a newly designed order of service and ensuring that all of Frome's acts of remembrance were highlighted across our networks.

The Christmas Light Switch On event, whilst led by the Marketing and Comms team, really was a whole council event with most staff being drafted into the event team on the day and many involved in the planning. Frome Light the Night Lantern parade and Mojo Moves, both again funded by PB funding, complemented the carol singing and the Samba band that combined created a very popular event where attendance exceeded expectations. The feedback was good with one resident letting us know that "Last night was one of my best Frome events – just loved it and going through it again now with a smile. Thank you."

The role of the M&C team varies. For example, November also saw an anti-bullying march in Victoria Park and the Walkers are Welcome launch. In both cases we simply supported the event by promoting them to the press in advance which led to the march featuring on both BBC and ITV local news. We also acted as event crew on the day making sure everything was safe, capturing the event on camera and on film, then editing and publishing the films across our channels as a follow up. Both events were tied in with national initiatives and so part of the job is to make the best of the opportunities that they afford to highlight the work that is happening in Frome.

As a footnote, distributing posters to our noticeboards is a function that our team provides, and it has been made considerably easier by the addition of our Volunteer Noticeboard Ambassadors who have taken on the role with enthusiasm ensuring that our noticeboards are up to date and relevant.

Staging and supporting events and meetings are resource intensive, are often outside office hours and sometimes the contribution of the M&C team is underplayed. However, it is important that this is recognised and seen as a legitimate use of our resources and this is the prime reason for this report.