

Report to:	EXECUTIVE CABINET
Date:	24 April 2024
Executive Member:	Councillor Vimal Choksi, Executive Member Towns and Communities
Reporting Officer:	Emma Varnam, Assistant Director, Operations and Neighbourhoods
Subject:	CIVIC EVENTS REPORT 2024
Report Summary:	<p>The Council support and programmes a vibrant and affordable calendar of events, generally free at the point of delivery. Key parts of this annual calendar are Whit Friday Brass Band Contests, Armed Forces Day, Remembrance Services and Parades and the Borough's Christmas celebrations. Significant national or local commemoration events compliment the calendar which in 2024 includes plans to mark the 80th Anniversary of the D-day landings and the 50th Anniversary of Tameside's inception following the Local Government Act of 1974. This report sets out a vision for these key events and activities in 2024. The proposed model takes into account the financial, organisational challenges facing the Council and the lessons learnt from staging/supporting civic events in the past.</p>
Recommendations:	<p>That Executive Cabinet be recommended to agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) The plans for Whit Friday are noted. (ii) The proposed revenue budget and request for external corporate sponsorship for Whit Friday is noted (section 2.6 refers). (iii) The plans for Armed Forces Day are noted. (iv) The proposed revenue budget and request for external sponsorship for Armed Forces Day is noted (section 2.10 refers) (v) The plans for Remembrance Sunday and associated Services and Parades are noted. (vi) The revenue budget and request for appropriate external donations for Remembrance Services and Parades are noted (section 2.13 refers). (vii) The plans for Tameside's corporate festive Lantern Parade 2024 are noted. (viii) The support package for the Town Christmas events is agreed. (ix) The revenue budget of £0.018m (section 3.8 refers) to support the core Christmas package is noted. (x) The proposals for marking the D-day landing are noted (xi) The proposals for marking the 50th anniversary of Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council are noted. (xii) The additional highlighted events programme is noted.
Corporate Plan:	<p>Tameside's civic events and cultural events programme significantly adds to the borough's communities sense of pride, our place and shared heritage. It increases opportunities for people to participate, learn new skills and fulfil their potential. It can increase aspirations and hope through learning, moving with confidence from childhood</p>

and into adulthood. It can support levels of self-care through a social prescription of cultural participation.

Policy Implications:

It is essential that any proposals demonstrate value for money and make a clear contribution to Council priorities.

Where possible the events and associated plans will take the Council's Environmental strategy into account through recycling, restricted use of plastic and impact on the environment is considered for each event.

**Financial Implications:
(Authorised by the
statutory Section 151
Officer)**

The 24/25 approved revenue budget for Arts and Events is set out in the table below:

	£m
Employee Costs	0.200
Other Expenditure	0.118
Other Income	(0.078)
Net Budget	0.240

This budget assumes that the service will seek external sponsorship and donations to support the delivery of the annual events programme within the budget. The net expenditure budget, excluding staffing costs, is £0.040m.

The key events set out in the report, with associated costs to the Council, are set out in the table below:

	£
Whit Friday Brass Band Contest	7,350
Armed Forces Day	7,000
Remembrance Day	5,000
Tameside Festive Lantern Parade*	0
Tameside Town Christmas support package	18,000
Total Cost to the Council	37,350

*The Lantern Parade is showing as nil cost as this is being funded through UKSPF funding in 2024.

These key events can be funded through the net core budget however, to deliver a full events programme through supporting the nationally significant events (Section 4) and additional cultural events and activities (Section 5), the service will need to seek to generate sponsorship for all events, including those key events listed above.

**Legal Implications:
(Authorised by the
Borough Solicitor)**

The report provides details of the planned civic events for the current year. The proposed events are within the powers of the Authority. The decision to support the events is subject to general legal principles of public law decision making including "Wednesbury reasonableness" and observing the Council's fiduciary duties.

Risk Management:

Outdoor events come with organisation and significant risk due to adverse weather conditions. This can require last minute decisions to cancel or alter events to ensure these are safe for audiences, staff, performers and equipment alike.

Risk to raising funds for community groups to deliver Christmas Switch ON events – the report proposes that a basic Christmas Switch On package be available to all town Switch On events.

Without additional budgets requested for Town Christmas events and Remembrance Services and Parades it is likely that these will pose additional risks to audience safety and meeting our statutory duties regarding highways. In the worst case scenario some of these may need to be cancelled or significantly altered to reduce the risk especially in relation to road safety, this could impact negatively on the Council's reputation.

All events and activities are subject to changes through unforeseen circumstances and as such this can mean last minute alterations and both the reputational and financial implications of this also needs to be considered.

Background Information: The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting Marie Holland, Arts and Engagement Manager.



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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Council supports and delivers a varied, innovative and generally free cultural events and activities programme in Tameside. Integral to the Council's programme are a number of key civic events: Whit Friday Brass Band Contests, Armed Forces Day, the annual Lantern Parade and the borough's Christmas celebrations. These are all commonly welcomed and supported by residents ensuring a sense of community, wellbeing and civic pride.
- 1.2 Tameside's Christmas celebrations consist of a number of small to medium sized 'Switch On' events (approximately eight) with one large scale corporate event staged in Ashton. All events are traditionally staged outdoors, in the early evening, with music, often entertainment provided by local groups and finally a countdown to the Christmas lights.
- 1.3 The traditional free Christmas package was continued for Christmas event organisers in 2023. This resulted in all nine events being supported with the required elements from the package for their events such as: a free Christmas tree and Christmas tree lights and marketing and mandatory health and safety training for Christmas event organisers.
- 1.4 Tameside's large corporate Christmas Lantern Parade returned to Ashton in 2022 on a permanent basis. It comprised a large scale lantern parade, illuminations of the key market square buildings, a festive window trail, the civic large Christmas tree being decorated by the town's schools and a specially commissioned star for the top of the tree, a stage programme of community content and additionally the adjacent trees in Fletcher square being adorned with festive lighting.
- 1.5 This report sets out the Event Panel's full programme of civic events: Whit Friday Brass Band Contests, Armed Forces Day, Remembrance Parades and Services, the civic festive Lantern Parade as well as the proposals for the Christmas Switch On events. Additionally it sets out the plans for marking the 80th anniversary of the D-day landing and the 50th anniversary of Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council.

2. THE 2024 CIVIC EVENTS PROGRAMME

- 2.1 The civic events programme spans a full 12 months of a calendar year and features the key events: Whit Friday Brass Band Contests, Armed Forces Day, Remembrance Services and Parades and the corporate festive lantern parade and town Christmas Switch On events.
- 2.2 Each year these events have drawn huge crowds, raised the profile of the borough and enabled residents to come together to celebrate and mark all that is great about Tameside. However, it is worth noting that the implications of the pandemic in terms of community support for key events such as Remembrance and the Brass Band Contests are still being felt as well as the impact across event infrastructure companies in terms of staff drain and increased expenses. 2023 also saw the first of 2 consecutive years of the lantern parade being funded fully through UKSPF grants.

Tameside Whit Friday Brass Band Contest

- 2.3 Tameside Whit Friday brass band contests take place on Whit Friday each year. This is considered the first brass band contest in the country charting its routes back to the 1870s in Stalybridge and Mossley. It is an essential part of the borough's heritage and a well-known national occasion. The contest brings communities together to celebrate a great local tradition and the opportunity to hear and see some of the greatest brass bands the country has to offer for free. In 2023, 126 volunteers supported and gave up 882 hours of volunteering to support across 9 brass band contests across Tameside to an audience of over 12,000 people.

- 2.4 The Tameside Brass Band Contest will take place on 24 May 2024. The contest in 2024 will consist of 10 individual competitions. Each contest is run by the individual venue; they all have their own prizes covering the different sections with awards and is judged by nationally recognised judges and entirely funded through local business sponsorship and community champions. After the contest has taken place all results are gathered together and the overall winners and runners up in each section are announced. Historically the overall awards are financed by the Council (see **Appendix 1** for venues and the Council's Tameside Prize fund).
- 2.5 The contest is coordinated by the Brass Band Committee but due to its high profile it has remained a key feature of the borough's annual calendar and has consistently been supported by the Council through eleven prizes and event support from the Council's Arts and Engagement Team. This allows for the contest to continue to attract the most bands in addition to high calibre bands from across the country and internationally. It also ensures that the contest can continue to compete with the Saddleworth Brass Band contests taking place on the same date.
- 2.6 The Event Panel proposes that the Council continues to support this high profile locally and nationally significant event through the ongoing support from the Arts and Events Team and wider operations and Neighbourhood Directorate. Additionally the Panel proposes that the annual prize funds of £7,350 (paid since 1989) remains the same and if there are less contests the prize monies are split accordingly rather than reduce the total prize fund. But with the proviso that the Arts and Engagement Team work closely with the Employment and Skills Team to generate the prize fund through corporate sponsorship thereby reducing the cost to the Council.

Armed Forces Day

- 2.7 Armed Forces Day takes place on the last Saturday of June annually. It is a nationally recognised event. The day offers a chance for the Council and all its residents to show their support for the Armed Forces community; from serving troops to service families, veterans and cadets.
- 2.8 Tameside has celebrated Armed Forces Day annually since 2008. Traditionally this has involved the Council inviting veterans and their families to a Civic lunch with the Civic Mayor in Denton Jubilee Square. This has been followed by a family fun day in Victoria Park involving arts activities, music on the bandstand, information stands, theatre, obstacle courses and traditional cream teas being serviced in the adjacent Victoria Park Community Centre. The day brings on average 5000 people together in the park to share in the celebrations, to find out more about Tameside's Armed Forces Community and the important job they do and have done in the past.
- 2.9 The events panel proposes that Armed Forces Day takes place in Victoria Park, Denton on Saturday 29 June 2024 in line with national celebrations. It also suggests that the event will continue to follow the same format as in previous years; with the borough's veterans invited to a lunch served within a marquee in Denton Jubilee Square followed by a family fun day of activities, music and Armed Services Information stalls.
- 2.10 However, whilst the Events Panel recognises the annual contribution from the MOD towards the event it does propose that revenue budget of £0.007m is put aside to support the event whilst further sponsorship and fundraising opportunities are explored to offset any costs to the Council for the event.

Remembrance Services and Parades

- 2.11 Tameside has a rich, proud and full history of marking Remembrance Sunday through Services and Parades. Annually Tameside hosts approximately 22 Services and 11 Parades across the borough during Remembrance weekend. In 2023 these had a combined audience of over 10,000 people. These Services and Parades are part of a long and important tradition

in the borough for commemorating the fallen. The Services bring communities together around a shared past and a joint future.

- 2.12 The Events Panel together with Democratic Services propose that the Services and Parades continue to take place in 2024 in their usual format with community and RBL support. The Events Panel proposes the continued partnership between the Operations and Neighbourhood Directorate and the Civic Mayor's Office to support the delivery of all Services and Parades taking place during the Remembrance Weekend 9-10 November 2024. Additionally the Panel proposes that a corporate Act of Remembrance takes place Monday 11 November 2024 at 11am outside Dukinfield Town Hall.
- 2.13 In 2023 the costs associated with this was £0.005m. The Events Panel proposes that revenue budget is allocated to support the Services and Parades but does propose that donations are investigated in a compassionate and appropriate manner given the sensitive nature of these commemorations.

3. CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS 2024

- 3.1 The programme of Christmas activities from the corporate festive Lantern Parade to the town based Switch Ons are the most high profile events the Council either organises or supports. They are very well attended, have local support, provide additional footfall to our town centres and therefore support businesses during their Christmas trading. They bring communities together and ensure that all areas of the borough feel included and part of the festive season. Lessons learnt from previous years have resulted in the following proposals being put forward for 2024.
- 3.2 **The Tameside Christmas Lantern Parade**
The last lantern parade took place in Ashton on the 18 November 2023. It included a full parade and associated day programme and town centre trail. The actual event day was attended by a record 9,000 audience. 2023 was the first year of 2 funded entirely through the UKSPF grant scheme for culture.
- 3.3 With the development work of Ashton's Market Square the Event Panel and the Executive Leader of Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council proposes that the event is moved to Hyde and takes place Saturday 16 November 2024 to ensure the increasingly popular event can be delivered safely and professionally.
- 3.4 The annual lantern parade is unique to Tameside and has attracted inward investment since 2015. In 2024 the lantern parade will be funded via external grants including the already agreed UKSPF grant for the Lantern Parade. The Events Panel proposes that the Arts and Engagement Team continues to seek sponsorship and funding for the 2024 event wherever possible to enhance and deliver the event.
- 3.5 **Town Christmas Switch On events**
Town Christmas Switch On events are a unique and festive feature of the Christmas programme in Tameside. Each town has its own traditions for the event and the Events Panel recognises that it is not possible to apply the same conditions whilst maintaining the individual nature of these events.
- 3.6 Town Christmas events have historically been organised by community groups, Town Teams, Town Councils and charities with some support from the Council. The local organising teams are encouraged to fully fund their own events through sponsorships etc. Any funding shortfall is not automatically met by the Council but in-kind support is available through marketing, technical and event management support and sponsorship advice.
- 3.7 In 2023 all 8 towns (Ashton held the lantern parade in 2023) took up either the full Christmas package including a free cut tree, Christmas tree lights and installation of these elements.

Additionally the towns where festive lighting on buildings and lamp columns had previously been commissioned benefitted from these being switched on again.

- 3.8 The Events Panel proposes that the Council again offers the towns a free cut Christmas tree and associated lights including the installation and de-installation of these but asks that the Arts and Engagement Team seek out external corporate sponsorship wherever possible to support the Christmas package for town organisers thereby reducing the annual town Christmas switch on revenue budget of £0.018m as much as possible.
- 3.9 Additionally the Events Panel proposes that the Arts and Engagement Team supports organisers with dates that ensures best value for money to the Council with regard to engineer cover costs and maximum opportunity for external sponsorship.
- 3.10 Finally the Events Panel proposes that mandatory event management training is again made available to organisers alongside fundraising advice and that Event Notifications are submitted 8 weeks prior to the event by the Christmas Switch On organisers in order for organisers to benefit from the Council's Christmas package offer.

4. NATIONALLY SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

- 4.1 Occasionally there will be annual events of national and local significance which the Events Panel proposes that the Council marks corporately and or through community engagement activity. The activities below represents the events which the Event Panel proposes the Council marks in 2024.

Pride

- 4.2 Pride events and parades take place across the country and internationally, they are seen as celebratory activities and events which champion LGBTQIA+ communities, equality and diversity. Tameside Pride campaigns for LGBTQIA+: celebrates LGBTQIA+ life and creates opportunities that engage LBGTQIA+ people so that they can thrive. There is a desire by community groups in Tameside to celebrate the diverse LGBTQIA+ communities at a local level. The Events Panel will ensure that the Council offers support to develop these community led plans. Tameside Council stands in solidarity and pride with our LGBTQIA+ community and believes in equality for all.

80th Anniversary of the D-Day landing

- 4.3 Thursday 6 June 2024 marks 80 years since the Allied Forces D-Day landing on the Normandy coastline of France and ultimately led to the liberation of mainland Europe. The Events panel proposes that the Arts and Engagement Team explore suitable and appropriate ways of marking the momentous day in line with national and local expectations. This may include opportunities for people to mark the day in our public buildings such as displays within Portland Basin Museum and Tameside Local Studies and Archives Centre.

Tameside at 50

- 4.4 2024 is a momentous year in Tameside's history as the borough turns 50 years old. The Events Panel proposes that this is marked throughout the year through the following opportunities:
- 50 significant objects from Tameside's history trail at Portland Basin Museum.
 - 50 significant people from Tameside's history blogs and public competition.
 - 50 significant and historical documents from Tameside's past - exhibition at Tameside Local Studies and Archives Centre
 - A Tameside at 50 logo to be produced and added to all publicity for the civic events in 2024
 - The naming of the square in Ashton by the entrance to Ashton Library in honour of the Borough's former Leader Kieran Quinn.

- A special photo opportunity at the first Council meeting following the local elections in 2024.

5. ADDITIONAL CULTURAL EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

- 5.1 The Events Panel recognises that the Operations and Neighbourhood Directorate's Cultural Services delivers a wide, diverse and engaging programme of cultural activities across the borough throughout the year in Museums, Local Studies, Libraries, community venues, outdoors in our parks and town centres and often in partnership with other external and internal partners. Whilst it is not possible to include all activity the Panel believes that the following events and activities are reflective of some of the free high quality opportunities which are available to Tameside residents.

Summer Theatre

- 5.2 Since 2011 summer theatre has been a key feature of the Council's free summer offer for families in Tameside. In 2023 ten productions were performed and fully booked in Tameside's parks and green spaces The programme received high praise and notably spectators commented that to have free events to attend during August had been extra important to them as they couldn't afford to go further afield. The Events Panel recognises the challenges Tameside residents are experiencing and believes that families will be increasingly looking towards local entertainment and opportunities in the years ahead. It believes that whilst Council should continue to endeavour to host a free programme of family holiday activities it also believes that the Arts and Engagement Team should explore further funding and sponsorship to deliver the events. It is envisaged that there will be 10 performances taking place across Tameside's parks during the August summer holiday in 2024 but that an increased focus will be on income generation to successfully deliver these. To minimise logistical costs such as portable toilets and other infrastructure the Events Panel proposes the following locations:
- Mossley Park, Old Brow Mossley
 - Hyde Park
 - Hollingworth Primary school
 - King George's Playing Field, Ashton
 - Ryecroft Hall, Audenshaw

Library Cultural Events

- 5.3 Tameside libraries hosts many regular events and activities, often these are linked to National library event days and weeks such as National Libraries Week and the Summer Reading Challenge. Tameside Libraries provide warm, welcoming and creative spaces that support all age groups to be more creative more often. For a programme of the key events delivered by the Libraries in 2024/25 please see **Appendix 2**.

Tameside Museum and Gallery Events and Activity Programme.

- 5.4 Annually Tameside Museum and Gallery Service attracts nearly 100,000 visitors with Portland Basin Museum rated the in the top 10% of attractions nationally and internationally. As part of the museum's annual calendar of events is its Father Christmas events, half term activities and Bank holiday events. The Events panel values the Service's dedication to celebrating the borough heritage through its engagement programme.

6. BUDGET

Christmas

- 6.1 The community Christmas Switch On events support proposal relies on key members of staff in Operations and Neighbourhoods being able to support the organisers with their events and plans. This will be funded through allocated revenue funding as part of core activities eg street cleansing. Cultural and Customer Services have traditionally set aside £0.018m to

cover the cost of the free Christmas package comprising a tree, lights and the associated costs of install and removal from their core revenue budget. However the panel is proposing that an additional focus is put on sponsorship opportunities to further support event organisers with event logistics and significantly reduced the cost to the Council.

6.2 The Christmas Lantern Parade was fully funded through the UKSPF grant in 20204 and is included in the UKSPF grant for cultural support in 2024 also. However, the Events Panel proposes that the Arts and Engagement Team continue to seek sponsorship and fundraise to support the event thereby ensuring the UKSPF grant can support more activity and events in line with the grant stipulations for permissible spends.

6.3 Other than the details above no budget provision is available to deliver additional activity at the local 'switch on' events. It is envisaged that each event will be funded, insured and event managed by local organising groups/committees.

Remembrance Parades and Services

6.4 The event panel has recognised the toll it has taken on Remembrance Event organisers and the increased focus on Counter Terrorism which has resulted in less safe events and gaps in the organisation of these. In 2023 the costs associated with this was £0.005m. The Events Panel proposes that revenue budget of £0.005m is put aside to cover these costs but that sponsorship is investigated in a compassionate and appropriate manner given the sensitive nature of these events.

Armed Forces Day

6.5 Tameside Armed Forces Day will be funded through the existing revenue budget from Arts and Engagement to the total of £0.007m, with the remainder covered by the MOD through their logistical support grants. However it is envisaged that the Arts and Engagement Team explore further sponsorship and fundraising opportunities to fully fund the event.

Whit Friday

6.6 The total prize fund of £7,350 for Tameside Council's Whit Friday Brass Band Contest remains allocated from the Arts and Engagement revenue funding unless sourced from external sponsorship and fundraising activities undertaken by the Arts and Engagement Team.

Pride

6.7 Any support offered for Tameside Pride will be covered within core revenue budgets.

Additional Budget information in table format

6.8 Due the complex nature of the budget requirements for the Civic events programme the table below sets out the revenue budget allocation proposed by the Events Panel for the above mentioned events but with the proviso that sponsorship and other external grant and fundraising opportunities are actively explored and delivered wherever possible.

Table 1

Revenue Budget Allocation	Amount
Whit Friday Brass Band Contest Prize money	£7,350
Armed Forces Day	£7,000
Remembrance support and additional road closure management and medical cover	£5,000
Tameside festive Lantern Parade	0
Tameside Town Christmas support package for trees and lights	£18,000
Total revenue allocation	£37,350

7. RISK

- 7.1 Outdoor Events can and do pose significant organisational and technical challenges due to their location, occasionally unkind weather conditions and large crowd numbers often involving a high level of children. If an event is not properly organised and managed due in part to a lack of experience and expertise then there is a risk to public safety and ultimately the reputation of the Council should an accident or incident occur.
- 7.2 In order to protect the public and for the safe management of an event, only experienced event officers will manage the events and support community organisers with advice. In addition to this the Council operates an Event Notification process whereby organisers Risk Assessments and Event Management plans are carefully considered by appropriate Council staff.
- 7.3 There is a risk that a number of Town Christmas organising groups will not be able to raise the required funding to stage their choice of an event. In order to mitigate the risk the Council will work with the event organisers to support them to deliver their events within their budgets.
- 7.4 There is an increased focus and awareness of the need for public Tameside events to run safely. For this to happen the Council needs to put extra measures in place to safeguard the public whilst they are parading or taking part in Christmas events. In order for these events to be delivered safely additional funding is required to support both the community organised Remembrance Services and Parades and the borough's Town Christmas switch on events or there is a real risk that these events may be cancelled due to safety concerns.
- 7.5 For the Civic Events programme to be delivered as proposed by the Events Panel it does require that the Arts and Engagement Team successfully raises significant sponsorship to deliver the events safely and to an expected high quality. There is an expectation within the approved budget for 24/25 that £0.037m of sponsorship income is generated and failure to reach these levels of funding will jeopardise key civic events such as Town Christmas Switch On events, Whit Friday Brass Band Contests, Armed Forces Day and Remembrance Service and Parades.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 As set out at the front of the report.