

AGENDA ITEM 10c

NOTES OF THE GOOSE FAIR WASH UP MEETING held in the Council Chamber, Drake Road, Tavistock on **Thursday 29th February 2024** at **10.30am**

PRESENT

- Wayne Southall (Chairman), Tavistock Town Council, General Manager
- Rebecca Rowe, Tavistock Town Council, Works Manager
- Carl Hearn, Tavistock Town Council, Town Clerk
- Lesley Reeves, Tavistock Town Council Community and Compliance Officer
- Laura Harley, Tavistock Town Council Support Officer (General Manager)
- Graham Bailey, Stagecoach
- Dave Williams, DSFRS
- Thom Shiell, DSFRS
- Cllr Pete Squire, Tavistock Town Council
- Cllr Barry Smith, Tavistock Town Council
- Richard Jones, Tavistock Lions
- John Dawson, Tavistock Lions
- Robert Kefford, Showmen's Guild
- Charles Farrell, Showmen's Guild

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- Alan Jenkins - Showmen's Guild
- Harry Leech – Devon and Cornwall Police
- Richard Pryce -Devon County Council
- Tom Pearce – Tamar Coaches
- Tim Beckett – SWAST
- Cllr Julu Irvine -Tavistock Town Council

2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

a) Minutes from 21st September 2023.

The Minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting.

b) Matters arising

There were no matters for consideration.

3. FEEDBACK ON THE 2023 GOOSE FAIR

The General Manager asked those present to provide feedback on the 2023 Goose Fair that had taken place on 11th October 2023.

Park & Ride – the representative from the Tavistock Lions stated the park and ride had worked well at Yelverton and Whitchurch Down however there were still issues with the traffic management at the Gulworthy site and a review of the signage would be helpful. It was also noted that there were some access issues into the Yelverton site but this would be picked up by the Lions to resolve. All the bus services worked well and the weather had not been a problem. The Lions confirmed that they would support the 2024 event by managing all three sites again this year.

The representative from Stagecoach reported that the bus services had gone well from Yelverton and Whitchurch Down (the routes Stagecoach cover). When it had been busy at lunchtime they were able to find another driver to run more services to alleviate pressure. During the day and when the weather

was dry Stagecoach were able to run an open top bus which was well received by visitors and is something they will consider for 2024. The General Manager stated he hoped Stagecoach would be able to proceed with the same arrangements for 2024 and looked forward to receiving their quotation.

Fire Service – the representative from the fire service stated that there were a couple of minor issues. Once again, this year there had been encroachment on to the entrance to the Bedford Hotel car park. There was also a lack of understanding by some stall holders regarding firefighting equipment, particularly with the use of wet chemical extinguishers in catering units. It was agreed to pass on guidance documents to the Town Council so that the information could be distributed to the stallholders. In addition, it was noted TTC would review the terms of trading to ensure complete clarity regarding health and safety. The drive through of the site had been satisfactory and from the Fire Services' perspective there were no material changes to be made for 2024.

The Showmens Guild – the representative from the Showmens Guild noted the revised layout on Bedford Square had worked well, affording more space around the respective rides. There was some concern regarding the 9pm closure (previous years approx. 10pm) as it was felt that there were still a number of pedestrians in the area enjoying the rides and visiting the catering units.

The Works Manager stated that from the point of view of the Town Council, the 9pm closure had worked well as there were less issues with stallholders trying to pack down and leave early. The crowds had dispersed quite quickly (possibly due to the rain that started at about 8.30pm) but there were some issues at the Drake's Statue end of Plymouth Road where traders were still selling food. It was noted there are challenges in achieving the right balance for all involved. In addition, there were a couple of incidents once again at the event with stallholders being verbally abusive and aggressive to staff. Further advice to traders regarding safe vehicle movements and behaviour would be issued.

4. REPORT FROM WORKS MANAGER

It was noted that the footfall was slightly down in 2023 (based on Park & Ride figures).

With regard to Devon County Council, there had been issues regarding parking enforcement as a number of residents (particularly in Chapel Street) had received parking fines. This matter, together with the issue of road closures generally, was to be explored in a separate meeting with Devon County Council. A couple of roads – for instance Watts Road – had been removed from the parking restrictions in 2023 with no reported problems.

The Town Council has been disappointed with the communications provided by Raynet in 2023 with particular regard to the radio infrastructure. Although they had provided a number of stewards, the service was not as commissioned. The Works Manager will explore options for 2024.

There was some concern about both staff and public safety at the event and it was intended to review the security with an intention to employ more SIA (Security Industry Authority) Licensed contractors. There was also concern

about staff lone working especially at the end of the event. In 2023, this was not helped by being 3 staff members short.

With regard to Market Road, whilst the Works Manager reported concerns pertaining to occupying Market Road, in the end approx. 160ft of pitches were let. In total only a 5ft and 10ft were not let which equated to approx. £177.

The Works Manager agreed that the Park & Ride was well organised and in response to the concerns raised by the Lions reference Gulworthy, advised additional signage had been introduced for 2023, however as the slip road is well known by locals, no matter the number of signs she suspects motorists will continue to use it

5. COMMENT FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

The General Manager was hoping to hold an Emergency Planning meeting similar to the one held at West Devon Borough Council in September 2023. This could be held in place of one of the operational meetings prior to Goose Fair.

The General Manager and Works Manager had held a Teams meeting with Officers from West Devon Borough Council to review the cleaning contract. It was agreed that communications between the two authorities had improved and that the meeting had been positive. TTC are awaiting a quotation for this year's event.

The General Manager reported that the management team intended to hold the fees and charges for Goose Fair at the 2023 level (subject to agreement by Council) in a bid to retain traders following the challenges the Works Manager had in securing stallholders post COVID. It was intended to ask external providers to look favourably on the event with a view to keeping costs as close to their quotations from 2023.

It was noted that the Showmens Guild had one more year of the current agreement with WDBC to use the Bus Station and Bedford Car Park for the Fairground.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Showmens Guild representative stated the addition of security staff was a positive intervention.

The Tavistock Lions stated that their insurance company was becoming concerned about insuring them for events run by third party organisations. It was agreed the Lions would have a separate meeting with the Town Clerk.

The Showmens Guild was pleased that the Town Council was intending to hold the fees at 2023 rates. (It was noted that this would be confirmed in April.)

CLlr Smith stated that he had received good feedback from residents regarding the 2023 Goose Fair. All had enjoyed the event and had no concerns about the 9pm finish.

The Works Manager stated that it was intended to engage with the Cattle Market in the hopes that it would be open for the 2024 event.

The meeting finished at 11.10am.