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I am pleased to confirm that Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee will be held over the weekend 2nd to 5th June 2022 and that both Her Majesty's Official Birthday, on Thursday 2nd June, and Friday 3rd June, are to be Bank Holidays. In addition, the Queen's Pageant Master has created a framework of national level celebrations that counties and communities may choose to build upon. Her Majesty's wish is to promote and celebrate community spirit, through local activities that are widely accessible and affordable. Indeed, most activities will be organised locally on a self-help basis.

The outline of the national events includes The Queen's Official Birthday on 2nd June that will be marked by Trooping the Colour in Whitehall, an RAF fly-past over Buckingham Palace and, in the evening, the lighting of beacons across Great Britain. On the Friday there is to be a national Service of Thanksgiving in St Paul's Cathedral. On Saturday, The Queen will be attending events, including racing at Epsom. In the evening there will be a 'Party at the Palace' which is to be televised. Finally, on Sunday, the hope is that local communities will hold celebratory picnics characterised as 'The Big Lunch'. The Queen's Platinum Jubilee website, www.royal.uk/platinumjubilee; is an excellent source of information and sets the tone wonderfully.

Given this background, my team and I are seeking your help to promote Platinum Jubilee celebrations in your towns and parishes. We have put our heads together and have identified a number of ideas that may inspire you and your communities. These are neither exhaustive nor prescriptive and you may wish to develop your own ideas to best meet local needs. Nonetheless, our thoughts include:

- Community Decoration – Week of 23-27 May 22. The intent is to promote the decoration of towns and villages with bunting and flags as well as to encourage retail and leisure outlets to dress windows in Platinum Jubilee themes.
- Beacon Lighting - Thursday 02 Jun 22. The aim is to promote the lighting of as many beacons as possible across the county and encourage youth participation. That could include lantern walks and a piper or trumpeter playing prior to firing the beacons (9.15pm) which would be followed by social gatherings with drinks and nibbles if appropriate. In the preceding weeks, there may be the opportunity for schools to discuss The Queen's Platinum Jubilee, her remarkable reign and her service to the Nation and Commonwealth.
- Music Night – Friday 03 Jun 22. There may be a window of opportunity to hold music events in Oakham, Uppingham and parishes on Friday afternoon and early evening.

Central to this was the idea of 'Music in the Park' or 'Music Night', which could draw on previous experiences and could include youth dance demonstrations and arts and crafts displays.

- Rutland Show - Saturday 04 Jun 22. It has been confirmed that this year's Rutland Show will be held on Saturday and promote a strong Jubilee theme. The show is a traditional event that has been well supported for a number of years and I expect that it will be a huge success in June next year. I highly recommend it to you all.
- Hospitality Venues. Pubs, clubs and restaurants could be encouraged to screen the televised national celebrations and promote Platinum Jubilee themes. Perhaps even a 'Jubilee Brew' or tippie.
- Services of Thanksgiving - Sunday 05 Jun 22. Early indications are that the Church of England will conduct special services on that Sunday. It is hoped that a formal service will be held at All Saints Oakham and that services of celebration will also take place in the many beautiful parish churches across our county.
- The Big Lunch – Sunday 05 Jun 22. This is the biggest and single most important event to celebrate The Queen's Platinum Jubilee and should promote vibrant communities in Rutland. The intent is to encourage all localities to celebrate the Jubilee with self-help street parties in an affordable and accessible manner bringing individuals, families and communities together. It should be above all a happy celebration of The Queen's reign and the joys of being part of a wider Commonwealth of nations and peoples. This to be guided and managed by towns and parishes to meet their individual needs and circumstances.

Clearly, this presents both a wonderful opportunity and a challenge. However, there is time to seek community input, test ideas and plan. Indeed, I am minded of the need to engage widely not only with towns, parishes and schools, but also with voluntary organisations. I'm sure ideas will bubble up and in scoping these issues will arise, but these should not be insurmountable utilising the expertise and goodwill embedded in our county.

Whilst we have 8 months until the Platinum Jubilee, there is a lot to plan and communicate. I would like Rutland's contribution to the Jubilee to be significant and wish to help publicise all you are doing. To that end my team will investigate the opportunity to create a Platinum Jubilee portal on my website and within the Rutland County Council website for reference and publicity and we will create other material for print and electronic media. This will be a key body of work and your input would be most welcome.

In summary, Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate her extraordinary reign and bring people together across Rutland. To make it the great success that it deserves to be will require planning and fore thought building on the expertise, skills and enthusiasm that Rutlanders have in abundance. My team and I very much look forward to working with you.

Sarah Furness.