

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

15th NOVEMBER 2021

CHRISTMAS DAY 2021

In a normal year the Town Council would support volunteers in delivering a Christmas Day event in The Watermark for those that would otherwise be alone at Christmas.

The Council sets a budget of £200 (4631/102) towards this, and volunteers and Officers source donations or discounts from businesses and individuals to support the event.

The coordinating volunteers and cooks who run the day itself, Lesley Hughes, SHDC Cllr Louise Jones and Cllr Ray Wilson have met and decided after much deliberation that with the uncertainty of Covid cases rising, this winter is still an unknown quantity and it would not be safe to bring together large numbers of potentially vulnerable people.

Last Christmas, Jessica Shipp, Community Connector and Shirley Weeks, So Social, and volunteers, supported by the Town Council putting together hampers and helped coordinate volunteers to hand deliver the hampers on Christmas Day. This ensured that those alone saw a friendly face on Christmas Day. There was even a cracker included for the volunteer to pull with the recipient. Volunteers were picked based on their geographical proximity to the recipient to foster some neighbourly spirit too.

Last year this was possible through donations of items from the College and others, public donations and financial support from Cllr Pringle's locality budget.

Given the popularity of the Christmas Day activity in normal times, and the success of the alternative arrangements last year, Members are asked to support a similar approach this year. Financial support will be sought from County and District Councillor locality budgets and donations requested. However, Councillors are asked to allow the Town Clerk to use up to £500 from the Festival/Community Reserve (9104/901) should it be needed, to ensure that the hampers can be created.

Jonathan Parsons
Town Clerk