

Loose Agenda Suggestions

Christmas Event Working Group

'Wash-Up' Meeting

Wednesday 26th January 2022 @ 6:00pm (ZOOM)

1. Apologies for Absence:

To receive apologies for absence.

2. Notes of Previous Meeting:

To confirm the notes of the meeting held on Monday 13th December 2021 as a correct record (Supporting Paper A)

3. 'WASH-UP'

To review the Christmas 2021 Event/s as held on:

1. Saturday 27th November 2021
2. Saturday 18th December 2021

- What worked well?
- What did not work/could be improved?

Note: The *Feedback Received/Observations Report (Supporting Paper B) may assist with the above.

*This is a 'working document' which will be supplied to members at the inaugural meeting of the *Christmas Working Group - Organisational Learning*, scheduled for Wednesday 2nd February at 7:00pm. Feedback/notes from this 'Wash Up' meeting will also be supplied.

ZOOM ACCESS CODE: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82335984969>

Meeting ID: 823 3598 4969

One tap mobile: 01314601196,,82335984969# OR
 02034815237,,82335984969#

Dial by your location: 0131 460 1196 OR 0203 481 5237 OR 0203 481 5240

Christmas Event Working Group
Notes of Meeting held on 13th December 2021 @ 6:00pm

Present: Councillors: J. Johns (Chair)
 Also Present: Elizabeth Sessions, Graham Sessions
 Joy Norris – Town Clerk (TC), Maria Weston – Deputy Town Clerk (DTC)

Item No	Notes (topics discussed)	Outcome/Action required	Action by
1.	Apologies	Apologies were received from Cllr. Dale & Chris Clarke.	N/A
2.	Notes of Previous Meeting	The notes of the meeting held on 15 th November 2021 were agreed.	N/A
3.	Gazebo – Santa’s Grotto	Discussion ensued regarding gazebo provision. If the Scouts gazebo is used for the Grotto, a donation would be in order. Should the Scouts gazebo not be a viable option, The Walronds marquee (6m x 12m) could be used however, there would need to be an individual available to direct its erection as this is not overly straightforward! Use of a ground sheet (dirt trapper mat) would be preferable. Arrangements to be confirmed. Perhaps the gazebo could be erected at 7:00am on Saturday. Back gates to be opened for access.	TC/DTC
4.	Grotto Decorations	Colour coded decorations are all in the Town Hall attic e.g. trees, baubles, light strings. A few 4ft Christmas trees are available for use. Staff/volunteers to decorate on Saturday. Ok to use The Walronds trolley to transport decorations.	TC/DTC/ Volunteers
5.	Covid-19	It was agreed it would be sensible if everyone ‘working’ in the Grotto could confirm they are ‘Covid free’ e.g. by carrying out a lateral flow test at least the morning before the event. Clear visors to be worn by Santa’s, Mrs. Claus & elves where possible. Need to purchase a supply of clear plastic visors. Need to update the Santa letter (QR code) Table and hand sanitiser to be available both at the WC’s and at the entrance to the Grotto.	Grotto ‘staff’ TC/JJ
6.	Santa Costumes	3 no. Santa’s. Big chair loaned from The Walronds to be available for Santa and chair for Mrs. Claus. 1 no. person needed to escort Santa and to facilitate the changeover (usually Nick) Signage will be required. Social distancing, Queue here etc. Allergies need to be highlighted. The Walronds have added approx. 3 new sets of external sockets which can be used to power any lighting etc. in the Grotto and the PA system e.g. competition announcements. There will be 3 no. costumes available for this year: GS has his own costume. There is also one in the Town Hall. A third bespoke costume has been made.	
7.	Gifts	A handful of gifts for under 3-year olds will be purchased together with gifts for the competitions e.g. boxes of chocolate.	TC
8.	First Aid Cover	D B Event Medical Ltd. will send 1 no. operative who will be located in the Town Hall and will walk around the venues. Signage to be added to the entrance of The Walronds to let people know.	

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		Long banner advertising Santa's Grotto should be used if possible.	
9.	Contact Details	Contact with organisers/volunteers will be via mobile phone; numbers to be supplied to include the First Aid operative if possible.	DTC
10.	Weather	Forecast is looking relatively good for Saturday.	
11.	Competitions	A number of shops have entered the Best Decorated Christmas Window Competition to be judged by public vote. A fair number of entries have been received for the Best Lit House & Street Competitions. Cllr. John Berry & former MDDC Cllr. Rosemary Berry will judge these and award the certificates/prizes on Saturday at 1:45pm in The Walronds garden. Request use of PA system.	DTC
12.	Workshops	The Walronds will host a Willow Star Decorating Workshop 10:00am – 1:00pm; There will be a nominal charge of £2.00 to pay towards the materials.	The Walronds
13.	Electronic Advent Calendar	There is enough footage to populate the calendar; GS has forwarded 26 videos (having supplied 6 of his own) to Function28. There are 25 no. slots.	
14.	Date and Time of Next Meeting	'Wash Up' Meeting Monday 10 th January 2022 at 18:30pm (Zoom)	DTC

Christmas Event Working Group – ‘Wash Up’ /Organisational Learning Meeting 2021

Feedback Received & Observations – 2021 Christmas Event/s

1. Saturday 27th November 2021 – Lights ‘Switch On’ Event;
2. Saturday 18th December 2021 – Santa’s Grotto Event

Working Document

Description	Comments	Action/Comments for CTC Officer use
INTRODUCTION/FACILITATION OF EVENT/S	<p>The Christmas Events are facilitated by the Town Council with partnership working. Town Clerk & Deputy Town Clerk coordinate. The Events take quite a bit of time to organise and are multi-faceted – Including for example (NOT exhaustive):</p> <p>Administration e.g. Road Closure Order/s, Event Management Plans & Risk Assessments, booking and organising entertainment, liaising with partners & members of the public, organising of the competitions, judging & prizes, sponsorship, Christmas Tree (large trees) provision, queries, traders/stall-holder queries, social media, advertising & publicity, Press engagement, meetings.</p> <p>NB: Work on the Christmas Events is undertaken whilst staff are also carrying out their usual work i.e. routine Council work such as Town Council & Committee servicing; This can result in staff feeling somewhat ‘overwhelmed’ and under pressure at times. Perhaps delegation of specific tasks to more individuals would assist..</p>	
DATES	<p>Split event (two-fold) seems to work well and is warmly received. Santa’s Grotto on the Lights Switch On date is too early and so keeping to the last Saturday before Christmas is preferable. However, this often means that Cullompton’s events clash with other local events although the numbers that have attended the event in the last few years suggest this isn’t too much of an issue!</p>	
FIRST AID	<p>Do we need first aid cover all day or just for the Lantern Parade?</p> <p>Cover was provided from 9:00am until 6:00pm on 27th Nov & 9:00am until 3:00pm on 18th Dec.</p>	
4FT CHRISTMAS TREES	<p>Letters to shops/businesses to request a tree needs to go out earlier – October?</p>	
LOCAL RESIDENTS	<p>Reminder letter to nearby residents – 48-24 hours before (did 24 hours before this time)</p>	
TRANSPORT	<p>Transport for Santa & Mayor for the Parade?</p> <p>Uffculme have a sleigh pulled by a car which was offered FOC to Cullompton however time/date conflicts meant this did not happen.</p>	

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PARADE	<p>Allow longer for the Parade to get from muster to ‘Switch On’ point’?</p> <p>Entertainment within the parade? 2021 Parade Participants: Crooked Tempo Samba Band, Ace Majorettes, Bradninch Morris Millers, Fire Brigade, Schools + members of the public who stepped into the road! NB: Most of the public stayed on the pavements. More local community/youth groups? Perhaps stilt-walkers? Large Lanterns missing this year. NB: Pantomime participants were warmly received with positive comments regarding their vibrant costumes!</p>	
ACTIVITIES, ENTERTAINMENT & WORKSHOPS	<p>Activities and entertainment during the day and after the parade? Comments that the entertainment is always the same. Bands? Stage. Evening entertainment? Shops encouraged to stay open later but this has not been forthcoming! Perhaps if there were more people in the town to spend money (instead of all dispersing as soon as the lights are switched on), this would encourage the traders to stay open. More workshops to encourage more families/individuals to come into town during the day of the Parade/Switch On?</p>	
BUDGET	<p>Consider setting up a budget / ERM to move towards independent electric supply points (like the ones in Higher and Lower Bullring) rather than reliance on goodwill of local traders etc</p>	
BUILDINGS SURVEY – BRACKETS ELECTRICAL SUPPLY	<p>A proper survey of which buildings have flag brackets, which of these have an electric supply and if possible, get the electrics safety checked. From this, we will have a structure to build on, perhaps adding more brackets especially in the 'darker' areas. NB: This would be useful for HM Queen’s Platinum Jubilee celebrations too.</p> <p>Need written information / drawings about the existing wiring, power supply points and contacts (not just relying on information held in people’s heads) This probably needs to be included in works specification as background information.</p> <p>Have own street level power supplies (similar to Higher & Lower Bullring) to reduce reliance on retailers / traders etc.</p>	
GROTTO	<p>Gazebo loaned from local Cub Scouts Pack. Should the Town Council look to purchase its own large gazebo for use at the event?</p>	

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	<p>Elf Shifts – Father Christmas does a set time ‘shift’, the Elves & Mrs. Claus seem to do the same job without a break for the whole time the Grotto is open – should there be a similar shift system? – if sufficient helpers could be found; or at least a change of duties?</p> <p>Santa booking system - could it be adapted so people can cancel and re-book? This can be time-consuming when dealing with changes otherwise. Ticket issuing for booked slots?</p> <p>More than ½ dozen groups turned up at Grotto saying they had been advised (by a Cllr.) they could do so - everyone was fitted in BUT some had to wait 20 min or so (probably no longer) - could have been difficult as we catered for presents for those who booked (tried to give priority to those who had booked and arrived on time)</p>	
COMMUNICATION	<p>Walkie-Talkies loaned from local Cub Scouts Pack (donation given 2021). Do we need these? Perhaps for the main ‘Switch On’ Event but not for the Grotto Event? Consider purchase of own appliances?</p>	
VOLUNTEERS – STEWARDS/MARSHALS	<p>Usually a struggle to find volunteers/enough volunteers to cover - certainly for the ‘Switch On’ Event. Recruit/train/induction earlier in the year perhaps?</p>	
CHRISTMAS LIGHTS & LIGHTS CONTRACT	<p>Insist on a pre-installation visit to identify any potential problems (this did happen) with a written record of problems identified, solutions and things that require no action (this didn’t happen)</p> <p>Strengthen the quotation document to make clear CTC want to see successful testing of all lights <u>at least 1 week</u> before the official ‘Switch On’ and there should be signed document (copy signed by contractor and CTC) to say that this has happened</p> <p>Specified payment points set out in the quotation document (e.g. 60% of total after installation and testing, 80% paid after successful switch-on, 100% paid after dismantling or possibly an overall retention is held until after dismantling)</p> <p>Strengthen / clarify the contract wording regarding the contractor’s responsibilities for the installation and setting of timers</p> <p>Lower Bullring - Power supply. Do we need additional supply / plug sockets – for the 2 lower trees and the PA used for the ‘Switch On’? (battery lights on 2 smaller trees worked well)</p> <p>Have a simple check list that can be used for ‘successful testing’ (perhaps specifying location / section, date time tested, and what the test / check comprised e.g. all lights on, timer installed)</p>	

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	<p>Need for a clear switch- on procedure – should it be the contractor or CTC – if the latter there needs to be clear information and instruction provided by the contractor and either way there needs to be a Plan B and more than 1 person having the information. (may need to include in works specification)</p> <p>Battery supply lights for trees near the Memorial Garden/Hayridge?</p> <p>Rehearsal of the countdown / switch-on is imperative (this did happen)</p>	
<p>ADDITIONAL DECORATIONS</p>	<p>Comments that the Lights are always the same and are boring. Look at options for different lights, column & free-standing decorations such as photos below? Storage of same?</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">   </div> <p>Should the Town Council look to build up a contingency sum to purchase its own lights and to have local contractors trained volunteers to install?</p>	
<p>MARKETS</p>	<p>Plenty of Farmers’ Market stalls & Craft Stalls (The Walronds). Use of the Town Hall?</p>	

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FOOD PROVISION	Comments regarding the lack of food provision. Perhaps inviting more traders for future events. Where will these be sited? Licensing for alcohol.	
WEBSITE	Needs to be populated with up-to-date information. This is a lot of work! DTC worked on this in conjunction with Function28. Needs re-wording from previous year/updating e.g. Covid information, competition details + needs to be revised once competition dates closed, Photos need uploading. More work needed on website a lot sooner in the year otherwise it's a 'last minute rush' – perhaps allocating elements to additional staff/volunteers?	
ELECTRONIC ADVENT CALENDAR	Should we continue with electronic advent calendar? Has been done for 2 years. It was difficult to get people to record slots – this takes a lot of coordination & time. If continuing, possibly Admin. Assistant to co-ordinate?	
SOCIAL MEDIA	There needs to be more input on the publicity of the event/s on social media platforms. Facebook populated mainly by DTC + Nick. Time-consuming. Can this be allocated to a specific person?	