
Report for councillors: Burnham fireworks display 2021

**Issued to: Town Improvements Committee
Meeting 12/07/21**

Purpose of Report

To note that £2,800 deposit was paid in 2020 in respect of a postponed fireworks display in Burnham-on-Sea, and to consider whether to proceed with a display in 2021.

Background

At its September 2020 meeting, the Town Improvements Committee by minute ref: 59/20/TIMP definitively resolved that in light of existing social distancing requirements & public health information, the council would not proceed with the fireworks display in November 2020.

At its preceding May meeting, the committee had resolved to provisionally book the firework event with Skyburst on the understanding that, if it later transpired that restrictions prevented the display proceeding, Skyburst would carry over the £2,800 deposit to 2021 without any financial penalties to the council. This payment was completed by the office and the postponement was honoured by Skyburst.

The current position

During April 2021, SDC was of the view that, when restrictions lift it was hoping to get as many events going as possible. Recognising the desire to increase footfall to town centres and despite the delay in lifting social distancing requirements, there has been no notification that SDC's aspiration has changed (subject to future restrictions that might be required).

In order to make plans for its business, Skyburst has requested to know the town council's intentions as to whether the event will proceed this year. It has requested a minimum of one month's notice of any event (preferably longer).

Skyburst has agreed that, if the town council decides that the health position indicates that it is '*unwise*' to proceed with the 2021 display, the company will once again carry-over the deposit payment to 2022.

Potential date of an event, with possibility to avoid flu season & high tide

The event is usually held during November, prior to the carnival. However, this office has been notified that there will not be a 2021 carnival. Should the council wish to proceed with a firework event this year, the committee might therefore consider this gives more flexibility to scheduling.

There is an opportunity to hold an event earlier than November, before the winter flu season and hopefully before any increase in potential instances of winter coronavirus. This might enable an event to present less of a risk to people and associated medical services and avoid any potential decrease in the availability of volunteer stewards, including staff. Skyburst currently has space for bookings before the November date.

The firework event relies on the local carnival club to provide the bulk of the stewards and Chapter 8 trained marshals working on the roads. The chairman of the carnival club is extremely helpful in providing the support we need, both on the roads and for crowd control, as well as with the provision of signage & barriers. He confirms that the club expects to have a number of volunteers available to assist, if required.

It is advisable that any proposed date should be subject to tide times in order to avoid the additional costs for scaffolding required during a high tide.

Authority to proceed with costs

Ultimately, any decision made by this committee is dependent on how are the pandemic figures/ restrictions look nearer the date of the event. However, if this council resolves that it intends to proceed with a 2021 firework event (subject to Govt. restrictions & any restrictions put in place by SDC), please be aware that the office will proceed with making arrangements asap, to include making bookings and paying for services. This is to ensure that all risks assessments and arrangements are approved by the safety advisory group ahead of time and that services are secured.

Financial implications

£9,500	2020 budget total (funds were moved to EMR)
£7000	Fee for the 2021 display by Skyburst (fee paid & held over from 2020)
£495	Road closure signs at 2019 rate
£816	Marshalling costs at 2019 rate
£140	First Aid costs at 2019 rate

£1100	PA systems at 2019 rate
£9551	TOTAL
(£2,800	standard firework booking deposit inc within £7000)
£2,910	EMR as at Jan 2019 to fund scaffolding, if required

Policy implications

Corporate Pillar 1: Engagement, Visibility and Transparency

1.1 Ensuring that we operate according to legislative and regulatory principles, whilst following ethical standards and best practice

Corporate pillar 3: Economic Development and Tourism

3.4 Actively support and encourage local tourism & 3.1 Support and benefit local business & 3.3 Support the promotion of Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge

Report author: *Sam Winter, Town Clerk*

Report Date: *5th July 2021*
