

SANTA TOURS

AGENDA ITEM No. 8

MEETING: EVENTS SUB-COMMITTEE

DATE: 3rd OCTOBER 2018

REPORT BY: LEISURE MANAGER

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Members with further information regarding the format of the Santa Tours for 2018 for their consideration and approval.

2.0 Background

2.1 The Santa Tours are a long running, well received Council event which is struggling to keep up with the demand as the Town expands and the public expectation grows.

2.2 The event relies upon volunteers to ensure each unit has a driver, navigator and Santa. In 2017 eight units with a total of 24 helpers were deployed around the streets of Newton Aycliffe, this followed an urgent appeal for help in which we were able to secure three additional volunteers for a mop up route, which picked up new parts of the town and some of the excess for those routes which were struggling to meet demand. It is currently unknown whether we will be able to sustain this level as volunteers are yet to be approached for 2018.

2.3 New housing has increased around the Town in 2018 with further developments in the Woodham area.

2.4 All the units are stretched to capacity and struggle to get around the Town in the allotted times. The units leave the OakLeaf Sports Complex at 1545hrs and usually return to the Sports Complex around 2000-2100hrs, this depends upon how busy the routes are.

2.5 It is unknown each year how busy the routes will be as it is not known how many families are on the routes, how accessible the routes are with increased parking for visiting family and friends and how many people will want to come out of the house to see Santa.

2.6 The Council had five units which were used for the event, and in 2017 three units were loaned from local firms. The Works Section with the help of Aycliffe Auto Electrics add sleigh sides, lights and music to every vehicle.

2.7 Historically the units were hired from Northgate, however following the economic down turn in 2008, vehicle hire facilities are no longer able to assist with the type of vehicle used (flatbed transit type) as these are on long term lease to companies and not available for short term leasing.

2.8 Each unit has a navigator, driver and Santa. It is the navigators role to navigate the route, assist the driver with tight cul-de-sacs, encourage the public to come the units at one gathering point rather than continually stopping in the same street several times, to ensure the public keep clear of the moving vehicle, to update complex staff of the route progress so they can update Facebook, to be the go between from Santa and Driver and to assist Santa with crowd control.

3.0 **Current Situation**

3.1 One of the volunteers last year, a serving Police Officer, highlighted to a member of council staff that the law states “no person shall travel on the back of a moving vehicle”. This is in reference to Road Traffic Legislation and Health & Safety Legislation.

3.2 The continued use of two seater vehicle would mean that the Santa’s must ride on the back. Drivers could be prosecuted and the Council’s insurance would be null and void, in the event of any accident resulting in a claim.

3.3 The Council’s insurers were happy to cover the event as long as the risk assessment was being followed, the 2017 risk assessment stated Santa to travel when possible in the cab and driver not to use excessive speed when Santa is on the back. (see appendix 1 risk assessment 2017) This is now known to be breaking the law and could mean prosecution for the driver and Council. An amended risk assessment which addresses this particular risk is appended (see appendix 2 risk assessment 2018)

3.4 The Council currently only have two vehicles which have three seats. The remaining six vehicles would have to be hired or loaned from local companies should Members choose the first option at paragraph 5.6.

3.5 Several rental companies have been approached to supply a quote for hiring a three seat flatbed, two have replied that they do not have flatbed units for hire over the period required. One would need an account opening before they could investigate the request, but they did feel it might be something they could assist, they thought six might be beyond their capability and one is still investigating, according to their website the units would cost £575.93 each to hire.

3.6 The other alternative would be to use 4x4 pick up vehicle with crew cabs, if this option was to be investigated, the frames which fit the sides of the flatbeds would need to be amended to fit the smaller units. It is not known whether these vehicles are available to hire.

3.7 If option 1 in paragraph 5.6 was the Members preferred option an appeal could be made to the businesses of Newton Aycliffe for the loan of the correct type of vehicle required. This could be done using the Aycliffe Business hour, social media and contacts within other local authorities. If this option was to be used, it would not be known as to the standard of the vehicles and sizes, which could cause problems for the sizing of the dressing of the vehicles as the existing frames are set for a flatbed transit.

3.8 Santa would travel around the streets in the cab waving as he goes, then when the vehicle stops get out and greet the children. This may involve more stops than has previously taken place. The back of the units could no longer be used, therefore they could be dressed up with more lights to make a more magical experience.

3.9 If option 2 in paragraph 5.6 was the Members preferred option no additional vehicles other than council stock would be required as there will be no requirement for a navigator as the stops will be limited to around six on each round and agreed in advance.

4.0 **Items for consideration**

4.1 The format for the Santa tours could be changed to accommodate the problems highlighted above, some suggestions are listed below.

- To try to continue the Santa Tours in the current format, with the exception of Santa travel on the back of the units and look at renting/loaning the vehicles with three seats, cost yet unknown. The costs would also include making adjustments to the dressing of the vehicle to ensure Santa could not try to access the flatbed, this would also improve the appearance of the vehicle. Additional lights to improve the look of the sleigh in the darkness.
- To change the format of the Santa Tours and only stop at pre-set locations. Therefore no navigator would be required as Santa would go to the pre-set location in the van with the driver stay the stated time, then get back in to the unit to go to the next pre-set location. The pre-set location would have to be investigated as to the viability of each location taking into account public safety, parking, lighting and distance residence would have to travel to see Santa.
- Set up a winter wonderland in the Town Park for a period of time prior to Christmas Eve to allow the public to come to Santa rather than Santa come to them via the Santa tours.
- Set up Santa in a shop in the town centre for children to visit at specified times.

4.2 It is not an option to take no action and risk the Council's reputation and standing as well as the potential cost of claims if something were to go wrong. The Council's insurers would not pay out claims if the Council were seen to be breaking the law.

5.0 **Impact for Great Aycliffe Town Council**

5.1 If the Council wish to try and secure vehicles with three seats, there is no budget for the hire of the vehicles and no guarantee of securing them.

5.2 If the Council were to change the format of the Santa Tours making specific locations and times, there would be little impact to Great Aycliffe Town Council. The Santa tours would still go out on Christmas Eve visiting all areas of the Town. A better timetable would be kept, everyone would know where and when Santa would be in their area and the risk to the public, volunteers and vehicles would be reduced as no vehicles would be trying to manoeuvre in tight spaces.

- 5.3 If the council were to opt for a winter wonderland type there is currently no budget for such an event, and officers would have to act quickly to try to organise attractions for the event. This maybe something the Council wishes to consider for the future.
- 5.4 If the Council were to opt for a shop in the Town centre, volunteers are required to man the shop and a system would need to be put into operation for safe working practices.
- 5.5 Although officers consider this is not a viable option if the Council opted for taking no action and tried to continue as the event is at present it could risk running the event without insurance, and prosecution of the Council and volunteer drivers.
- 5.6 There would appear to be two viable options to continue to run the Santa Tours on Christmas Eve, both options would have enhanced sleigh lighting to provide a better visual affect
1. Continue with the present arrangement requiring three seater vehicles, it is unlikely that this will be sustainable for the future as the Town continues to grow. Santa will not be allowed to travel on the back of the vehicle at any time.
 2. The preferred option, in order to future proof the event, would be two persons in a van with very limited stops but staying in those areas for 30 minutes. This would ensure the timing is controlled, everyone knows where Santa will be at given times and Santa will travel in the vehicle.

6.0 **Policy implications**

- 6.1 Consideration of this report will assist the Town Council with the delivery of the following aims:

No.1 To provide good quality governance and management of the Council.
No. 3 To provide accessible, affordable leisure facilities and opportunities.

7.0 **Staffing implications**

- 7.1 This will depend upon which option is progressed.

8.0 **Financial implications**

- 8.1 There will be additional budget requirements depending upon which option the Sub- Committee chooses to follow.

9.0 **Crime and Disorder Implications**

- 9.1 None

10.0 **Equal Opportunities Implications**

- 10.1 The Town Council are trying to make the Santa tours available to everyone.

11.0 **Environmental Implications**

11.1 None

12.0 **Risk Assessment**

12.1 It is considered that the matters contained in this report pose a risk to health and safety of staff or to the financial or public standing of the Council to a degree that a risk assessment is appended to this report.

13.0 **General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)**

13.1 Is any personal or sensitive data required for this proposal which may have any implications for GDPR? **NO**

14.0 **Recommendations**

14.1 It is recommended that Members:

- i) Consider the information provided in the report.
- ii) Advise officers as to the course of action they wish officers to proceed with.
- iii) Note that whichever option is chosen there will be additional budget requirements.

**Contact Officer: Judith Thexton
Leisure Manager**

Risk Assessment Form (RA1)

Service: Leisure and Events	Reference: RA/EVE/01 2017
Activity: Santa Tours	Site: Around the streets of Newton Aycliffe
People at Risk: Staff, Public, Volunteers, Young people and Children	Additional Information: MANEVE01, MANEVE02, MANEVE03, PPEEVE01,

Risk Evaluation

Hazard	Risk	Initial Rating (L, M, H)	Existing Control Measures	Residual Risk (L, M, H)	Additional Action Required (action by whom and completion date)
Lack of event planning	Serious injury Major hazards	H	Pre-event meetings Risk assessment undertaken	M	
Pre-event set up at OakLeaf Sports Complex:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handling of boxes of sweets • Purchase/handling of bottles of spirits • Violence/threatening behaviour/theft of staff returning with bottles • Santa suits prepared for dry cleaning 	Injury Musculo-skeletal disorder Cuts Slips, trips and falls	M	Sweets delivered directly to managers office for storage 2 members of staff to collect bottles for security Manual handling assessment (MANEVE01) All staff trained in manual handling Suits bagged to eliminate tripping from trailing items	L	
Pre-event vehicle set up/inspection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sides attached • Auto electrician to rig 	Injury Musculo-skeletal disorder	H	Auto electrician employed to rig the lighting onto the vehicles Manual handling	M	

up lights	Burns Cuts Slips, trips and falls		assessment for erecting sides on vehicles (MANEVE02) PPE provided (PPEEVE01)		
Non Council vehicles used to supplement Council fleet	Injury to vehicle users and pedestrians Damage to property	H	Vehicles insured under Council's insurance Vehicles checked for faults prior to issue	M	
Use of volunteers None compliancy to safety notifications	Injury Damage to property	M	Safety notices issued to all volunteers Pre event brief on do's and don'ts Volunteers work in teams of 3 Use of regular volunteers years of experience Carrying equipment to vehicle MANEVE03	M	
Child protection issues	Assault/abuse of minors Injury	M	Santa never left alone with minors, parental supervision, bystanders around at all times Santa not to hold young people and babies, in case of dropping Teams of 3, to ensure support, back up for Santa	L	
Getting on and off vehicle	Injury	H	Crew to have pre-set	M	

Falling from vehicles	Musculo-skeletal disorder Slips, trips and falls		signals for when vehicle in motion, to ask for help or give warning Santa to travel when possible in cab Steps issued to each crew for getting on and off vehicles All steps checked by competent person prior to use Navigator to assist Santa on and off vehicle Driver not to use excessive speed when Santa on back of vehicle		
Attack/violence from public	Injury Stress	M	Crew of 3 to have one mobile phone with them for assistance or emergency service back up No entry to private houses If under threat move from area	L	
Injury to public	Crush from moving vehicle	M	Navigator to assist driver by getting out of vehicle when manoeuvring in streets with limited access No public to enter cab of vehicle	M	

			No public to get on the back of vehicles Navigator to advise public when vehicle is going to be moved		
Music played through external speakers and bells ring to alert public of Santa's presence	Lose of hearing Damage to hearing	M	Volume to be kept at a suitable level, to attract public's attention. Without effecting volunteers	L	
Damage to other vehicles when in areas of limited access	Damage to property Injury to public	M	Driver to assess road conditions and not enter cul-de-sacs if hazardous to do so Navigator to give assistance to driver	L	
Weather conditions	Injury Damage to property Exposure to elements Slips, trips and falls	M	If hazardous icy/snow conditions stick to main roads, navigator to get public to come to vehicle Santa advised to wear several layers of clothing to protect from elements	M	

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Risk Evaluation

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Pre-event vehicle set up/inspection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sides attached • Auto electrician to rig 	Injury Musculo-skeletal disorder	H	Auto electrician employed to rig the lighting onto the vehicles Manual handling	M	

up lights	Burns Cuts Slips, trips and falls		assessment for erecting sides on vehicles (MANEVE02) PPE provided (PPEEVE01)		
Non Council vehicles used to supplement Council fleet	Injury to vehicle users and pedestrians Damage to property Standard, condition and size of vehicles not known prior to vehicles coming on site. All vehicles must have a seat and seat belt for every occupant.	H	Vehicles insured under Council's insurance Vehicles checked for faults prior to issue Vehicles must have an MOT Only use vehicles with 3 seats	M	
Use of volunteers None compliancy to safety notifications	Injury Damage to property Failure to compile with law.	M	Safety notices issued to all volunteers Pre event brief on do's and don'ts Volunteers work in teams of 3 Prosecution of driver and Council Use of regular volunteers years of experience Carrying equipment to vehicle MANEVE03	M	

	Injury to Santa whilst getting onto the back of the vehicle		Layout on the back of the vehicle changes so no one can assess the flatbed, area only used for display purposes only. No ladders provided for access.		
Child protection issues	Assault/abuse of minors Injury	M	Santa never left alone with minors, parental supervision, bystanders around at all times Santa not to hold young people and babies, in case of dropping Teams of 3, to ensure support, back up for Santa	L	
Getting on and off vehicle Falling from vehicles	Injury Musculo-skeletal disorder Slips, trips and falls	H	Santa's will not access the back of the vehicle	L	
Attack/violence from public	Injury Stress	M	Crew of 3 to have one mobile phone with them for assistance or emergency service back up No entry to private houses If under threat move from area	L	
Injury to public	Crush from moving vehicle	M	Navigator to assist driver by getting out of vehicle when manoeuvring in streets with limited access	M	

			<p>No public to enter cab of vehicle No public to get on the back of vehicles</p> <p>Navigator to advise public when vehicle is going to be moved</p>		
Music played through external speakers and bells ring to alert public of Santa's presence	<p>Loss of hearing</p> <p>Damage to hearing</p>	M	Volume to be kept at a suitable level, to attract public's attention. Without effecting volunteers	L	
Damage to other vehicles when in areas of limited access	<p>Damage to property</p> <p>Injury to public</p>	M	<p>Driver to assess road conditions and not enter cul-de-sacs if hazardous to do so</p> <p>Navigator to give assistance to driver</p>	L	
Weather conditions	<p>Injury</p> <p>Damage to property</p> <p>Exposure to elements</p> <p>Slips, trips and falls</p>	M	<p>If hazardous icy/snow conditions stick to main roads, navigator to get public to come to vehicle</p> <p>Santa advised to wear several layers of clothing to protect from elements</p>	M	

BUSINESS RISK ASSESSMENT

Proposal	<i>Provide details of the proposal to be considered (as per committee report)</i> Providing Santa Tours
Risk	<i>The actual thing we are reviewing</i> Santa travelling on the back of the vehicle whilst in motion

RISK ASSESSMENT MATRIX

LIKELIHOOD OF RISK HAPPENING	3	HIGH			1, 4, 6, 8
	2	MEDIUM			
	1	LOW	7,		2, 3, 5
	<p style="color: red; font-size: small;">1. Assess the risks below and score them. 2. Enter the risk number from the left hand column below into the relevant box in the matrix. 3. Note any actions or comments to deal with the risk in the right hand column below.</p>		1 LOW	2 MEDIUM	3 HIGH
			IMPACT OF RISK HAPPENING		
			RED: HIGH Priority AMBER: MEDIUM Priority GREEN: LOW Priority		

No	Assessment Criteria	L'hood	Impact	Score	Actions or comments to minimise the risk
1	Does undertaking this proposal present a potential risk to the Council finances? YES	3	3	9	We have been informed that this is against the law
2	Does undertaking this proposal present a potential risk to staff or health and safety? YES	1	3	3	High possibility of accident. A new H&S risk assessment has been completed
3	Does undertaking this proposal present a potential risk to the public? YES	1	3	3	High possibility of accident. A new H&S risk assessment has been completed
4	Does undertaking this proposal present a potential risk to the Council's reputation? YES	3	3	9	
5	Will undertaking the proposal create adverse publicity? YES	1	3	3	Potentially if an accident takes place or if legal action was taken against the Town Council
6	Does undertaking the proposal leave the Council open to claims? YES	3	3	9	We would not be covered by the Council's insurers if we break the law
7	Will undertaking the proposal have a negative impact on Service Quality / complaints or audit reports? NO	1	1	1	Because members of the public are used to seeing Santa on the back of vehicles (however, this is no longer an option)

8	Does undertaking this proposal present a potential risk that the Council may fail to comply with any duty? YES	3	3	9	
	Overall Assessment of the proposal/ situation or risk outline above	HIGH			

Expected Outcomes	a) POSITIVE – There would be no positive outcome if the Council allowed Santa to ride on the back of a vehicle b) NEGATIVE – The implications could be far reaching leading to prosecutions and injury to volunteers and no insurance to cover any costs.
Financial Implications	<i>Provide details of any potential cost or savings to the Council</i> No Alternative options will lead to additional costs but these will be minor compared to the potential of any legal action.

Summary/Comments or further supporting information

(anything not covered elsewhere)

Please see the 2018 Health & Safety Risk Assessment.

Recommendation of Responsible Officer

This recommendation is given after analysing the situation as far as I am able to do so and is made after a request by either the Performance Management Group or a designated officer that I carry out a risk assessment on the proposal outlined in this report, and on assurance given by Great Aycliffe Town Council that I will bear no personal responsibility for any decision taken by the Council which takes into account my recommendation.

Signed..... **Date**.....
(Officer preparing the report)

Refer to Committee YES / NO

Management Team Signatures

.....

Entered into GATC Risk Register**date**

COMMITTEE MEETING

DATE: MINUTE NO.