



MEETING PAPER

Subject: Bid for Lowestoft to host National Armed Forces Day in 2023

Meeting: Agenda Item 40.c – Events and Communications Sub-Committee

Date: Wednesday 23 August 2023

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~/NON CONFIDENTIAL

Background/Introduction

Lowestoft Town Council has agreed to explore the bidding process, and if successful, hosting of National Armed Forces Day in 2025. To note, the MOD are yet to confirm if this event will take place in 2025. There is no NAFD in 2024.

Details

Officers of LTC met with the main organiser of NAFD 2023 (Cornwall and Falmouth). This Cornwall Councillor had been instrumental in leading this bid and had very strong military background and numerous contacts. He was keen to stress that any bid must not be a bid from the Council but a bid led by the Council and must focus on how the bid recognises and rewards service personnel and not how it would benefit the town.

The costs for Cornwall to produce their bid document were minimal as they had in house resources of a comms team, printing room, cross council support, letter of support from various military and non-military organisations. It is suggested that for a successful bid, the bid document needs to include the following. From starting work on the bid to hosting the event, took 20 months.

- Why Lowestoft?
- Has to involve residents of Lowestoft and stakeholders and needs their full backing
- Background on Lowestoft and its links to Armed Forces
- Sustainability

Once successful in the bid and informed they would host 2023, Cornwall Council employed a specialist team to oversee this event, but also increased hours of Officers that were employed within the council to support the team where needed. Cornwall had hosted high profile events leading up as they had practice in hosting G7 leaders at annual summit and Tour of Britain event

It is thought that 100,000 visitors attended the main event and this brought a need for additional resources such as transport, water, toilets, medical teams. Veteran and service personnel accommodation was also needed and this was provided free of charge in the empty (due to summer holidays) residential accommodation at colleges and universities. A military village was built that housed activities – Friday was day where schools from across region were invited as preview. Saturday Parade required high profile security detail and accessibility adjustments to support veterans.

The total cost to Cornwall to host the 2023 event, which spanned a five day period, was **£650,000**.

Recommendations/Decision

If the Town Council wishes to pursue a bid being made for 2025 it recognises the resources that are required to submit such a bid and considers how the cost of hosting NAFD could be met by the Town Council (and other partners).