

Committee: Sustainable Communities Scrutiny and Overview Committee

Date: 11th October 2017

Wards: St Helier, Merton Park, Cannon Hill

Subject: Eastern Electrics Event, post-event review

Lead officer: Graeme Kane

Lead member: Cllr Nick Draper

Contact officer: Graeme Kane

Recommendations:

1. Members are asked to note the contents of the report and provide officers with any comments regarding their experiences, or reports they have received, of the event.
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1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report is intended to provide Members with an overview of how London Borough of Merton oversaw the management and delivery of the Eastern Electrics (EE) event which took place at Morden Park on 5th August 2017. It also provides a review of the event in terms of its safe delivery.
- 1.2. Teams across the Council worked hard to ensure the EE event, organised and presented by We are the Fair, at Morden Park on 5th August 2017 was safe and secure. They worked closely with the police and the event organisers to carefully manage noise pollution, food hygiene, litter and anti-social behaviour associated with large crowds. The event was subject to close scrutiny by the Licensing Committee and restrictions were put on the event to limit its numbers to 17,000 and reduce the times at which loud music could be played. Our enforcement officers ensured these limits were adhered to. The official attendance figure for the event was 15,995. On the whole, the management of the event is considered to have been successful with few incidents of anti-social behaviour or nuisance.

2 DETAILS

2.1. Background

- 2.2. The original proposal was for the event to be a single-day 20,000 capacity Electronic Dance Music Festival to be held at Morden Park. This concept had been running over 8 years at various venues including Knebworth House and Greenwich. They have been at Hatfield House since 2014. The fact that most of their clientele was from London attracted them to the setting of Morden Park and its good transport network. The Festival was intended to run from 11:00 am to 11:00pm on Saturday 5 August 2017, with a range of music from various artists across a number of stages throughout the site. The event was only open to guests aged 18 and over, and was largely a pre-ticketed event.

2.3. Licensing Committee and Safety Advisory Group (SAG) oversight

- 2.4. The SAG reviewed the event plans at their meeting on 4th April 2017, which was attended by representatives from the event organiser and promoter. The SAG raised specific concerns including among other things: emergency access to the site; public nuisance before, during and after the event; noise disturbance to the residents and those having ceremonies at the Morden Registry Office.
- 2.5. The Licensing Committee considered the event application at their meeting on 10th May 2017. A total of 153 conditions were placed on the event organisers to fulfill. The duration of the event was reduced to 11am to 11pm, with licensable activities (including music and alcohol sales) ceasing at 10pm. The capacity of the event was limited to 17,000 rather than the 20,000 originally envisaged by the organisers. The organisers were also required to provide a noise management plan produced by a suitably qualified noise consultant. This considered the noise levels at particular receptors around the site i.e. residents' homes. There was also a requirement to carry out ID scanning on a random sample of attendees to deter underage attendees and those looking to cause a nuisance. The close of the event was also staggered to encourage the crowds to leave over the course of several hours rather than all at once.
- 2.6. Among other things, the conditions required the organisers to provide to the SAG the following plans: waste management plan; water management plan; event control plan; crowd management plan; alcohol management plan; and, traffic management plan. The organisers were also required to provide an emergency plan, which was tested by the SAG with a robust table-top exercise. The required security plan included the position of CCTV cameras, extent and nature of the external perimeter fence as well as the number and position of marshalls/security personnel and the position of entry/ exit gates. Security arrangements were provided by G4S on behalf of the event organisers. A pick up/ drop off plan was put in place for taxis and private hire vehicles with the aim of ensuring guests were not being collected along the main road.
- 2.7. Having been suitably satisfied with the plans provided by the organisers, on 26th June 2017, the SAG agreed for the event to go ahead.
- 2.8. **Communication with residents**
- 2.9. During the early planning stages, officers from the Greenspaces Team liaised with the Friends of Morden Park to gain their feedback and support. This two-way flow of information and exchange continued throughout the planning and post-event stages as necessary. The Friends gave their support to the event.
- 2.10. The organisers were required to send a communication letter to the neighbouring residents and made an offer to provide discounted tickets to them. Some feedback was received suggesting that this letter was not circulated as widely as required and there was limited opportunity to take advantage of the free tickets.
- 2.11. Elected members were also informed in advance of plans to monitor and oversee the event.

- 2.12. During the event weekend, the organisers provided a dedicated resident hotline number so their staff could coordinate and respond to residents' concerns.
- 2.13. **Preparation and monitoring of the event**
- 2.14. Given the size of the event, the site took several days to build and several more to deconstruct.
- 2.15. The main concerns from residents and stakeholders continued to be noise disturbance and antisocial behaviour from the guests, in particular urination in public places after the event. To combat the latter, public portaloos were situated outside the Civic Centre and part way up the pedestrian route along the A24 at the car wash. The route was also marshalled at the start and end of the event to discourage anti-social behaviour of this nature around the residential properties.
- 2.16. Given the nature of the event, particularly being the first time it had been held in Morden, and the concern amongst residents and stakeholders, LBM arranged for professional and service- related officers to be on site during the day to oversee certain elements. This included:
- (i) Green Spaces Team: Two officers were present for the duration of the event liaising with the event control room and present within the park and surrounding area;
 - (ii) Parking Services: Civil Enforcement Officers and mobile enforcement vehicles were present in the surrounding roads for the duration of the event;
 - (iii) Noise Nuisance: In addition to the event organisers having their own noise consultants present at the event to carry out monitoring, two LBM officers from the Environmental Health Pollution team were present throughout the day;
 - (iv) Food Safety: Officers carried out checks on all 18 caterers who were present at the event. Further checks were undertaken after they set up their stalls on the Friday before the event. One food safety officer was present for the duration of the event itself;
 - (v) Licensing: Two licensing officers present for the duration of the event to ensure compliance to the conditions.
- 2.16.2 All of these officers were able to ensure the event was safe and secure, as well as build up intelligence and evidence of how the event was being managed by the event management company.
- 2.17. The event organisers put in place a waste management plan and appointed a separate contractor to clear up the park, surrounding roads and pedestrian route to the park. Our own contractors, Veolia, were made aware of the increased footfall in Morden and will tailor their resources appropriately on the Saturday and Sunday;
- 2.18. To address anti-social behaviour, LBM also requested the support and assistance of the Street Pastors and Catch 22 to provide support to those who were need of assistance owing to inebriation.
- 2.19. The London Metropolitan Police treated the event as a London-wide event and therefore were able to provide officers additional to the borough team.

Police officers were also patrolling inside the site, the costs of which were met by the event organiser.

2.20. Feedback following the event

2.21. Noise monitoring confirmed that noise levels were reported to be lower than expected by up to 10dB and therefore complied with the conditions. There were three complaints received by the noise pollution team on the day. The noise did not unduly disturb the ceremonies at the Registry Office; it was louder on the first floor than the ground.

2.22. During the day five complaints were received regarding anti-social behaviour. They referred to a perceived lack of stewards and police, the number of people leaving the site, urination in public places.

2.23. The Licensing Team concluded that the event had been well organised and observed the intention and requirements of the 153 conditions.

2.24. Trading standards were content with the weights and measures compliance on the site. Statutory requirements were met and additional notices were put in place following a walk around before the event. There was no evidence of underage selling. Some counterfeit merchandise was seized from one concession and an investigation is underway; this does not reflect on the organiser.

2.25. Over the course of the day, there were no arrests made within or close to the event. Catch 22 reported that they had been in the park from 4pm until 9.30pm and generally found the young people to be respectful. There were very few incidents and they were relatively minor. There were some low level incidents of legal drug use evident from NO₂ canisters found in the vicinity.

2.26. London Fire Brigade issued a Fire Safety Certificate for this event and no incidents occurred on the day.

2.27. Medical provision was considered to be very good and there were no significant incidents reported.

2.28. Concerns and complaints following the event focused on relatively minor, although understandably concerning, incidents. This included some reports of urination in residents' gardens and public places despite the provision of portaloos. It may be that additional portaloos would have helped to avoid this situation but it is not guaranteed that this would solve the problem entirely. The pick-up arrangements were also not used as well as intended which resulted in crowds waiting for taxis/ private hire along the A24, which caused safety concerns and created late night disturbances for residents. Both of these issues could be better managed in future with changes to the marshalling arrangements around the site and along the main pedestrian routes. There were also reports, and evidence after the event, of low-level drug dealing, namely illegal 'high canisters'.

2.29. Future events

2.30. Given the success of the event, the organisers have indicated that they would be interested in returning to the location next year. They have invested considerable time and learnt a great deal from delivering the event this year. Therefore it is not surprising that they want to build on this investment. In the same vein, LBM officers and other key stakeholders, have

learnt from the experience and have been reassured by the professional and responsible approach demonstrated by the event organisers. They would therefore be willing to consider future events in the park as long as they were controlled and managed in a similar manner. The safety of residents and attendees will remain an essential element of any future event. Despite efforts this year, it was noted that the communication with residents could be improved and this is an area for further work and attention. There is also great advantage in confirming, and therefore communicating, any future dates well in advance to give residents, stakeholders and officers plenty of time to put in place necessary arrangements.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 3.1. This is a post-event review and therefore there are no decisions required or recommended. Members are asked to note the contents of the report and provide officers with any comments regarding their experiences, or reports they have received, of the event.

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 4.1. Officers engaged with the Friends of Morden Park during and after the event. Representations were received by the Licencing Committee by key stakeholders during the consideration of the license application. Comments and feedback from local residents was received before and after the event which informed the management and oversight of the event, including the conditions applied by the Licensing Committee.

5 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. There are no financial implications as a result of this post-event report.

6 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. There are no legal or statutory implications as a result of this post-event report.

7 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. There are no human rights, equalities or community cohesion implications as a result of this post-event report.

8 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. There are no crime or disorder implications as a result of this post-event report.

9 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. There are no risk management or health and safety implications as a result of this post-event report.

10 APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT

N/A

11 BACKGROUND PAPERS

N/A

