



The Queen's Hall
High Street
Cuckfield
West Sussex
RH17 5EL

01444 451610
01444 454276

ACE Committee Meeting

Date: 25th May 2022

Agenda Item: ACE006 iii To review the Coronation Picnic event held on Sunday 7th May 2023 and consider changes to the format for future events

1. Introduction

Cuckfield Parish Council resolved to organise an event to commemorate the coronation of King Charles III to be held at Whitemans Green in order to maximise the number of attendees from within the village. This was to ensure everyone who wanted to could join in as feedback from the Jubilee event in 2022 was that many people were disappointed they were unable to attend due to the reduced tickets available.

The event took place on Sunday 7th May 2023 from 2pm until 7pm.

This report outlines the details of the event, costs incurred, feedback received and future proposals. The results of the questionnaire shared with residents has been included as an appendix.

2. Coronation Picnic Event

a. Event Planning

Planning for this event commenced in February 2023 with a core working party of 4 Councillors and the Clerk. This was quickly expanded to include volunteers from the village (Lindy Elphick who was instrumental in organising the Jubilee Street Party, Charlie Fergusson representing Haywards Heath RFC (HHRFC) and Jem Lee who was running as an ISOC Mayoral candidate for 2023).

The site had to be booked via MSDC for use, although there was no cost for this due to it being to celebrate the Coronation.

It was resolved that the event would be free to attend and include as many free activities as possible, alongside local commercial food and drink stalls as well as the charity fundraising offerings from HHRFC and ISOC. This was to encourage as many people as possible to attend by making it a fully inclusive event open to all.

The following stalls and activities were arranged:

- HHRFC Bar and BBQ, including soft drinks and cakes
- Jem Lee's Pimms & Beer Tent
- Skate Jam at the skate park, where free coaching was available throughout the event along with skateboards and safety equipment for all to borrow.
- Circus Skills, this included coaching throughout the event, alongside a magic show during the afternoon.
- Fairground rides, including a bouncy adventure course, bungee trampolining and a merry-go-round, all free to use.
- Pizza Van
- Crepe Van
- Donuts and Candyfloss
- Icecream Van
- Indian Food
- Prosecco Stall
- Gelato
- First Aid Vehicle
- CPC Information Stand

All food stalls attended on the basis that they would contribute 20% of their takings to the Parish Council, however the last minute addition of the Prosecco Stall and Gelato advised they had agreed they would donate to HHRFC and not CPC.

Whilst all activities were due to be free, the Fairground providers advised 24 hours before the event that they would bring a paying stall to cover the costs of the staff required to run their activities, and offered to contribute 20% of their proceeds. This was also far from ideal, and against the ethos of the event. Much of the plastic rubbish left behind was from their stall.

Live music was arranged as well as a compere for the afternoon.

All attendees provided a risk assessment and copy of their PLI certificate.

Additional toilets and bins including general waste (4 x 1100ltr bins), mixed recycling (2 x 1100ltr bins) and glass recycling (2 x 240ltr bins) were hired. These were delivered directly to HHRFC on the Friday before the event, and collected the following week. This seems to be the correct amount of bins for the size of the event.

A National Lottery grant was applied for twice, both were unsuccessful. However a small grant from MSDC of £600 was secured.

HHRFC arranged for the TEN licence to cover all alcohol sales and music at the event. A detailed event plan was created which included an overall risk assessment.

Eye-catching posters were designed for the event which were put up around the village and shared on social media, alongside 5 large banners placed in strategic places. A programme was created and handed out during the event so people could join in with the community choir sing-along. A CPC team attended the Cuckoo Fayre the week prior to the Picnic to hand out leaflets to spread the word as widely as possible and encourage all to attend.

Jem Lee also prepared his own set of leaflets which he handed out at the Cuckoo Fayre and around the village in the lead up to the day, as well as some yellow boards placed on the roadside to advertise his beer and Pimm's stall.

With no parking available for anyone attending other than the volunteers running the event, it was necessary to have marshals at the car park to direct people to the drop off location or send them away if they were hoping to park. Cones were put out along the road to stop people parking on the pavements, and were used in the car park to create a drop off zone.

A site plan was prepared to identify where all attendees would be located for the event. A Lost Children point was identified for the afternoon and publicised in all event literature.

b. On The Day

Event setup started at approx. 9am with setting up the marquee for the bands and the sound system, the beer and Pimms bar and the fairground attractions.

Due to the rain the ground on the site was still wet, meaning vehicles struggled to drive onto and off the grounds. Although not prearranged, a tractor was called over to help tow vehicles for set up and again at the end of the event.

All attendees had been contacted in advance to find out how long they needed to complete their setup, and were advised they needed to be finished driving on the site by 1.30pm at the latest to minimise the risk of movements with pedestrians on the field. They were also advised they could not move off the site until after 7pm, and had to be escorted during vehicle movements by hi-vis wearing marshals to ensure safety.

PCSOs attended a couple of times during the event to ensure all was ok, and the Clerk walked the event regularly through the afternoon to check in with everyone and ensure there were no issues which needed help resolving.

Volunteer marshals were secured from the rugby club and councillors to man the car park, and hand out programmes during the afternoon. 'Car Park Closed' signs were purchased and used at the entrance of the car park to discourage anyone from entering after the marshals had been stood down.

The compere narrated the event, publicising the food stalls and activities and introducing the bands and music throughout the day.

An impromptu bagpipe performance also took place which was well received.

Once 7pm arrived it was necessary to encourage the music to be turned off as people were having a great time; it took some time for the public to gather up and leave, but the clear up was significantly quicker than the setting up time.

Marshals roamed the site with bin bags to clear up rubbish, and to escort vehicles off the site.

c. Key Learnings

The working party for this event had regular zoom calls diarised however on many occasions it was not possible for key players to attend, leading to a disjointed understanding of what had been planned.

Although the Parish Council was the lead on this event, this did not feel fully supported at times. A terms of reference document would be helpful to identify key roles and responsibilities for the event planning, shared to all members of the working party at the start of the planning process.

Funding was also an issue, with the Parish Council funding the event entirely, however there was confusion at times over who would be paying for individual stall expenses. These should not be covered by the Parish Council. Also, although a cost budget was circulated, additional costs were requested near the event date which had not been anticipated.

Due to the wet grounds, a tractor was necessary to support the entry and exit of vehicles to the site. This is something that should be planned for and arranged in advance in future.

Some stalls agreed their donation would be made to HHRFC; again, in future, it needs to be clearer who the stalls are making their contributions to. A stall holder booking form needs to be developed for future use.

Status update reports should be prepared and circulated to the Council on a regular basis.

Whilst the sound quality for the compere was excellent around the site (it had to be turned down as was too loud!), the sound for the band and singers could be better. They were difficult to hear unless you were very close to them, which was a shame. Regarding the community singing, a tech rehearsal and boundary mikes would be a better option to ensure all of the singers could be heard.

The free rides and activities for children were a huge success, although it has been reported the queues could be long and perhaps it would be better to separate access to the bouncy castle by age groups.

Consideration should be given to the timing of the event as well as the date; the event could start earlier and end earlier, and it would certainly be better to consider holding any repeat later in the year, perhaps in June, so it doesn't clash with the Cuckoo Fayre.

Funding from local sources should be explored in more detail, for example the Bonfire Society, as ISOC and Cucksoc both refused to consider making any donation on this occasion (although they may reconsider this for future

events). Grant funding from the National Lottery can also be reapplied for in future.

Marshals should be booked as soon as possible in order to ensure the event has sufficient people available to manage the car parks (at a minimum).

Finally, more publicity would be required to advertise that the Parish Council are funding and running the event, so more banners may be necessary. Also, it would be better if more Councillors were available on the day to attend the event, help out where appropriate and show their support.

d. Key Learnings

All feedback received so far has been extremely positive with many attendees happy they were able to attend as there was no restriction on numbers present. The free activities for children have also received very positive feedback.

Repeated calls for a regular event have been received from members of the community.

3. Costs

Organisation	Activity	Cost
Team Rubicon	Skate Jam	£920.00
Poi Passion	Circus Skills	£650.00
Funfair	Merry-go-round & Bouncy Castles	£1,400.00
Event Medic Services	First Aid	£275.00
Paul Williams	Compere	£200.00
BOD	Band	£150.00
TS Professional	Sound System	£185.20
TRP Ltd	Bins	£330.00
Local Toilet Hire	Event Toilets	£630.00
Various	Posters/Banners	£450.00
	Total	£5,190.20

Grant Received from MSDC of £500.

Leftover funding from Jubilee Celebrations of £636

Income received to date:

Organisation	Donation
Prosecco & Gelato	£0.00 £150 paid to HHRFC
Sweet as a Nut	
Mid Sussex Super Cream	£150.00
Pizza Van	
Saffi's Crepe Stall	£50.00
Fairground Stall	
Indian Food Stall	
Total	£200.00

Current forecast expenditure by Cuckfield Parish Council is **£3,854.20** pending arrival of further donations from event stallholders.

4. **Conclusion**

The event would appear to have been a great success, and on the day went very smoothly (other than the issues with the ground being too wet).

Whilst there were minor issues, there is nothing that cannot be resolved with the benefit of experience and a firmer scope for the event, which would need to be set out from the beginning.

Future budget requirements will need to be considered on an ongoing basis should this become a feature of the Parish Council's event diary.

Name: Sam Heynes
Title Clerk
Date: 17th May 2023

Appendix – Questionnaire Feedback

19 responses received, summarised below.

<p>What did you like the most?</p>	<p>Childrens activities The free entry and children’s entertainment was lovely. The live music, Band of Dads The community spirit and atmosphere Fully inclusive Beer festival and good-natured crowd</p> <p>“My son absolutely adored the skateboarding coaching on offer and has now found a new hobby out of it.”</p> <p>“The community coming together to celebrate. My three daughters, my grandchildren and many friends from Cuckfield attended and we all had an amazing time. Especially grateful that the rides, bouncy castle etc were free. So lovely to see so many happy children of all ages playing football, going on rides and playing in the mud in the woods. Very grateful for the volunteers who gave up their time to organise and run the event.”</p> <p>“The children loved the bouncy castle and roundabout and the skate jam!”</p> <p>“It was all fabulous. The free rides and bouncy castle etc were a huge hit with all the children.”</p>
<p>What could we improve or do differently?</p>	<p>Band / entertainment in centre or on stage Needed speakers further back as could only hear the music if towards the front. Band PA & ability to offer more pa sound for community singing Bit more crowd participation. Sports? football mini tournament, beat the goalie, quoits, boule More BOD More craft beer and maybe tickets for the kids rides to limit/impact 1.5hr queue!! Hand out picnic blankets for those who forgot! different food options, soft drinks, water</p>
<p>Would you like to see this event repeated in 2024?</p>	<p>Yes! Yes, although it might lose the magic if it’s not a special celebration. Yes, lovely for the community to get together Yes, but only if it does not compete with the Cuckoo Fayre Absolutely! This format could replace the old bank holiday festive day that took place on these fields, celebrate sports locally</p>