

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to the Executive for Decision 08 January 2024

Portfolio:	Leisure and Community / Policy and Resources
Subject:	D-Day 80 Event
Report of:	Assistant Director (Democracy)
Corporate Priorities:	Leisure opportunities for wellbeing and fun

Purpose:

To consider proposals for the Council to support an event to recognise the 80th Anniversary of D-Day at Solent Airport @ Daedalus.

Executive summary:

6th June 2024 is the 80th Anniversary of the D-Day Landings and the Battle of Normandy that led to the liberation of France and Europe. In 2019, the Council commemorated the 75th Anniversary with a well-received community event held at Solent Airport @ Daedalus and, consequently, the Executive are invited to consider whether it wishes to recognise the 80th Anniversary next year.

This report considers the options available, including the potential for a similar event to be staged and an approach has been received by an external events company to run this.

Recognising the significant milestone events also taking place during 2024, including a full local election, completion and launch of Fareham Live, 50th Borough Anniversary events, the finite officer capacity for these exceptional events alongside the annual programme of activities, and taking account of lessons learned from previous events, it is proposed to invite an events management company to organise a community event at Daedalus, alongside a simultaneous fly-in event at Solent Airport.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Executive agrees:

- (a) to appoint Montserrat Events Community Interest Company to organise an event, under licence, to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of D-Day in June 2024 non-airside at Daedalus, subject to financial approvals and subject to agreement of detailed terms and conditions;

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Executive Briefing Paper

Date:	08 January 2024
Subject:	D-Day 80 Event
Briefing by:	Assistant Director (Democracy)
Portfolio:	Leisure and Community / Policy and Resources

INTRODUCTION

1. 6th June 2024 is the 80th Anniversary of the D-Day Landings and the Battle of Normandy that led to the liberation of France and Europe. In 2019, the Council commemorated the 75th Anniversary with a well-received community event at Solent Airport.
2. An opportunity exists to recognise the 80th Anniversary in 2024 and officers have been considering the options available, including the potential for a similar event to be staged and an approach has been received by an external events company to run this.

D-DAY 75 AT SOLENT AIRPORT

3. The D-Day 75 event was held over two days on 8 and 9 June 2019 and included a flying and static aircraft display, a classic car display, fun fair, games area, community and craft stalls, food concessions, live music and other performances, an event arena showcasing motorcycling displays, dance displays and a marching band, and children's activities.
4. The event was attended by around 15,000 people and funded from ticket sales supplemented with a contribution from the council of around £24,000. Officer resource costs were not included in the cost of the overall event but it was a significant undertaking both before and during the event.

LEE VICTORY FESTIVAL

5. Montserrat Events CIC (EO) approached the Council for permission to use Solent Airport for a Lee Victory Festival on 22-24 September 2023.
6. Whilst the festival was well received and popular with the local community, a number of lessons were learned in relation to the preparation and planning stages of the event which resulted in unexpected officer time and resources being committed at a late stage to ensure the smooth running of the event.

7. A confidential debrief summary report has been created by officers to identify those operational and preparatory issues experienced. This document will provide valuable learning points to be reflected in the licence agreement for the proposed D-Day 80 event. Some of those issues identified include:
- Clear plan for airside and non-airside areas to be controlled by appropriate barrier fencing;
 - Specific areas of responsibility clarified including control of public movement within the non-airside perimeter; and
 - Clear communication channels between the Council, as landowner, the Event Organisers and the airport operator.

PROPOSALS FOR A D-DAY 80 COMMEMORATION EVENT

8. While there is a desire to recognise the 80th anniversary of D-Day next year, existing commitments in the Spring of 2024, including the all-out Council elections, the opening of Fareham Live and activities linked to the Borough Council's 50th Anniversary, make the delivery of an event at Daedalus extremely challenging in terms of the capacity of officer resources. However, the value of the proposed event to the community is recognised so an alternative approach to delivering an event has been explored.
9. In September 2023, Montserrat Events CIC organised the successful Lee Victory Festival at Solent Airport and they have expressed their interest in organising the D-Day 80 event. A summary of the learning points from the Lee Victory Festival is attached at confidential Appendix A.
10. In order to provide capacity to deliver the event, and taking into account the lessons learned both from the D-Day 75 event in 2019 and last year's Lee Victory Festival, the following is proposed to deliver a commemorative event for D-Day 80:
- (a) Subject to financial approvals, to appoint Montserrat Events CIC to organise an event, under licence, to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of D-Day in June 2024 non-airside at Daedalus, subject to agreement of detailed terms and conditions;
 - (b) to request a simultaneous fly-in event at Solent Airport, organised by the Council's Airport Operator;
11. This approach would allow a vibrant community event to proceed with a limited demand for officer resource as the responsibility for all aspects of non-airside planning and delivery would be the responsibility of the event organiser. Importantly, the approach will de-risk the event for the event organiser, as it would be non-airside only and would leave the airside activity fully within the remit of the Council's airport operator, thus limiting the need for extra-ordinary airside costs.
12. A fly-in event would allow the airport operator to promote and attract a wide range of interesting and relevant aircraft to fly into Solent Airport and a temporary parking area could be created such that visitors to the community event would be able to see the aircraft. While an air display would not be appropriate, there could be a "fly past" for the crowd's enjoyment and the Council have already expressed an interest to the Red Arrows and Battle of Britain Memorial Flight teams to participate in the event.

13. In order to ensure that the simultaneous activities operate in a complementary way, it will be necessary to engage the services of an event programme co-ordinator, to bring together the event organiser, the airport operator and the council officers through the planning process, and to ensure the event is delivered smoothly by all parties in compliance with the licence/other agreements.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

14. The following options have also been considered, should Members feel that the approach outlined above was not appropriate, as follows.
15. **Do Nothing:** The event in 2019 marked 75 years since D-Day and was fitting as a quarter-centennial event, alongside a national programme of recognition. Whilst it is not proposed to create an expectation for an event at regular 5-year intervals, it may be appropriate to fulfil a recognition event for the 80th anniversary given that there are D-Day veterans who may be able to attend. If Members were minded to go ahead with a community event, this could happen at a different time in the year, when capacity would be greater to support the event.
16. **Marked in a different way:** Alternative ways to recognise D-Day 80 could be considered, such as temporary signage at Solent Daedalus, a fly-in for heritage aircraft, VIP visit to Solent Airport for Fareham veterans and their relatives, a history of Daedalus on D-Day videoclip with associated promotional activity. These options could be accommodated if the Executive were not supportive of the proposed event.
17. **Repeat D-Day 75 event:** This option was considered, but as it would be a Council-led event, it was rejected as a viable option due to insufficient capacity in the events team that would be necessary to ensure a safe and successful event.
18. **Allow a third party to lead the event in full:** This option was also considered as a means of limiting the demand on Council resources. However, the lessons learned from the Lee Victory Festival suggest that operators would not be willing to proceed with an event of this scale without the Council underwriting the financial risk (e.g. in the event of poor weather, low ticket sales, extra-ordinary costs). This, together with the operational issues that arose, led to this option being rejected.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS/CARBON IMPACT ASSESSMENT

19. Although difficult to quantify, it is recognised that there will be additional carbon emissions associated with running the two connected events, particularly the fly-in. However, the importance of the 80th Anniversary of D-Day to our community means that it is considered appropriate to proceed with proposals.

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

20. In addition to the Council's normal programme of events and activities, 2024 will see three significant and exceptional events in addition; a borough-wide election, launch of Fareham Live and 50th anniversary of the borough. Therefore, officer capacity is very limited and additional resource will be required to deliver any D-Day 80 activity. The proposed event will require some additional event co-ordination resource, estimated to be c.£10,000, plus any costs directly attributed to the licence agreement with the community event co-ordinator.
21. In order to make the event viable, it is anticipated that the event licence will not have a

fee attributed to it, and airport fees will likely be heavily discounted to attract heritage aircraft. Furthermore, any fly past activity will need to be funded.

22. Consequently, it would be necessary to earmark £30,000 from the Council's revenue reserves if the proposed event is supported.

SUMMARY

23. The 6th June 2024 is the 80th Anniversary of the D-Day Landings and the Battle of Normandy that led to the liberation of France and Europe. In 2019, the Council commemorated the 75th Anniversary with a well-received community event at Solent Airport and the Council wishes to commemorate the 80th Anniversary next year with another event at Solent Airport.
24. Given concerns about staff capacity and taking account of lessons learned from previous events, it is proposed to invite an events management company to organise a community event at Daedalus, alongside a simultaneous fly-in event at Solent Airport.
25. Further work is needed to work up the costs for the event that will need funding from Council budgets. Approval for the funding, once the value is known, will be sought from the Executive in February as part of the Revenue Budget report and the delegations and appointments set out in this report are subject to that finding being made available.

Enquiries:

For further information on this report please contact Leigh Usher on 01329 824553.