

Committee: FULL COUNCIL

Date: 19 September 2023

Title: Bonfire and Fireworks 2023

Purpose of Report

For Members to consider a request received from ISCL for the annual bonfire and fireworks display.

Recommendation:

Members **Resolve** to give permission for a bonfire and firework display in accordance with the bonfire being at the location agreed by Members. Also to close off the southern entrance of Britten's Field between Britten's Field and Herne Hill in order to allow the event to proceed safely.

Report:

1. A request has been received from Ilminster Sports Club Limited to hold their annual event on Sunday 5 November 2023.
2. A location plan has been sent through **(Appendix 19A)** but due to confusion over the planned location and its apparent nearness to the cricket wicket further information was requested from both ISCL and the grounds team.
3. As a result a further plan is included with the report which shows a more accurate location for the bonfire. **(Appendix 19B)**. The square in red is the initial location that was submitted to the Council. The actual location is by the square marked 2023 and the rectangle marked 2022 is the location of last year's bonfire.
4. It is in fact worth noting that permission last year was granted for where the bonfire is to be held this year even though it was held in the other position.
5. These inaccuracies do not assist officers in preparing information to be brought to Members and are the reason why we ask all organisations to provide us with accurate information.
6. ISCL have indicated that if permission is given, they will immediately provide the required £500 deposit for use of the recreation ground. They have already submitted a risk assessment for the event.

7. There was a deposit paid last year and following an inspection of the area by the Grounds Team this was refunded with no funds having to be held back. The grounds team will recommend when the area has reached an acceptable standard for a recreation ground and it is at this point that the deposit is refunded. The decision is for the people responsible for the recreation grounds and should sit with them.
8. ISCL have their own waste contract and have assured officers that plenty of bins will be available and that litter picking will be carried out after the event as well as the following morning. It may also be possible that we can assist by providing a couple of bins to help. The grounds team will be able to confirm this closer to the event.
9. A tractor and trailer will be used to bring material for the event onto site as well as possibly vehicles delivering the fireworks. The tractor will also be used to assist with marshalling the event.
10. There is a request that the footpath at the top of Britten's Field and Herne Hill be closed off from 16-00 hrs on Sunday 5 November to allow for the setting up of the fireworks and bonfire. This is an eminently sensible precaution and if the event is given the go ahead should be authorised as well.
11. They have asked that signs be put up ahead of the event notifying people of a closure. They should be responsible for this and promoting this information as widely as possible. We will also put it out on the council website and social media pages to assist.
12. A police presence has been requested but it is unlikely that they will be able to provide anyone due to current staffing concerns. They are also loath to put security in place as they feel this sends the wrong message for a community event that is very popular. It might also be prohibitively costly to enact.
13. They would like to highlight that they have a local business wanting to donate free tickets to children who go to school in Ilminster and Neroche to highlight how well received the event is.
14. Members are being asked to **Resolve** to give permission for a bonfire and firework display in accordance with the bonfire being at the location agreed by Members. Also to close off the southern entrance of Britten's Field between Britten's Field and Herne Hill in order to allow the event to proceed safely.

Mark Tredwin
Town Clerk
September 2023