

## Agenda item 12 VE Day Celebrations

### Summary

To consider organising an event for the VE day celebrations

### Background

The 75th anniversary of VE day will provide the nation with an opportunity to reflect on the enormous sacrifice, courage and determination of people from all walks of life who saw us through this dark and terrifying period. To commemorate this important time there will be “VE Day 75”, a three-day international celebration that will take place from 8th May to 10th May 2020. No doubt the residents of our Parish would wish to be involved

### Legal Requirements

s.137 Local Government Act 1972 – provision of grants to voluntary organisations

s.145 Local Government Act 1972 entitles the Council to do, or arrange for the doing of, or contribute towards the expenses of the provision of an entertainment of any nature;

### Details

By the time of this item on our agenda Members have considered the financial implications to the Council of past financial management and approved a budget which, broadly, involves little in terms of additional services to our Parish. Nothing was provided for VE day celebrations in any ear marked reserves in previous years to accumulate a pot for the Council to use to take a lead on events in the village in budgets leading up to the 2019/2020 budget. No budget was approved in any event for 2019/2020.

The Reserves policy on this agenda in particular highlights the Council’s needs to work within the budget it has approved for this coming financial year if it is to become financial viable.

During our budget discussions at the last Council meeting Councillor Garret raised the prospect of investigating means of raising additional income from external sources. Central Government used to provide some grant funding to assist in keeping precepts down but that option, having been investigated, is now a non- starter. There are other ways of making our limited funds go further and one is to add some of our budget to organisations who can then, as voluntary organisations, use that towards other grants they may be able to secure. That is where our grant scheme can assist.

Under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, Parton Parish Council has discretionary powers to award grants to local groups or organisations who may wish to manage some events for the celebrations. There are some legal constraints on the use of such monies however

- Firstly the Council has to be satisfied that what they propose to do is, in the Council’s opinion, in the interests of, and will bring direct benefit to, Parton or any part of it or all or some of its residents. Any Council minute authorising this expenditure must confirm that the Council is so satisfied;

- Secondly we cannot spend, in a financial year, any more than a sum determined by a statutory formula. The funding we have in the Budget for these purposes is well below that figure

In the alternative a grant could be made under s145 of the local Government Act without the s137 constraints.

The grants scheme does recommend that the maximum grant that could be provided should be £150

### **Budget Implications**

Issues around the Budget have already been aired. As a result there is actually no budget line for any financial contribution to any celebration events around VE day otherwise than through the grants scheme. Nor is there any budget line for the Council to actually fund its own event. If the Council wishes to do more than contribute via the grant scheme to the event then we need to look at each Budget line to ascertain if there is any funding that may be used without impacting on services agreed or on necessary spending such as on the maintenance of the playground equipment. To be fair that possibility is remote.

There is a £40 saving on land registry fees having agreed not to proceed with the acquisition of the Football Field. There is a sum of £30 included in the Budget for VE day plus a further £50 for civic hospitality. If that £50 were to be used then clearly once it has gone- it has gone.

There is a sum of £1100 for grants and some of that could be used to support any voluntary groups organising village events as I say. If the Council wished to organise an event then, realistically, it would have to use some of that money thereby reducing the availability of funding for grants.

### **Risk Management Implications (if any)**

If the Council were to undertake the organising of events, at its cost then it would probably place itself in a greater financial difficulty going forward. Apologies but that is the situation we have inherited. That could simply expose us to financial risks. If any funding is to be used then the reality is that it should be from the grants scheme

### **Recommendation**

1. That anyone organising an event be advised that they may be able to secure a grant if they apply in accordance with our approved scheme but should do so without delay so that their application can be considered at the March Meeting. Applications should be submitted no later than 14 days before that meeting to assist in the preparation of the agenda
2. If Council is minded to fund an event itself then it resolves to vire an agreed sum for that purpose from the grants budget to fund the event.