

LYMM PARISH COUNCIL

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Lymm Parish Council statement following the decision to move the date of Carols from The Cross 7th November 2022

An Extra Ordinary Meeting of Lymm Parish Council was held on 2nd November, at the request of the Events Committee, to enable the Council to confirm additional budget and authorise expenditure necessary to fund this year's Christmas decorations, activities and Carols from The Cross.

A lawful Extra Ordinary meeting can be called at the request of the Chairman or two or more Parish Councillors. A meeting needs three clear working days' notice and the agenda has to be made public at the beginning of that period. Items not on the agenda cannot be decided upon at the meeting.

The purpose of this meeting was to provide the funding to enable the decision taken by the Events Committee to move the Carols event to the 23rd of December instead of the 24th, and to use local commercial suppliers in place of volunteers.

It was necessary to make these changes for several reasons. At the time of the Committee meeting, there were insufficient volunteers willing to work on Christmas Eve and therefore safely deliver the Event Management Plan approved by Warrington Borough Council. In addition, there were staffing considerations, cost implications and clashes with other organisations' plans for Christmas Eve. All of these factors contributed to the evidence that the Events Committee took into account when making this decision on behalf of, and at the request of, the Full Parish Council in a meeting that lasted some three hours.

This decision was properly made taking all the evidence into account. While it came as a surprise to some, it is a valid decision which stands, and steps are being taken to deliver the event as proposed.

The Parish Council had not asked, nor was it required to ask, the Committee to bring their decision back to the Full Council for ratification.

The Parish Council has been negotiating with the leadership, consulting the members, and offering proposals to Lymm's Festivities Group for several years. These have not led to a satisfactory agreement on how a lawful and safe event can be delivered. It was for this reason that the Events Committee felt it had no choice but to make alternative arrangements for this year.

The Parish Council is very willing to discuss volunteering arrangements for future years with former members of the Lymm Festivities Group and other potential

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volunteers. However, it is very unlikely that this can be done in time to change the decisions on this year' events.

It is also notable that there is a great shortage of suitably qualified and willing volunteers to manage a number of village events and organisations, as a result similar crises have occurred over the last few years. The Parish Council is investigating the possibility of recruiting and training a pool of volunteers who can help.

At the time of writing, four Parish Councillors have requested another Extra Ordinary Meeting to revisit the decision taken by the Events Committee on behalf of the Parish Council. The date, agenda and location of that meeting has been made public – November 10th at 8.30pm in the Youth and Community Centre.

Cllr Bob Barr OBE
Chairman, Lymm Parish Council