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Committee: Full Council: 21st October 2024
Agenda Item: 70 Food Festival
Date: 16.10.2024

1 Purpose. To consider a request for Council assistance with the 2025 Food Festival.

2 Decision Required. Councillors are asked to consider the options at 6.

3 Background

3.1 On the 19th September 2024 the second Food Festival was held in Looe. This event was organised by a group of volunteers led by Helena Jaycock and Ben Palmer. The event was very successful with food demonstrations and food stalls delivering a popular well attended event.

3.2 In October 2023 it was **RESOLVED** that the Council would support the food festival by:

- providing staff to complete risk assessments and safety arrangements;
- taking the role of lead organisation and providing insurance for the event;
- offering administration support to ensure appropriate checks are in place to meet insurance requirements;
- transferring balance of funds from 2023 event to the Food Festival committee once an appropriate bank account has been established.

3.3 In January 2024 Council agreed to manage income and expenditure on behalf of the 2024 Looe Food Festival without accepting liability for any debt. This additional support was agreed because the Food Festival was not a constituted body and therefore could not open its own bank account.

3.4 The Food Festival also received advice from the Council's contracted event consultant who fulfilled the role of Event Director with overall responsibility for safety on the day of the festival.

3.5 A Memorandum of Understanding was signed by both parties outlining the support that LTC would provide, the responsibilities of the Food Festival organisers, how issues would be resolved and key milestones and dates for the delivery of the event.

4 Food Festival 2025

4.1 The Food Festival volunteers would like to deliver a Food Festival in 2025.

4.2 They have asked that council consider providing the same level of support that was provided this year. This would include;

- Providing insurance cover
- Completing all statutory notifications and licences, risk assessments and safety arrangements for this event including use of the Council's contracted event consultant.
- Admin support to the Food Festival so that the appropriate checks are in place to comply with our insurance policy (approx. 14 hours)
- Providing financial management invoicing of stall holders and paying suppliers (approx. 14 hours).

5 Event Support in Looe

5.1 Covid curtailed Looe's vibrant event programme but now a year-round programme of activities is beginning to evolve. These events support the local economy, bring the local community together and celebrate Looe. All of these grass roots events rely on volunteers to make them happen.

5.2 The Town Council supports festivals with grants, allows the council chamber to be used for meetings and festival events and provides advice and guidance. Other local organisations in town including Looe Development Trust, support events by providing physical spaces, holding funds, insuring activities, and offering advice and support.

5.4 The Food Festival can be covered under the Council's insurance, but it is important to recognise that the Council are then responsible for managing and mitigating risk. This includes completing risk assessments, providing safety management on the day, reviewing all stallholder documentation and liaising with Looe Harbour Commission to ensure the event complies with their regulations.

5.5 Supporting the event by providing financial management, raising invoices and paying suppliers uses a small amount of officer time. The RFO reviews financial commitments, and the Memorandum of Understanding with the Food Festival clearly outlines that the festival is responsible for any debts incurred. The Food Festival particularly wishes to continue with this arrangement as in their view it gives additional credibility to the event.

6. Options

6.1 That the Council provide the same level of support to the Food Festival as in 2024 and that a new Memorandum of Understanding is signed by both parties.

6.2 That the Council request the Food Festival explore alternative options for insurance cover and financial management and that any remaining income from the Food Festival is transferred when the Food Festival has opened an appropriate bank account.