

MEETING REPORT

Meeting: Council, 4th March 2024
Agenda item: 23/127
Report subject: Ivybridge Summer Event
Report author: Councillor L Rea

Proposal

To consider proposals for a 2024 summer event, to agree the event date of 25th May (afternoon), and approve event costs of £1,000.

Financial implications

£1,000 from Earmarked Reserves – community events. Any unspent from these funds to be retained in EMR, together with any additional income made from each ‘Summer Event’, to aid provision or improvements to future years events.

Ivybridge Summer Event – Scoping Report

Working group: Councillors Louise Rea, Shirley Weeks, Matt Steele, Crystal Cao, Alan Spencer and District Councillor Nadine Dommett.

The Vision

This vision is a summer garden party style event crossed with small festival. We propose holding the event in Victoria Park on the afternoon of Saturday 25th May 2024 (the Saturday afternoon on the late May Bank Holiday weekend). We would like to establish this event as a regular annual event within the town, but are aware that it may take a few years to get some traction and establish, so we will start relatively small in the first year and hope to build on the success of year 1 in subsequent years.

The vision is to hold an event for the community, by the community, so we will engage with local groups to provide the entertainment and the refreshments, and to support the event in a wide range of ways. The event will target a wide sector of the community including children, families, young people, schools, community groups, local businesses, performers and wider.

Costs and income

We don't want this event to be exclusively grant funded, but aim to generate income through the event to cover some of the costs, however we are currently still working with estimated costs, so until we can secure commitment we cannot confirm the total budget required. **We are requesting start-up funding of up to £1000 from ITC** in order to cover any upfront costs. These are expected to be generator and fuel, first aid, waste disposal, stage costs, comms and marketing and also allows a contingency pot for unforeseen costs.

Additional funding will be secured through a contribution from food trucks – we will confirm the details once we get into the formal planning stages – we plan to have c.4 food trucks

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and would estimate income of between £200-£400. We will also be running a duck race, and selling ducks at £1, estimated total income, £200. We have also been offered support from the SHDC localities fund to help with costs.

Details of the proposal

Entertainment will all be provided for free by community groups and contacts that we have. In future years if we wanted to grow the event, we could consider paying for a headline act, however, we would then need to secure increased income to cover this cost if we wanted the event to remain cost neutral.

We have had provisional conversation with local community groups who are keen to perform and have had contact with the head of music and performing arts at ICC who is confident that they will be able to support with performers. SHD Councillor, Pablo Munoz has offered to support by running the stage. If agreement to this proposal is granted, we can also reach out to further community musicians to see if there is more interest in performing. (For example at the new Open Mic night held in The Exchange).

We have had interest from Ivybridge Brewery and other local food trucks who are keen to attend and sell refreshments. Once we have agreement on the proposal we can firm up the details with them and agree on their financial contribution to the event.

Nick Harris from Skate Southwest has agreed in principle to attend and offer some skateboarding lessons and even a show style event in the park as part of the programme. He has also expressed interest in bringing his pop-up café to the event which will both promote the skate park project that they are working on for Ivybridge and also aid in marketing of his pop-up café that is to be opening in Filham park over the summer.

There are no toilet facilities in Victoria Park. However, we have made contact with St John's Church and The 1st Ivybridge Scout group. Both have agreed to support the event by opening up their halls and toilet facilities for use by the public. There is also, of course, the town centre not far away with public toilets.

As well as its toilet facilities St John's Church will also offer teas and coffees in the church hall, which will expand the event and accommodate different needs, as well as offering some respite from the elements should the weather not be on our side on the day. In addition, we are in conversation with them about a bouncy castle – TBC including considerations regarding insurance as this could end up being cost-prohibitive.

The Scout Group are also keen to be involved, as well as opening their hall offering toilet facilities, they have agreed to support with a litter pick in the park following the event to reduce the impact on the Parks officers, and they are also planning to take advantage of the event to put on some fund-raising events of their own in the hall, raising money for a new roof on the hut. This adds significant value to both events by engaging with different community groups and joining forces, we can increase the reach of the event into the wider community.

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Making it an Ivybridge event

We would like to build on the traditions and themes of the 'Beating of the Bounds', and commemorating the historical significance of the Ivy Bridge¹. For a time, one of the elements of the former 'Bridge Ceremony' was gate dressing. Residents local to The Ivy Bridge would decorate their gates on the specified day, and for a time there was even a competition. Another regular tradition was to run a duck race down the river. Our proposal is to take some of the elements that have been used previously and to build on them. So we will be asking local community groups and park users, for example the Erme school, scouts, guides, church etc to decorate each of the gates in the park. To maximise our PR, we propose that ITC also takes a gate on the children's play park so that even if the play park regeneration isn't quite ready for this event, we can use it to promote the forthcoming opening of the new play facility in the park.

We will run a 'virtual duck race' We don't propose running a real duck race due to the potential environmental damage, requirement for significant volunteers, requirement for health and safety assessment / insurance etc, and because we want the event to be centred on the park. We have been gifted the functionality to run a virtual duck race by The Erme Primary School PTA and will sell tickets to this, as stated above, to generate income to cover event costs.

Further considerations and next steps

If this proposal is agreed by Full Council, the working group will take away the scoping report and firm up the details. Responsibilities are outlined in the below high-level project plan below.

We will need officer support with licences and insurances as required. We may also need support on the morning and evening of the event to transport required items to the park, however this could be covered elsewhere.

We will be looking at local groups and networks to see if we can borrow a stage. We request to use the gazebos that we generally use at events through ITC networks. Vic and Shirley have been working on a project around promoting ITC at local events. We suggest that we use this event as the flagship event of the season in terms of engagement with the community, and request that if councillors are able to attend and stand behind a staff for a short period on a rota, it will be a good opportunity for community engagement.

¹ The Ivy covered Bridge over the River Erme dates from the early 13th century. For centuries it was the only way over the River Erme. It was built to carry pack horses and riders on what was the main road from Plymouth to Exeter. In the 18/19th centuries the Bridge was widened to carry wagons and stage coaches. A settlement grew up around the Bridge and the close by London Hotel and took its name from the Bridge. The Bridge marks the meeting point of the boundaries between the parishes of Cornwood, Ermington, Harford and Ugborough. If you look you can find the boundary stones on the flanks of the bridge and the roads close by. [Ivybridge Heritage – local history and archives collection \(ivybridge-heritage.org\)](http://ivybridge-heritage.org)

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Communication and marketing

Communication and marketing is a big consideration. If this is going to be a success we need to start working on the comms strategy now.

Suggest that officers are involved in this in order to use existing comms channels and expertise, we also need to think about flyers, posters and perhaps an editorial feature in the I-mag.

We have discussed using the community to create the stage backdrop, this could be a crafting session one Saturday morning in the Watermark, that would create a shared product, but also promote the event.

We wondered about running a competition through the schools, a bit like the Mayor's Christmas card competition to design a poster of the event.

We wonder if the website has capability for us to have a page dedicated to the event that we can update as we go along with the plans and also can link through to our social media channels. This could be updated each time we secure a new act, when the food trucks are secured etc. to keep a flow of interest. It would also act as a 'programme' of events so that folks can see the line up on the day and attend to see their act in plenty of time.

Project Plan

Roles and responsibilities

Activity area	Owner (s)
Entertainment programme	Shirley and Crystal
Links with St John's Church	Crystal
Links with the Scouts	Louise
Food trucks	Nadine
Stage and technical requirements	Matt (and Pablo)
Duck race	Louise
Gate dressing	Louise
Face painting, crafts and other activities	Nadine and Shirley
Stage drop (proposed community engagement as part of marketing and communications)	Shirley, Nadine and Louise
Links with Nick at SSW	Matt
Comms and Marketing	Louise with officer support

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Timeline

Activity	March	April	May
Comms and marketing	Poster competition Save the date on social media Web page created Comms to schools/community groups for newsletters	Posters created and printed i-mag advertorial Posters in the watermark and other community spaces Engage park users for gate decorating	Flyers in watermark and other community spaces Comms to schools/community groups for newsletters Community crafting event in Watermark
Entertainment and programming	Scope programme	Confirm programme	Implementation
Logistics and infrastructure	Hire generator and confirm costs for fuel Confirm requirements for stage Food trucks secured		Implementation