



B O S T O N

B O R O U G H C O U N C I L

REPORT TO: BOSTON TOWN AREA COMMITTEE (BTAC)

DATE: 20 MARCH 2019

SUBJECT: BTAC WORKING GROUP REPORT: EVENTS

REPORT AUTHOR: HEAD OF PLACE AND SPACE

EXEMPT REPORT: No

SUMMARY:

The BTAC budget incorporates a number of services for the residents of Boston including the delivery of an events programme, throughout the financial year.

This report provides an update on the 2018.19 programme and a summary of the events programme planned for the 2019/20 financial year, with budgeted financial breakdown attached, for the Committee to note and approve.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That this committee:

- i) Notes and approves the outcomes of the 2018/19 events programme.
- ii) Approves planned programme of events for the 2019/20 financial year.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

This report is a summary of the events planned for 2019/20.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

None.

REPORT:

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The BTAC budget incorporates a number of services for the residents of Boston.

2.0 Event Delivery

- 2.1 The 2018/19 financial year saw an increase in both event delivery and events income for the town, following additional funding allocated by BTAC in 2017. This has resulted in an expansion of the events programme, increasing the number of events delivered from 15 to 30 in 2018/19. The Events Programme as presented to the 24 October BTAC meeting is appended for reference (Appendix A).
- 2.2 The Events Team consists of 1.5 Full Time Equivalents (FTE's), and in the delivery of 30 events is working at full capacity. To deliver additional events safely going forward would require additional resource.
- 2.3 An Internal Audit Review on Events, completed on 24th January 2019 received a Substantial Assurance rating from the Auditors, with the following outcome:

“Our review gives us Substantial assurance that controls are in place, and operating as expected, to deliver an effective event programme.

The Council’s events team have been successful in increasing the number and type of events as part of the 2018/19 programme. This leads to wider benefits for the town, increasing visitor numbers, which in turn supports business.

Work to encourage sponsorship and advertising is also taking place, which should generate increased income to run the events programme. The team have received positive feedback on event delivery from visitors and the wider benefits for the town are emerging.

The increase in the number of events provided has resulted in resource pressure on the small event team. This is being reviewed by the Head of Place & Space as part of delivering the 2019/20 event programme”.

- 2.4 The events programme to date has generally comprised of a mix of community-based events and it provides families opportunities that may not otherwise be easily affordable.
- 2.5 Some of the events in the programme have the potential to become more commercially focused events, the Fairy Door Hunt for example, and the Working Group aims to explore opportunities in more detail during the 2019/20 financial year and report its findings to committee in the quarter 3.

- 2.6 Boston Big Local (BBL) have been a key supporter for additional events in Boston. BBL is due to finalise and approve its own Plan covering the next two years in April and it is hoped that BBL will be able to continue its support for the BTAC programme of events.
- 2.7 BTAC at its 30 January meeting debated a Minor Grants application from Shakesperts Emerge Festival in April, in Central Park. The decision of the BTAC Committee was to grant Shakesperts the sum of £2,500 to be funded from the Events budget. The Emerge Festival has subsequently been added to the Events Programme (Appendix B) and Officers are supporting the organisers to put on an event on Council owned land.

3.0 Working Group Activity

- 3.1 The Events Working Group currently consists of 3 BTAC Members and 4 members of the public, who are interested in supporting the development of the annual programme.
- 3.2 The Working Group assisted in the delivery of three new events during 2018/19, namely the Vikings, Teddy's Bears Picnic and Santa Fun Run, which were reported to BTAC at its 24 October 2018 meeting. By way of an update, December's Santa Fun Run saw over 300 Santa's running through the town and has received really positive feedback.
- 3.3 These three events have all being included in the 2019/20 Events Programme. The 2019/20 Events Programme is appended for reference (Appendix B).
- 3.4 The Events Working Group previously reported to the 24 October BTAC Committee meeting, on the outcomes of the programme undertaken during the 18/19 financial year. In the report, it also reported on the successes of the programme to that date. Since its 24 October report, the Group has revaluated one of its events, namely the 14 July 2018, Beer & Sausage festival. Following further discussion, the Group have determined to change its name to The Boston Music & Beer Festival and has proposed that the event be moved to the 24 August Bank Holiday weekend. Moving the event would see budgeted costs rising by £1,000 for the 2019/20 financial year, to cover an increased cost in staffing an event on this Bank Holiday, but the Group have a view that there is an opportunity to build the event into a more commercial event, in future years. The Group will work with Officers to develop a prospective business case during quarters 1 & 2 of the 2019/20 financial year, with a view to report back to the BTAC Committee during quarter 3, of the next financial year.
- 3.5 The Events Working Group currently evaluate the success of each individual event, based on a combination of factors such as numbers in the case of ticketed events, such as:
 - Selling all 500 tickets for an Outdoor Cinema screening,
 - Covering its cost/creating profit in the case of the Fairy Door hunt,

- Benchmarking new events that can be fenced in i.e. 1,725 attendees at the Viking event.
- Anecdotal evidence from photographs, staff managing the event or sponsors attending the event i.e. 1940's Weekend, Beach event and Christmas Market, illuminate & Lights switch on.

Events in the 2018/19 programme, such as the examples listed above will be benchmarked against the upcoming 2019/20 programme where specific information is already available. Appendix C gives the Committee a visual idea of the impact some of the events have had during this financial year, but evaluating the success of all events is not currently undertaken. The success of day long events where people cannot be contained and where visitors are free to access and leave the event a number of ways at any time, are however harder to evaluate. During the 2019/20 financial year, the Working Group will also aim to develop 'success' criteria for each individual event, to be reported back to the BTAC Committee in Quarter 3, of the 2018/19 financial year.

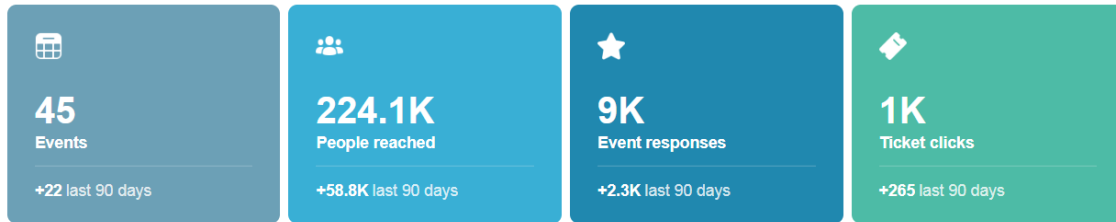
4.0 Prosperity of the town

4.1 The Events programme has led to wider benefits to the wider Town Centre with businesses seeing an increase in their footfall whilst events are being held, and businesses are starting to support the development of the events programme through sponsorship and advertising. The benefits to the whole town are now starting to show. Some of the positive comments have included:

- The events I attended were great and free to attend.
- Enjoyed all the events I attended, anything that brings the community together has to be good for the town. Would have attended them all if I had been here.
- Well organised. Lots free activities, good weather, prices for children. All round fantastic family day out on the budget.
- Fantastic day out for children of all ages and it costs nothing or bare minimal, keeps children active and entertained. Absolutely fantastic.
- The events I attended were great and free to attend.

Comments from members of the public are periodically reported to Members at Cabinet as part of the Council's quarterly monitoring of performance reporting, which is also available online at www.boston.gov.uk

4.2 Statistical analysis of the Council's social media platforms has also highlighted increasing awareness of the BTAC events programme, the data below from our Facebook page, 'Visit Boston UK' events page activity, provides an overview. (last 365 days as of 21st Feb 2019)



What does this mean?



Events – number of events hosted included Co-hosts; NB in January 2019 we have started to add other people’s events to the Visit Boston Facebook page



People reached – number of people who had info about your events enter their screen (NB this does not mean they have read or engaged)



Event responses – Total number of people who responded with Interested or Going to your events (NB this does mean they are engaging)



Ticket clicks – The total number of click on the link to tickets for your event

4.3 An overview of whole page for the week of 14th – 20th February 2019, during half term, showed the following:

- Page engagements = 1,922 – the number of times that people have engaged with your posts through likes, comments, shares and more.
- Page views = 116 – the number of times that the page’s profile has been viewed by people.
- Post reach = 14,985 – the number of people who had information from our posts enter their page, as above; **NB** this does not mean they have read or engaged.

5.0 Conclusion

5.1 Following the increase in the number and breadth of the programme, Boston is developing into a town more noted for its events; with a wide mix of family oriented and more commercially focused events. It appears that local people are starting to stay within town to find activities and more visitors are also starting to travel from further afield to Boston for BTAC events (as previously reported).

- 5.2 The Events Team will continue to establish new relationships with businesses to create further sponsorship opportunities to support the costs of running events where feasible.
- 5.3 The current capacity within the Events Team is sufficient to deliver the 2019/20 programme. However, any ambition to expand the events programme further is likely to require additional resource in order to ensure it is delivered safely and further reporting to BTAC.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This is an update report with no financial implications as costs are contained within current budget.

The 2018/19 Events budget outline is appended (Appendix D).

The 2019/20 Events budget outline is appended (Appendix E).

LEGAL & EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

The Council is required to conform to the requirements of the EU Procurement Directive and its own Contract Procurement and Procedure Rules Part 4 (H) of the Constitution.

ANY OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None

CONSULTATION

- Volunteers within the BTAC Events Working Group
- Members of the public at events
- Retailers forum meetings and working with Boston Town Team
- Businesses who are supporting our events

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Programme of Events, 2018/19, presented to BTAC 24 October 2018
Appendix B – Programme of Events 2019/20
Appendix C – Photographs of Events 2018/19
Appendix D – Events budget 2018/19
Appendix E – Events budget 2019/20

BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers as defined in Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the production of this report.

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF THIS REPORT

None