

26. 10. 2000

**REPORT BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE**

PART A - MATTERS REQUIRING A COUNCIL DECISION

1. FESTIVAL OF ROMANCE PROPOSAL

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Corporate Plan Output: Events - Contracted	

The purpose of this report is to consider a proposal submitted by the Festival City Trust for the Festival of Romance. The proposal was the subject of a report to the September meeting of the Committee.

The trust would like to turn the Festival of Romance from an annual event to a biennial event, while maintaining an annual grant at its current level with the next festival being run in February 2002. The trust proposes to continue to produce the Valentine's Day Dance annually to maintain a regular presence for the festival.

The Festival of Romance was first held in 1991 and currently receives funding of \$86,955 per annum. The Festival runs for approximately ten days in early February between the Buskers' Festival and Festival of Flowers. SummerTimes also takes place during this period.

This is a well-established festival, which has developed a large attendance level. Information collated in the 1999 Monitoring Report, which was supported by statistics taken from the visitors' survey, shows that the festival attracted in excess of 80,000 people and achieved a satisfaction level of 93%. Council funding distributed per attendee worked out to 96 cents per person.

In the 1999/2000 year the Council made the decision to remove the Valentine's Day Dance budget in an effort to recover some of the additional costs created by 2000 celebrations. This budget was not reinstated in 2000/01. The 2000 Valentine's Day Dance was produced for the first time by Festival City Productions as part of the Festival of Romance. No extra funding was allocated to Festival City Production when they took over the responsibility for producing this event. This event attracts audiences of between 8,000 and 10,000.

The Leisure Manager recommended to the Parks and Recreation Committee that \$20,000 be allocated from the current year's budget for the 2001 Valentine's Day Dance.

This recommendation was not adopted by the Committee at its September meeting. Instead, the Committee appointed a subcommittee comprising the Chairman, Councillors Anderton, Austin and Sheriff to explore, in consultation with staff, proposals for producing the Valentine's Day Dance.

The subcommittee met with Mike Kelly, Tony Paine and Jodi Wright of the Festival City Trust to discuss the trust's proposal for the Valentine's Day Dance and also the Festival of Romance.

Given that the trust is struggling financially to produce an annual stand-alone festival, the Subcommittee raised with the trustees the possibility of forming an umbrella organisation, comprising the Festival City Trust, the Garden City Trust, the Canterbury Horticultural Society and possibly a wine and food festival organisation to produce a major festival incorporating:

- Festival of Flowers
- Festival of Romance
- Valentine's Day Dance
- a wine and food event

26. 10. 2000

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Each group could continue to be responsible for the areas in which they have special expertise with the umbrella organisation being responsible for the festival marketing. As marketing makes up a large component of each group's budget significant savings should result from such an initiative. As well, the larger festival should be more marketable to prospective sponsors and audiences.

The trustees indicated their total support for the concept proposed by the Subcommittee as well as their willingness to work co-operatively with other groups to bring it to reality.

Because of the lead time needed to implement the proposal it would not be possible to put any new arrangements in place in time for the 2001 festivals.

The Subcommittee is therefore proposing that responsibility for producing the 2001 Valentine's Day Dance remain with the Festival City Trust. As the Council is the core funder for Festivals of Romance and Festival of Flowers it is also considered that the Subcommittee should remain in place to work with the groups in developing a proposal for 2002. Councillor Sheriff is the Chairman-elect of the Garden City Trust and Councillor Anderton is a director of the Canterbury Horticultural Society. This, coupled with Councillor Austin's marketing experience, means the Subcommittee is the ideal group to act as facilitiator.

Subcommittee's

Recommendation:

1. That up to \$20,000 be allocated from the 2000/01 funding allocation for the Festival of Romance for the Valentine's Day Dance in 2001.
2. That the 2001 Valentine's Day Dance be produced by the Festival City Trust, subject to a budget for the event being submitted to the Leisure Manager for approval.
3. That the Subcommittee of Councillor Condon (Chairman), Councillors Anderton, Austin and Sheriff remain in place to develop a festival proposal for 2002 in consultation with the Festival City Trust, the Garden City Trust and the Canterbury Horticultural Society.

CONSIDERED THIS 26TH DAY OF OCTOBER 2000

MAYOR