

Notes of Meeting of the Pre Marden at Christmas Meeting held on Thursday 21st September 2023 commencing at 11.30am at the Parish Office, Marden Memorial Hall, Goudhurst Road, Marden

PRESENT:

Cllrs Boswell, Robertson, and Tippen.

Graham Tippen, Admin Assistant and the Deputy Clerk were also in attendance

ITEMS DISCUSSED:

Marden at Christmas 2023

The Allens

Cllrs agreed that 11.00am till 12.00pm worked well at The Allens and that the timings should remain the same. Preparation of The Allens worked well the previous year and Cllrs requested the Clerks do this again to cut down on the amount of time needed on the Saturday morning. Depending on what weight the bags are of sausages, it is possible that we may reduce the amount. It was agreed to reduced the boxes of mince pies by one box. Cllr Boswell agreed to cook the sausages again from home and deliver.

The Allens - Entertainment

The Boughton Monchelsea Morris Dancers have been booked and Cllrs agreed for the Deputy Clerk to contact the Weald of Kent and Loose Ladies groups to ask them if they wish to join. Due not to having the East Peckham Silver Band this year, the Deputy Clerk would contact Forte Music to see if their choir and pianist could attend in their place. Rev Nicky Harvey would be happy to conduct five carols and the carols would be a repeat of last year.

Village Events

The Deputy Clerk will contact the various businesses and local groups to get involved with Marden at Christmas event especially the West End Tavern who did not take part last year. The church would do more soup this year as they run out last year and could have served a lot more. All those taking part would be advertised through MPC social media and e-newsletter channels.

Marden Memorial Hall

The Admin Assistant had received about 50% of the bookings for stalls already. There were a few usual attendees that had not made contact and the Deputy Clerk would chase these. The Clerk had reported that more help was needed at the hall in the morning to set up. Cllr Robertson requested that no other stalls being put into the John Banks Hall so that seating can be provided for the WI Café.

Marden Memorial Hall – Grotto

It was decided that there would be four options for gifts this year. They would be 1-2 years old – chocolate buttons not wrapped, 3-6 years old, 6-8 years old and 9-11 years old. The Clerks and Admin Assistant were looking at books for the younger children and fun gifts for the other ages. The Deputy Clerk would contact Nigel Jenner with regard to transporting Father Christmas. Graham Tippen requested that new decorations be sourced for the grotto as the existing ones are looking a little tired. The Clerks and Admin Assistant would look into having a sort out of the decorations and possible purchasing new ones. Father Christmas would also get a gold feather pen and special notebook to use in the grotto. It was agreed that three elves be on duty for the grotto and a rota would be created.

Christmas Miscellaneous

The Deputy Clerk and Admin Assistant would discuss the Elf Hunt and how to change it slightly from previous years. There would be Festive Front Trail in the village but this would not run as a competition. The Deputy Clerk would start to advertise these shortly. The Deputy Clerk informed Cllrs that next year's Marden at Christmas would take place on Saturday 7th December 2024. It was suggested that cut outs of Christmas characters be placed around the village for residents to take photos of themselves. The Deputy Clerk would seek costings of these. The Clerks and Admin Assistant would also advertise the letters to Father Christmas towards the end of October.

Budget and Stallholder Fees

The Clerks proposed to Cllrs that the stallholder fee be increased from £10.00 to £15.00 for next year's event. Cllrs agreed.

Festive Lighting

The Deputy Clerk asked Cllrs whether they wished to add any further lampposts to the Festive Lighting so that the cost of these could be taken to the Financial Committee for budgeting purposes. Cllrs discussed and agreed that two more be added to the display to fill in the gaps. The Deputy Clerk would ask the contractor for costings.