

AT the -
ILLUMINATIONS EVENT held at the
Council House, Walsall on
Thursday 1 March 2007 at 6.00 p.m.

PRESENT

Councillor Towe (Chair)
Councillor Burley
Councillor Beeley
Councillor Beilby
Councillor Bott
Councillor Sanders
Councillor K.Phillips
Councillor Harris
Councillor Young
Councillor Sanders (Arboretum Champion)
Councillor Harrison (Portfolio Holder)

ALSO PRESENT

Mr. W.J. Jones WJ Jones & Sons Amusements
Mrs. S. Jones WJ Jones & Sons Amusements
Mr. C. Machin Arboretum users group
Mr. C.M.Venables
Mr. P.Gooch Arboretum Cafe
Mr. W.Corbeth Contractor
Ms. P. Jones Black Country Consortium
Ms. A-M Pope Black Country Arts Partnership
Mr. A. Moulton Disability Forum
PC S. Lees West Midlands Police
Sgt P. Garret West Midlands Police
Mr. T.Kemshall Town Centre Board
Mr. A Rainsford

OFFICERS PRESENT

Tim Challans Assistant Director for Leisure Culture
and Lifelong Learning
Graham Hood Head of Green Spaces
Mike Parrott Group Co-ordinator Arts & Development
Antonia Pompa Promotions & Events Manager
Louise Oakley Arts & Events Marketing Co-ordinator
Jo Digger Collections Curator
Angela Highman Road Safety Unit
Ruth Bull Events
Julie Simmonds Events
Simon Tranter Regeneration Manager - Environment
Helen Kinder Town Centre Management
Dan Slee Press Office
Stuart Bentley Scrutiny Officer

Councillor Towe welcomed everyone to the event and gave an overview of how the evening would progress before outlining the key decisions that had already been made regarding:

- The opening date of 19 October (with a press night on 16 October) and closing date of 2 December.
- Pricing policy, which represents a freeze at 2006 prices but with better family deals.

Councillor Towe then introduced: Graham Hood (Head of Greenspaces), who gave the meeting an update on progress towards the Arboretum Lottery Bid; Tony Kemshall (The Town Centre Management Board) who spoke about the aspirations of the Town Centre Management board with respects to enhancing the town centre offer and the links to the Illuminations; Simon Tranter (Regeneration) who suggested possible improvements to the physical environment that could link the town to the Arboretum; and Louise Oakley who gave an overview of the current marketing position for the 2007 event.

Councillor Towe then thanked the speakers and reminded the group of the Cabinet decision made in December 2006 before introducing the group to the 4 key areas identified in the consultation document. He then asked the meeting to form the 4 “task” groups, which would report back periodically to the steering group.

Following the break-out session to form the groups, Councillor Towe then confirmed the membership of the steering group and thanked everyone for their attendance.

AGREED

That the “**Investment**” **Task Group** would be lead by Mike Parrott to address the objective:

- Recognition that the investment required to develop the event into a modern visitor experience needs to be secured.

Key lines of enquiry

- Identification of possible funding streams
- Research into possible partnership proposals
- Identification of sponsorship / partnership opportunities
- How to increase the commercial activity in the event
- Steer development of 5 year funding strategy

The membership being:

- Mike Parrott (Lead)
- Mr. A Rainsford
- Mr. A Mault
- Mr. W. Jones
- Mrs. P. Jones
- Accessibility Representative (TBA)

That the “**Marketing**” **Task Group** would be lead by Louise Oakley to address the objective:

- That the status of the Illuminations be enhanced, as one of the regions most popular visitor attractions, by growing local and regional visitor numbers year-on-year.

Key lines of enquiry

- Development of Group / Audience packages
- Relationship with the press / media
- The Walsall Illuminations brand and how it is advertised
- Target setting and monitoring

The membership being:

- Louise Oakley (Lead)
- Mr W. Jones
- Mrs. P. Jones
- Mrs. P. Humphries
- Dan Slee
- Accessibility Representative (TBA)

That the “**Links**” **Task Group** would be lead by Tim Challans to address the objective:

- That the economic impact of the Walsall Illuminations be doubled by making much stronger links between the Arboretum and the town and its traders and attracting increasing numbers of visitors from outside the town. However, it was stated that any developed link with the town should not be detrimental to the core offer within the Arboretum.

Key lines of enquiry

- The development of partnership working with the key stakeholders
- Input into the development of the Civic Quarter
- Development of cross-over / linking events

The membership being:

- Tim Challans (Lead)
- Simon Tranter
- Mr. T.Kemshall
- Ms. P. Jones
- Ms. A-M Pope
- Accessibility Representative (TBA)

That the “**Development**” **Task Group** would be lead by Antonia Pompa to address the objective:

- The development of the Illuminations into an event that reflects not only the history and culture of Walsall in its districts, but also presents a dynamic and progressive image of the borough.

Key lines of enquiry

- Development of a picture of the target audience
- Possible new attractions and diversification of the offer
- Development of an offer that is educational and reflects local culture.

The membership being:

- Antonia Pompa (Lead)
- Ms A.M.Pope
- Mr. M. Harris
- Mr. P. Gooch
- Mr. W. Jones Jr
- Ms A Highman
- Accessibility Representative (TBA)

That the **Membership of the Steering Group** be confirmed as:

The 9 Members of the Neighbourhoods Scrutiny and Performance Panel
 The Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Culture & Lifelong Learning
 The Arboretum Champion
 1 Member of the Arboretum Users Group
 2 Traders
 2 Members of the Investment Task Group (Lead + 1)
 2 Members of the Marketing Task Group (Lead + 1)
 2 Members of the Link Task Group (Lead + 1)
 2 Members of the Development Task Group (Lead + 1)
 1 Accessibility Representative.

Their being no other business the meeting terminated at 7.45 p.m.