

Report 1 - Agenda Item 10: To consider the request to agree in principle to allow outdoor performance events in the Cloister Gardens and other areas, in the context of Covid 19 Guidance

1. Situation:

As part of its COVID 19 response activity Malmesbury Town Council is working with Malmesbury Town Team to encourage increased footfall and dwell time in the High Street.

An activity that will help achieve this objective and that can be supported is busking and outdoor performance events at suitable locations around the town centre, including Cloister Gardens, Birdcage Walk, Market Cross, the Town Hall and the High Street.

Volunteer buskers have already suggested themselves under the auspices of Malmesbury Live Arts, who would like to organise and undertake a small number of busking spots on Saturday 1st August.

2. Proposal:

It is proposed to run busking spots on Saturday 1st August as a trial and if this is successful to look to extend the opportunity for busking and suitable outdoor performance events over the summer and autumn period.

3. Additional Information:

1. Busking and outdoor performance events are allowed under current government COVID 19 guidance provided social distancing is maintained and crowd size is limited to no more than 30 people.
2. Subject to adherence in 2.1, permission has been given by Abbey House Gardens and the Abbey for the Cloisters to be used for unamplified busking and outdoor performance.
3. Light amplification would be needed to support busking and outdoor performance in other areas to offset road noise (and to enable some musical equipment to function). No excessive noise is proposed.
4. All buskers would be working to a standard busking code of practice, which includes only performing in suitable areas, monitoring crowd size and social distancing and ceasing performance if social distancing or crowd size becomes challenged, or any local retailer asks for a performance to cease.
5. All buskers and performances would be required to pre-register their intentions with MTC via the TIC and to receive an approval to perform. As part of this registration they would confirm adherence to the code of practice and any agreed timings. Events in Cloister Gardens would include safe social distancing spacing guides from the performer(s) to the audience.

4. Financial Implications:

1. Authorised activity would be under the auspices of the Town Council and covered under MTC public liability insurance.
2. As performers would be volunteers there is no direct financial cost to Malmesbury Town Council for supporting this activity.
3. In the tradition of busking volunteers may accept freely given financial donations from audience members.

Campbell Ritchie
Mayor
20th July 2020