

Agenda item number: 6

Date of meeting: 10th December 2018

THATCHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Events Committee

Report by: Jennie Currie

Job Title: Community & Civic Manager

Subject: Review of the Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day Parade 2018

1 Purpose of Report

To provide details of the 2018 Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day Parade organised by the Town Council which took place on 11th November 2018.

2 Background of Event

In September 1981 the Town Council was approached by The Thatcham Branch of the Royal British Legion to take over responsibility for organising the annual Remembrance Sunday Parade. The Town Council agreed and since then has taken the lead on the event whilst working closely with The Thatcham Branch of the Royal British Legion, the Royal School of Military Survey and parade participants.

3 Report on Event

Unusually the 2018 Remembrance Sunday Parade fell on the same day as Armistice Day plus it was the centenary of the end of WW1. With so much national press coverage of the significance of the year more people than ever before attended our Parade and Service. It is estimated that 4,000 people were in the crowd and 650 were in the parade.

The Thatcham Memorial Hall and Playing Fields Foundation had recently installed a domestic power supply to the War Memorial garden which was utilised for the PA system but this was ineffective for the size of the crowd.

On 10th November Thatcham Memorial Hall and Playing Fields Foundation organised for additional names from WW1 to be unveiled on the War Memorial and in recognition of this their names were read out during the service at the War Memorial.

4 Finances

Total for cost centre:

| | 2018 | 2018/19 Budget |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Total income | 991* | 0 |
| Total expenditure[†] | 7,413 | 4,060 |
| Net balance | 6,422 | 4,060 |

Total for Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day Parade:

| | 2018 | 2018/19 Budget |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Total income | 0 | 0 |
| Total expenditure[†] | 4,289 | 3,510 |
| Net balance | 4,289 | 3,510 |

[†] Total expenditure excludes salary reallocation.

A detailed budget report is included under item 10.

*The £991 income is a grant received from Greenham Trust Ltd towards WW1 events.

5 Publicity

Press releases were issued and posters displayed on the Town's noticeboards. The event was promoted via social media and on the Town Council's website. Local schools were emailed about the event.

6 Evaluation

Please refer to following page for public feedback. The questions asked were:

Where did you travel from?

How did you travel to the Parade?

Did you watch the Parade before walking to the War Memorial?

At the War Memorial, where did you stand?

At the War Memorial, how well could you hear the announcements on the PA system?

At the War Memorial, were you offered a printed order of service?

Did you follow the Parade to the church?

Did you go into the church for the service?

Other comments

The main issues that were raised are: the lack of an effective PA system; the crowd not joining in but talking amongst themselves, which presumably would improve if they could hear; crowding on the parade ground, partly caused my members of the public on the parade ground; the parade arriving at the parade ground too early.

The clerk is investigating hiring a custom designed PA system for the event and looking to rearrange the parade ground. The proposed new layout would include turning the parade 90 degrees so that the parade faces to the east with those who speak during the service standing on a raised platform at the eastern edge of the parade ground adjacent to Brownsfield Road. This layout would also allow the public to stand at the northern end of the parade ground and on Brownsfield Road whilst being able to see and hear more of the service.

Where did you travel from?

| | |
|--|----|
| Thatcham RG18 | 25 |
| Thatcham RG19 | 37 |
| Thatcham other/unknown postcode | 1 |
| Neighbouring parish - Newbury, Cold Ash, Bucklebury, Brimpton, Greenham, Midgham, Ashford Hill with Headley | 1 |
| Other area | 1 |

How did you travel to the Parade?

| | |
|--|----|
| on foot | 45 |
| by bicycle | 0 |
| in a private vehicle (car, van, motorbike, etc.) | 21 |
| by public transport (bus, taxi) | 0 |

Did you watch the Parade before walking to the War Memorial?

| | |
|---|----|
| No, I went straight to the War Memorial | 22 |
| Yes, I stood in the Kingsland Centre car park | 0 |
| Yes, I stood in The Broadway | 11 |
| Yes, I stood in the High Street | 7 |
| Yes, I stood on the A4 | 2 |
| No, I was in the Parade | 24 |

At the War Memorial, where did you stand?

| | |
|--|----|
| On Brownsfield Road (between the parade ground and the health centre) | 7 |
| On the pavement near the War Memorial | 8 |
| On the A4 in line with the War Memorial | 6 |
| On the pavement on the opposite side of the A4 | 5 |
| On the A4 near the bus stop outside the health centre or near Green Lane | 5 |
| On the Parade Ground (Memorial Hall car park) - as part of the parade | 27 |
| On the Parade Ground (Memorial Hall car park) - as a spectator | 8 |

At the War Memorial, how well could you hear the announcements on the PA system?

| | |
|----------------------|----|
| 1 star Not at all | 20 |
| 2 stars | 21 |
| 3 stars | 14 |
| 4 stars Very clearly | 11 |

At the War Memorial, were you offered a printed order of service?

| | |
|-----|----|
| Yes | 55 |
| No | 11 |

Did you follow the Parade to the church?

| | |
|-----|----|
| Yes | 34 |
| No | 32 |

Did you go into the church for the service?

Yes

14

No

52

Other comments

I noticed not many people joined the singing

The rainbow section needs to be sorted, squeezing through people to get to the position on the parade then coming back to position after the parade where members of the public are standing

Still too early at memorial and the public need to be restricted around the parade at memorial, also too many dogs in close proximity to parade.

As a rainbow leader it was very difficult to go back where we stand at the end due to public standing there. Maybe a barrier across to stop them moving up. I know it's difficult but we only have a short time and five units of girls and leaders it's a lot

All was done brilliantly but would like congregation to stand when the standards are paraded into the church and when they march out. Standards are sacred items and should be respected as such. Other than that well done to all for good organising

The sound really let down the great efforts all had put in here

A well organised parade, I was given service sheet at Waitrose car park and did not attend church as feeling unwell

Huge congratulations to all on parade, very proud to be associated with such an event.

Was disgusted with amount of people talking through the service. We moved to be nearer (middle of A4 by the little road next to the parade ground and still could hardly hear the loud speakers.

Could do with adding some speakers at the rear of the carpark. There's a lot of support for the day but this would make it better!

It was nice to see the youth organisations well represented alongside veterans.

Lovely service, shame that we could hear so little. Wonderful sense of community

Excellent parade - well done Thatcham Town Council

Very well organised.

Quality of the PA system was very poor

Parade and service both well organised and enjoyable

It was a lovely tribute

It was well organised and a good important community event. However it was difficult to hear-even at the very front by the memorial

Very well organised, it was a moving tribute to all of the war heroes

I feel that at the start of the service, the members of the public may be kindly reminded about noise level and behaviour. I was stood at the back of my section as I am (proudly) part of the parade. However I couldn't hear anything of the service due to members of the public talking all the time. Constantly moving across the parade ground as well as allowing children to run around. I appreciate them watching and supporting however I personally feel just a quick reminder to show a little more respect to those who are actually taking part is required. Its 1 morning a year that we pay our respects to the fallen and fighting. Surely a polite notice isn't too much? On a positive note. Parade run smoothly and was lovely to see lots of people in high-vis to ensure safety etc. Very much appreciated especially with so many young people around. Service programme is always clear and easy to follow. Many thanks for another successful remembrance day parade.

Generally very well organised event, the only glitch being the PA system which needs to be much louder. Only the people close to the memorial could hear the service, which made it difficult for most people to participate.

I was there with one of the Rainbows units. It was my first parade and on the whole it was very well run. However the delay at the start was a bit of a shame, I understand it was timed to start at 11 am but it was a stretch for the children to stand for so long with nothing happening. Perhaps the band could have filled the gap a bit. But otherwise very good.

The service was good but the sound system was not could do with it being a bit louder

Complete lack of respect from people standing in the road talking whilst service was ongoing which resulted in difficulties in hearing what was said. Disappointing to see the cars that ignored notices and still parked on High Street on the morning.

I felt the PA system let you down both on sat for the unveiling and sun for the service, I liked the change of route from the memorial to the church, and the longer road closure. Well done

I take my son (7) every year. This year was very busy and for the first part he couldn't see as we were quite far back. A lot of the older generation did allow us to move in front of them and a lovely lady let him stand right at the front near the fence. I was very much appreciated and will definitely continue to take him

Excellent service, we took our 98year old father a former Para from Walnut Close.

I actually live on the second floor in Tudor Court next to the parade ground, so we watched the majority of the service from there.

We only drove to the event because we have 3 young children, 2 were taking part in the parade. They were walking and standing for a long time that morning and we didn't expect them to walk home easily again afterwards.

The PA system was very quiet. We couldn't hear a thing. This didn't help with the noisy children around us to spend the whole time talking with the parents and running around like it was a playground! No respect shown at all by the adults & children. A good turnout by all and nice to hear the clapping as the parade marched back to church. Well done all involved.

Lovely turnout

An excellent parade well attended by the good folk of Thatcham

Thank you for organising a beautiful event.

Stood in same place as other years but couldn't hear anything

My son Charlie carried the 2nd Thatcham Cubs flag during the parade & we were so proud to be there

Some complaints from member of the public by the tennis courts not being able to hear.

I feel the girls should be allowed to wear coats

A long time waiting for the service to start at the cenotaph. The general public could be heard quite loudly whilst everyone else was waiting very quietly.

Arrangements in the church are inadequate for the safe management of groups of young children.