

NLPC/Bonfire

14 Nov 18

Parish Councillors

## **POST EVENT REPORT - BONFIRE NIGHT 2018**

Reference:

- A. Administrative Instruction dated 16<sup>th</sup> Aug 18
- B. Risk assessment dated 17<sup>th</sup> Sep 18

### **AIM**

1. The aim of this report is to identify the lessons learnt from the Bonfire Night activities on 5th Nov 17.

### **BACKGROUND**

2. Between Jul and Nov 18 the Bonfire Working Group: Cllrs Cade /Burrows /Cummings reviewed the planning of the event. The Group reviewed the 2015 and 2016 Review Reports and the 2017 post event report. In August 18 the Group published a detailed draft Administrative Instruction (Reference A) and a full Risk Assessment / Site Plan and Staffing Lists. These were formally reviewed by the Parish Council at its meeting on 22nd October .

### **OVERVIEW – THE EVENT**

3. The annual Bonfire Night event was held on Mon 5th Nov 18 on the Oval. It is estimated that some **600 people** may have been in attendance. On 5th Nov the weather was ideal, with little wind and no potential threat of rain. The weather was monitored continuously in the period leading up to the event. By 3pm it was possible to confirm that it was safe to hold the event and to identify the most appropriate area for the launch of fireworks. The bonfire was lit at about 6.10pm and the display commenced at 6.35pm and was complete by 7.15pm.

### **SAFETY**

4. There were no reported safety incidents. As recommended in 2016 the barrier adjacent to Butt Lane was moved a further 5 metres away from the fire (35m) and there was no requirement to move the crowd at any point.
5. Following the event, care was taken to ensure that no 'used' fireworks were placed on the embers of the fire and all 'used' fireworks were safely disposed of by Cllr Burrows.

### **PREPARATION**

6. Police and Fire Services were notified 5 weeks prior to the event. As in 2017 a detailed Risk Plan (Reference B) was implemented.

7. As in previous years, Cllr Cade purchased the fireworks in advance of the event and stored them in a locked garage. The storage arrangements were entirely satisfactory. During the event, the fireworks were held in a secure container (Van) and prepared for firing by a 2 x nominated individuals (Cade / Burrows) with 2 x assistants.

8. The safety zone was bounded by a picket fence, and hazard tape and proved to be both secure and resilient. No spectators were allowed in the area to the North of the bonfire bounded by Edith Weston Road and the established, marked safety zone 35m from the fire. No 'live' elements of fireworks fell outside the safety zone.

## **INSURANCE**

9. Under the terms of the Parish Council's new insurance policy we ensured that:

- the bonfire would not be lit within 12 metres of any road, railway, building, structure, overhead cable, woodland bracken or similar combustible material;
- the bonfire or firework display areas will be roped off to provide a minimum distance between the display and spectators of 15 metres;
- authorised adults only will enter the roped off area to tend the bonfire or to light fireworks;
- a responsible adult will be in direct charge of safety matters at all times;
- fireworks will be kept in a metal container fitted with a lid;
- no petrol or other accelerant will be used for the purpose of lighting or maintaining the bonfire;
- any flammable liquid or material or empty containers will be removed from the area of the bonfire or firework display.

10. Having reviewed the requirement noted above, the Bonfire Working Group were content that the required warranty could be given.

## **BONFIRE**

11. The bonfire was made entirely of wooden pallets – with the exception of straw for lighting. Only some fallen branches from Oval Trees were added to the fire itself by Cllr Cade. A small curtain sided non-articulated truck of pallets was provided which created a fire some 5m x 5m x 2.5m – this was entirely appropriate for the event. The fire was built with a broad base, which ensured no risk of collapse. The fire was checked in advance of lighting for people/animals in line with HSE recommendations. It was lit with a blowtorch using suitable kindling materials. The fire caught immediately and spread throughout the base evenly.

12. The pallets burned very cleanly, resulting in little if any burning debris, beyond the inevitable column of fine embers. The fire burnt rapidly and provided an excellent spectacle.

## **FIREWORKS**

13. Again this year, in line with previous recommendations, no rockets were included in the display. The range of fireworks available is limited within the explosive 'category 3' products that we are able to purchase for the display. The fireworks provided an excellent display which lasted for some 40 minutes –the pace of the display was excellent with 2 x Teams of loader/firer/remover. Sufficient portfires were available for lighting fireworks. There were no safety incidents reported relating to the lighting of fireworks.

## **LIGHTING**

14. As in 2016 and 2017, the Working Group, together with Bob Rennard, created a DiY tower using a trailer and a scaffolding tower. Together with a number of 'worklights' provided by Working Group members sufficient lighting was available. A generator was provided by Bob Rennard - this was ideal for the job. Additional lighting was provided by Bob Rennard. The BBQ area was lit by Cricket Club Committee members. It should be noted that Bob Rennard may not be available next year and consideration should be given as to how to replicate the lighting system.

## **SOUND**

15. A PA System was kindly loaned for the event at no cost Use of a PA system is strongly recommended for future events.

## **FIRST AID**

16. Jonnie Davies provided qualified first aid support including Defib facilities. There were no minor injuries. First Aid cover needs to be reviewed for next year when Mr Davies might not be available

## **REFRESHMENTS**

17. As agreed by the Parish Council the Cricket Club managed the BBQ and hot drink arrangements for the event. An enthusiastic team of Volunteers provided first class refreshments. Jason Allen in The Fox kindly arranged for all food to be pre-cooked and delivered to site. The Cricket Club is believed to have made a profit of circa £850, which will be used to offset the costs of running the Club in 2019.

## **CLEAR UP**

18. A small team of Volunteers including Working Group members cleared the area completely by 1100hrs the following day. As usual, the Oval Committee will now need to address the issue of the reinstatement of a large area of burnt grass. Sufficient volunteers were available to complete the clear up.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

19. Sufficient volunteers were available to support the event, however we inevitably rely on a small pool of individuals year on year and we need to identify 'new blood'. Appropriate hi-vis jackets and communications were provided to Stewards and bucket collectors. A list of 2018 volunteers is available on request.

20. 10 x Bucket Collectors were well organised by Tim Smith and located at all key access points. They were very effective in attractive substantial donations.

## **FINANCIAL CONTROL**

21. A nominated individual together with Parish Clerk had been identified to manage the bucket collection cash, however in the event, arrangements changed at the last minute. It is recommended that in future years this responsibility should lie with the Parish Clerk.

## **FINANCE**

21. Following the event the Parish Clerk circulated a provisional financial statement in summary:

Income – Bucket Collections	£1630.80	
Net Income – Gluwein Sales	£399.50	
Total Income:	£2029.50	
Expenditure – Fireworks	£1,000.00	
Expenditure – Safety Tape	£33.63	
Total Expenditure	£1033.63	
Total Net Profit:	£996.67	(Attendance Circa 600)
<i>(Profit 17/18 (Incl BBQ)</i>	<i>£1566</i>	<i>(Attendance Circa 900)</i>

Note: Though booked, no traders attended the event in 2018.

## **SUMMARY**

22. A safe and very well organised event. However, it does require considerable planning and resources in terms of staffing, and management. This remains a 'high-risk' event which needs careful supervision and management. If it is to be repeated, I recommend that the PC nominate a Bonfire Working Group to review the event in Jun 19 including a detailed analysis of the Risk Assessment and the early identification of volunteers. The PC should formally review all aspects of the event in Sep 19.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

23. The following recommendation are made regarding safety:

- Fireworks Working Group to start work on consideration of 2019 Proposals in Jun19.
- Size of bonfire should be maintained at no more than  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a 40' Foot vehicle load.
- Identification of suitable First Aid cover should be an early priority
- Review of lighting provision needs to be a priority.

PBG CUMMINGS  
Chair NLPC