

Background

Pre covid the Honorary Townsman were presented with their awards at an evening event held in Wem Senior Club on a Friday night in November.

Those attending including the families of those receiving the awards along with Honorary Townsmen and Town Councillors. Usually up to around 50 people attended the presentation evening.

The evening began with a Welcome from the Mayor, followed by a speech from the Councillor who proposed the Townsman for the award outlining the reasons for the nomination and then each recipient would also make a short speech. Badges and Certificates would then be presented by the Mayor.

The evening ended with a cold buffet provided by Councillors along with drinks provided from the Mayor's hospitality budget.

Post Covid

The formal event in the Senior Club has not been held for some time as two awards were made during Covid and the 2023 Honorary Townsman chose to receive her award at a Town Council meeting.

Format of 2024 Awards

As the two nominated people have accepted their nomination for 2024 it is for the Council to decide whether they wish to return to the pre covid format for the evening or develop a new format for presenting the award.

Food

If the Council decides to return to the pre covid format, with concerns over food handling and the risks around food allergens, it is the Clerks recommendation that if food is to be offered at the presentation, then it should be provided by a professional caterer to ensure it complies with food standards.

The rationale for this recommendation is regarding food safety – in particular the preparation and storage of food prior to an event to reduce any possible risk of food poisoning due to food not being stored at the appropriate temperature prior to an event – particularly for high-risk foods eggs, meats, dairy.

The introduction of Natashas Law also makes it a legal requirement for food at an event like this to be labelled to inform guests attending of any allergen information. If the Council were to use a caterer they would be responsible for providing all allergen and traceability information for any food provided and ensure that correct food safety measures are in place.

A quote has been received from a local caterer who has offered to provide the buffet at cost for £6 per head to supply and serve a hot plate e.g. hot turkey/pork baps with trimmings or Jacket potatoes with Chilli or Bolognese or £7 a head for a cold plate option.

Date and month

The decision around who will receive the award is made in June however the presentation has traditionally been held in November.

As November has become a very busy month for the Council with Remembrance, Fireworks and Christmas it is suggested that the date is brought forward to October. A suggestion has also been made that due to commitments on a Friday night of one of the proposers and one of the nominees, that the event could be altered to a Thursday evening. This would also help staff with the clean up after the event.

Provisional dates for 2024

Thursday 24th or Friday 25th October

Thursday 14th or Friday 15th November

Funding

As the Mayor is not having a Civic Service this year, he has suggested that £400 from the Mayor's Hospitality Fund is allocated to cover the cost of this event.

Decision needed

For the Council to decide how it wishes to mark the presentation of the 2024 Honorary Townsman Award