

Agenda Item No: 8 **Report No:** 118/17
Report Title: Chair of the Council's Civic Programme
Report To: Scrutiny Committee **Date:** 14 September 2017
Report By: Catherine Knight, Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services
Contact Officer(s)-
Name(s): Caroline Hanlon
Post Title(s): Civic and Member Services Officer
E-mail(s): caroline.hanlon@lewes.gov.uk
Tel No(s): 01273 085030

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 of the Council is as detailed in the Constitution:
 - To Chair Council Meetings.
 - 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.
- 2 During the year 2016/17, 79 engagements were carried out by the Chair (Councillor Nigel Enever) and Vice-Chair (Councillor Stephen Gauntlett), excluding Council meetings. It is worth noting that it is not the volume of

engagements that a Chair manages to attend or host during their year of office but the 'quality' of the engagements in terms of the local community that is important.

A 'quality' engagement is one which is in support of the Council's priorities and which takes place within the District. If the Chair is invited to attend an event hosted by a Mayor/Chairman of a neighbouring authority, unless the event is something that will enhance or support this Council's priorities and those of its residents, then the Chair is advised not to accept in an official capacity. He/she can of course attend if they wish but attendance is then financed by the Chair themselves.

- 2.1 One of the first events attended by the Chair was a special service of thanksgiving at Chichester Cathedral to celebrate the 90th birthday of Her Majesty The Queen. The event was hosted by the Lord-Lieutenants of East and West Sussex, and the Dean and Chapter of Chichester Cathedral.
- 2.2 The Chair's theme of office for 2016-17 was 'Supporting arts and heritage in the District'. Councillor Enever supported Artwave 2016 (held 20 August – 4 September 2016), attended several of the artists' studios to meet the artists and view their work, hosted the Artwave Awards at Lewes House on 9 September and presented an award. He also visited the Artwave Surrealist Café at Lewes House.
- 2.3 Lewes Heritage Open Days (held 8 - 11 September 2016) was once again supported by Lewes District Council, and the Chair hosted the launch event at Lewes House on 1 September and provided the welcome remarks. He also visited several of the venues and tours that were open to the public.
- 2.4 In January this year, Holocaust Memorial Day was marked by an event held at the All Saints Centre, Lewes, called 'How Can Life Go On?' The event featured stories from refugees of the past and today, and included presentations from Jenny Matthews, photographer, Gaby Weiner, author of 'Tales of Loving and Leaving', and Melanie McFadyean from the Baobab Centre for Young Survivors in Exile.
- 2.5 The event was organised by the Holocaust Memorial Day Group in association with the Lewes Group in Support of Refugees and Asylum Seekers and Lewes Amnesty International Group. It was supported by Lewes District Council, Lewes Town Council and Chalk Cliff Trust. Councillor Dr Graham Mayhew, Mayor of Lewes, provided the opening welcome address, and Councillor Enever, Chair, provided the closing remarks. Lewes District Council's Graphics Officer designed the promotional material for the event, and also for an associated exhibition entitled 'Refugees' Stories', which was well received. An exhibition related to Holocaust Memorial Day was also held in Lewes Library.
- 2.6 This was the third Holocaust Memorial event organised by the Lewes Holocaust Memorial Day Group, and the numbers of attendees, and comments received, were encouraging. A film event at the Harveys Depot Cinema is being planned for Holocaust Memorial Day in January 2018 and will again be supported by Lewes District Council.

- 2.7 One of the Chair's last events of the year was 'Unsung Heroes' held at Lewes House on 22 April 2017. 42 local residents were nominated as Unsung Heroes by a range of people, including Councillors Enever, Saunders, Neave, Ient, O'Keeffe, and Murray. Nominees included the Kingston Action Group, who clear footpaths and litter in Kingston, Emily Sanders who works with young people with Autism and Sally Cronk from the Raystede Centre for Animal Welfare. Nominees received lunch in the gardens of Lewes House and were entertained by students of the East Sussex Music Service. They were also presented with a certificate by the Chair and his Consort. Civic guests included the Mayor of Lewes, the Mayor of Newhaven, the Deputy Mayor of Seaford, the Deputy Mayor of Peacehaven, and the Chair of East Sussex County Council. The event was the fourth of its kind to be hosted by the Chair of Lewes District Council.
- 2.8 The Chair also attended several performances by local theatre and music groups, including the East Sussex Music Service, Rotary Club of Lewes, Seaford Musical Theatre, the Lewes Area Music Centre, LOS Musical Theatre and East Sussex Youth Orchestra.
- 2.9 The Chair had the honour of being presented to HRH The Princess Royal, Patron of the Restorative Justice Council, along with other dignitaries including the High Sheriff, at a celebration of the work of the Sussex Restorative Justice Partnership. The event was hosted by Katy Bourne, Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner, and was held at her office on 23 February 2017.
- 2.10 In 2016-17, the Chair hosted and attended events as diverse as AGMs, award ceremonies, charity fundraising events, festivals, film screenings, commemorative and remembrance ceremonies, exhibitions and opening ceremonies.
- 2.11 23% of the Chair's engagements took place outside the boundaries of the District, all of which were in support of Council's initiatives and included the Brighton University winter graduation ceremonies at the Brighton Centre, the Chair of East Sussex County Council's Summer Reception in Battle, the Sussex 100 Centenary Celebration of Cub Scouting in Ardingly, and the East Sussex Music Service Secondary Schools' Prom at the Eastbourne Winter Garden.
- 2.12 Wherever possible local caterers and/or suppliers of organic produce and fair trade were used for each event.
- 2.13 At the end of his term of office, Councillor Enever made donations to Children With Cancer, LOS Musical Theatre, Seaford Musical Theatre and Peacehaven Players.

3 Year 2017/18

Councillor Stephen Gauntlett's theme of office for 2017-18 is 'to encourage and affirm wildlife conservation throughout the District, particularly with young people.'

It is not possible at this time to set out a detailed programme for the whole year; this has still to be determined. The following events will take place/or have taken place:

- The 75th Anniversary of the Dieppe Raid Commemorations, 18-20 August 2017.
- The launch of the Heritage Open Days weekend, 31 August 2017.
- The annual bonfire night celebrations at Lewes House, 4 November 2017 (as Bonfire falls on a Sunday this year, the event will take place on the Saturday).
- A film festival to mark Holocaust Memorial Day around 27 January 2018.
- An Unsung Heroes event in April 2018.

4 Financial Appraisal

The total budget available to Councillor Enever as Chair of the Council in the municipal year 2015/16 was £10,000. Total expenditure incurred was £10,000.11. The total budget currently available to Councillor Gauntlett in the municipal year 2017/18 will be £10,000, which covers the period May 2017 to May 2018.

5 Legal Implications

There are no legal implications arising from this Report.

6 Risk Management Implications

There are no risk management implications arising from this Report.

7 Equality Screening

This is a routine, procedural Report with no potential for negative impacts. Therefore, an Equality Analysis is not required.

8 Background Papers

None

9 Appendix

A list of the Chair's engagements for 2016/17 is appended for information.