

Agenda Item No: 8 **Report No:** 101/13
Report Title: Chair of Council's Business Report
Report To: Scrutiny Committee **Date:** 27 June 2013
Ward(s) Affected: All
Report By: Corporate Head – Legal and Democratic Services
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Purpose of Report:

To consider (a) the outgoing Chair's civic programme and (b) the civic programme for the forthcoming year and budget provision.

Officers Recommendation(s):

- 1 To note the Report.

Information

- 1 The role of the Chair is as detailed in the Constitution:

- To focus his/her activities on the communities of the District (including communities of interest, as well as geographical ones) and, by focusing on the Council's priorities, strengthen links between those communities and the Council.
- To act as an enabler and ambassador by arranging meetings between the Council and other parties for the benefit of the District.
- To celebrate those people or groups in the District who do extraordinary things to help others in the community, and to recognise those whose everyday lives are a challenge but who succeed in spite of their difficulties.
- To celebrate successes of partners involved in major projects with the Council, particularly projects steered by the voluntary sector.
- To encourage activities that 'recognise' and support staff (e.g. the annual garden party).

- 2 The role of Consort was reintroduced this year.

During the year 2012/1213, 132 engagements were carried out by the Chair and Vice-Chair, excluding Council meetings. It is important to note that it is not the volume of engagements that a Chair attends or hosts during their year of

office but the quality of the engagements in terms of serving the local community. This was a busy year that included national events such as HM the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, the London 2012 Olympic Torch Relay and the 70th Anniversary of the Dieppe Raid. The Chair and Consort visited many schools across the District as part of HM the Queen's Diamond Jubilee activities and 1500 portraits were submitted from local schools and exhibited at Lewes Town Hall.

Lewes District Council and Lewes Town Council were awarded second prize in the Civic Office of the Year awards based on 'quality and innovation', 'value for money' and 'promotion of the Chair/Mayor'. The awards are organised by the National Association of Civic Officers (NACO) that represents civic officers throughout the UK.

The application was submitted for the two events that Lewes District Council and Lewes Town Council organised in partnership; HM the Queen's Diamond Jubilee event and the event for the London 2012 Olympic Torch Relay as the flame came through Lewes District.

The focus for Councillor Tony Nicholson as Chair was to support communities across the District. During the year 2012/13 the Chair, assisted by the Vice-Chair, met with, supported and offered hospitality to a diverse range of people.

One of the first events hosted by the Chair in partnership with the Mayor of Lewes was HM the Queen's Diamond Jubilee exhibition and strawberry tea. Youth organisations, senior citizens, school teachers and pupils from across the District attended either the strawberry tea or the exhibition, which remained open for the Jubilee weekend.

The Chair hosted an Olympic Torch Relay event at Lewes House that included school children, local people associated with sports, and representatives from business and organisations connected to Lewes District. The winner of the 'Celebrating in 2012' banner competition attended the event and was presented with a prize. The Chair also hosted an event in partnership with the Mayor of Lewes to thank all the volunteers who had helped make the torch relay a safe event by acting as stewards.

The Chair hosted and attended events as diverse as AGMs, art exhibitions, award ceremonies, commemorative and remembrance ceremonies, opening of new buildings, welcoming visitors from China and Japan, and visiting special needs schools. The year was completed with an 'Unsung Heroes' event inviting volunteers working in different spheres of the community.

11% of the Chair's engagements took place outside the boundaries of the District and included the Chattri memorial ceremony, an event hosted in aid of Martlets hospice and an art exhibition at Blind Veterans UK.

Wherever possible, local caterers and/or suppliers of organic produce and fair trade are used for events hosted by the Chair and Consort.

3 Year 2013/14

The focus for Councillor Michael Chartier's year as Chair will be supporting staff and communities across the District. The detailed programme for the year has still to be determined. The Chair will attend the raid on Dieppe commemoration in Newhaven and Dieppe and the following events will take place:

- Flag raising at Newhaven Fort and Lewes House to mark British Armed Forces Day on 29 June 2013.
- Launch Heritage Open Days.
- Inauguration event at the newly refurbished offices.
- Staff and partnership organisations summer party in August 2013.
- Bonfire night celebrations.
- Holocaust Memorial Day in January 2014.
- 750th anniversary of the Battle of Lewes.
- Mark the beginning of WWI.
- 2014 commemorations of D-Day.

4 Financial Appraisal

The total budget available to Councillor Nicholson as Chair of the Council in the municipal year 2012/13 was £16,255.34. Total expenditure incurred to date is £9,145.22. In a year of financial constraints, efforts were made to reduce expenditure by pooling resources, exemplified in the partnership work with Lewes Town Council.

The total budget available to Councillor Chartier in the municipal year 2013/14 will be £16,300, which covers the period 8 May 2013 to 7 May 2014. The figure includes the Chair's monthly allowance.

5 Environmental Implications

There are no environmental implications arising from this Report.

6 Risk Management Implications

There are no risk management implications arising from this Report.

7 Equality Implications

I have completed the initial Equality Impact Assessment screening exercise and have identified no negative impacts arising from this Report. Therefore, a full Equality Impact Assessment is not required.

8 Background Papers

None

9 Appendix

Chair's engagements for 2012/13