

COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY 9TH SEPTEMBER 2020

ABERGAVENNY FOOD FESTIVAL

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To discuss and approve changes to Town Council contribution to the Food Festival in 2020/21

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In April 2020, Abergavenny Town Council and Abergavenny Food Festival agreed a two-year funding agreement. However, the 2020 Abergavenny Food Festival has been cancelled. The funding agreement covers £6000 for decorations and contributions towards involvement of young people and subsidising the stalls in Frogmore St for local & appropriate quality traders.
- 2.2 The £10,000 annual funding from Abergavenny Town Council has not yet been paid in 2020/21.
- 2.3 Due to the works at the Town Hall, the Market Hall decorations were placed in storage from September 2019 until they were re installed in January 2020. The market closed as a result of coronavirus in March and reopened in June. As a result, the 2019 decorations have not been on show for much of the usual 12 months.

3. 2021 FESTIVAL

- 3.1 Abergavenny Food Festival will be offering a number of virtual events during 14-20 September. Badged VAFF20 (Virtual Abergavenny Food Festival) most events will be free apart from tutored tastings.
- 3.2 The 2021 Festival will be launched in April/May 2021 and at that time the decorations in the Market Hall will be changed. It was not possible nor desirable (given that the current decorations have not been seen for many months) to change the decorations in September 2020.
- 3.3 Social distancing has required a rethink on how the decorations will be created. Bettina Reeves, the creator will spend some time in Autumn working on prototypes with a view to running workshops in March/April 2021. Currently it is expected that the workshop sizes will be smaller than previously which results in an additional staffing cost for Bettina and her assistant. Sixth form pupils from KHS will be encouraged to get involved with the workshops. There may be opportunities for Bettina &/or her assistant to attend primary schools to work with classes on 3D modelling. This would be in addition to the normal costs of staffing and materials.

- 3.4 Workshop space will be required for 2021 as the studio space at Peak in Crickhowell is no longer available. Hiring workspace may result in an additional cost.
- 3.5 The theme for 2021 will link with the local environment and it is proposed that an interpretation board is on display in the Market Hall to highlight the significance of the decorations. This promotion of biodiversity is in line with the Town Council's duties under Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act. This interpretation board is additional to the costs for creating the decorations.
- 3.6 Bettina Reeves will donate a print and or one of the hanging pieces to be auctioned for the Mayor's Charity. The Food Festival is also looking at previous decorations to see if there is anything appropriate for the new space to be occupied by the TIC and Box Office.
- 3.7 For many reasons, the process for producing the Market Hall decorations has had to change. As a result, the cost of producing the decorations will be £10,000 of which the Town Council (under its agreement) would contribute £6,000. The Food Festival would cover costs additional to the £6000 but this year there will be little income for the Food Festival. There is an allocation of £10,000 in the 2020/21 budget.
- 3.8 It is not unreasonable to conclude that these difficult times call for flexibility in funding arrangements with a proposed sum of £8000 offered towards the cost of producing the decorations with the remaining £2,000 held back to cover the cost of the interpretation board, working with schools, hire of a venue for workshops should these elements materialise.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To agree £8000 towards the decorations and for 50% to be paid immediately.
- 4.2 To agree that £2000 can be used to cover the additional elements details in 3.8