



Our Ref/Ein Cyf

Your Ref/Eich Cyf

Date/Dyddiad

MBW/TJR

15th October 2021

To: All Members of the Council

Dear Member,

You are requested to attend a Special Meeting of the Council to be held via Zoom Conferencing on Wednesday 20th October 2021 commencing at 7pm.

The Agenda for the meeting is given below.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. Wright'.

Town Clerk and Financial Officer

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES

To receive and approve apologies for absence with reasons.

2. CANCELLATION OF ANNUAL BONFIRE & FIREWORKS DISPLAY

Following the introduction of the new Welsh Government Covid 19 Regulations on 11th October 2021, the Mayor and Chairs of the Standing Committees, in consultation with the Clerk, took the decision to cancel this year's Fireworks Display. However, it has been brought to my attention that following the cancellation of this year's event, some "keyboard warriors" have highlighted that the New Regulations allow for exemptions, different from the reasons quoted on the Town Council Website and in the Press Release, thereby indicating that the Firework Display could go ahead. Having read the documentation, the situation appears somewhat confusing. The Clerk has contacted the Welsh Government on the matter and is awaiting a reply, however that can take up to 15 days. An explanation of the rationale behind the confusion is listed below :-

1. The document referred to is the Welsh Government - Guidance - COVID Pass: guidance for businesses and events (see attached).
2. The above document explains in detail the requirement for holding events. Under the Sub Heading - Settings - It states "The new requirements will mean people over the age of 18 in Wales will need to show their COVID 19 status to attend the following venues or events:" One of the highlighted areas is "any outdoor or indoor venues with over 4,000 in the audience, where some or all of the audience are not normally seated." This applies to Buckley Town Council's Firework Display and requires those attending the event to show a COVID 19 Pass.
3. Under the Sub Heading - Exemptions and Exceptions, it states "Staff, contractors, performers or volunteers involved in the delivery of the event are not required to show a COVID Pass or proof of a negative Lateral Flow Device or test in the last 48 hours. However, in order to protect themselves and others and to help us keep the sector open, venue owners and event organisers may wish to consider encouraging all those on site to take regular lateral flow tests prior to an event as part of their Risk Assessment. The following are examples of the types of premises that are specifically exempted from the requirement". Premises that are listed include "...A free firework display in a public park..." As read, the above exemption appears to relate to the Staff, contractors, performers or volunteers. It does not indicate that the public attending the event are exempt from being required to show a COVID 19 Pass.
4. However, on Annex 1, it states under Example Scenario "An un-ticketed event is being held in an open space. The event will include a firework display. There are no fixed entry or exit points" Under Certification Requirements it states "The event does not need to apply checks prior to entry as it is un-ticketed, being held in an open space and there are no fixed entry or exit points". This appears to contradict the passage under Exemptions and Exceptions, unless the implication is that efforts should be made to confirm the Covid status of sampled individuals once they are at the venue.

Listed below are examples of cancelled North Wales Fireworks Displays and the reasons given:-

- a. Amlwch - "After much deliberation and consulting with various Public Agencies we have made a decision to call off the Community Bonfire and Fireworks. We haven't come to this decision lightly but Covid cases are rising and the hospital is busy. We just can't put anyone at risk unnecessarily"
- b. Denbigh Town Council - "Following on from Denbigh Town Council's full meeting...one of the items discussed was the annual Fireworks...and with great disappointment I advise you that this year's event will not be going ahead... The Town Council had to take into consideration the advice received from their Health & Safety Consultant, Fireworks provider, CADW as well as the up-to-date instructions from the Welsh Government...Whilst it is a disappointment to

the residents and visitors to Denbigh, the Town Councillors felt that the safety of the Councillors, Staff and Volunteers was paramount."

c. Beaumaris Town Council - "Unfortunately due to problems concerning crowd management and Covid Regulations the Bonfire Committee has reluctantly decided not to go ahead with the display this year."

d. The RNLI have cancelled the Flint Firework Display - "After great consideration we have had to make the unfortunate decision to cancel Flint RNLI's Fireworks Display this year. This annual event attracts thousands to Flint Castle every year. The current assessment highlights that due to the events complex location we would be unable to put in place the necessary safeguards to ensure the safety of our community, volunteers and supporters, so the decision has been made to cancel the event for this year."

It is acknowledged that the following displays are currently going ahead - Holyhead, Caernarvon, Llandudno and Wrexham, but these are pending any further changes to the Corona virus situation.

For the period 8th – 14th October 2021 there were 661 confirmed cases of Covid 19 in Flintshire an increase of 2.2% over the previous seven day period. Also, there are currently 1 in 55 people suffering from Covid symptoms in Wales and on Thursday 14th October 2021 new cases of Covid 19 reached a three month high (source Department of Health).

It is not for the Town Clerk and Financial Officer as to whether or not the current cancellation of Buckley Town Council's Firework Display is reversed, that it is a matter for the Council. I am therefore arranging an Emergency Meeting of the Council via Zoom conferencing on Wednesday 20th October 2021 at 7pm, a decision can be made at the meeting. However, I would remind Members of the quote from Denbigh Town Council when cancelling its Annual Fireworks Display "Whilst it is a disappointment to the residents and visitors to Denbigh, the Town Councillors felt that the safety of the Councillors, Staff and Volunteers was paramount."

The Council is requested to receive and note the above report and enclosed documentation and to decide whether or not the Firework Display will remain cancelled or go ahead.

