

February 11th 2020

**REPORT OF 2019 DIDCOT FOOD FESTIVAL FOR THE DIDCOT TOWN COUNCIL
FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE.**

THANK YOU TO THE COUNCIL FOR OUR 2019 GRANT AWARD.

I can report that the 2019 festival which was spread over the 2 days of the 26th and 27th October was a huge success. This was the first year that we went over 2 days instead of just the Saturday which of course meant considerably more expense. The councils grant meant that we could achieve the following:

- We were able to hire a very professional kitchen which attracted many top chefs from TV and local establishments which in turn drew large crowds at every showing.
- Obtaining this calibre of chef means we need to pay a decent fee and travel expenses.
- With such large crowds in the Northbourne room we must ensure that everyone can hear and see what is going on in the kitchen area. Thus we hire a professional lighting and sound man who erects a large screen and cameras and puts in a sound system that enables everyone to enjoy the proceedings!
- We can also hire the services of Al Ryan, a top presenter at BBC Radio Oxford who talks to the crowd thus involving them and who also interacts with the chefs which is really great in entertainment value!

The expenses for the above were covered by the council grant and I cannot emphasise enough the importance of the above to the whole festival. Obviously our other wonderful attractions, food and drink suppliers, the children's room, the Vintage Café and outside area all contribute to the ultimate success of the event but without the huge attraction of the Chefs theatre we would not have had the crowds that we did...everyone wants to see T.V. chefs!!!

The money raised from this event enabled us to put on the 26th Didcot Street Fair which is so loved by the town and surrounding areas. I am not exaggerating when I say without the profits from the food festival the Street Fair would have run at a loss and may not even have happened.

Thank you!

Chris Wallace – Great British Bake Off finalist and Food Festival organiser.