

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Enterprise Planning & Infrastructure
DATE	11th September 2012
DIRECTOR	Gordon McIntosh
TITLE OF REPORT	City Events Programme 2013 - 2014
REPORT NUMBER:	EPI/12/146

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek approval for the 2013 - 2014 City Events programme and associated budget as outlined in Appendices 1 and 2.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. That members note the content of this report.
2. That members approve the proposed City Events programme for 2013 - 2014.
3. That members approve the proposed budget to deliver the programme for 2013 - 2014.
4. That this report is referred to Finance & Resource Committee to consider the request for monies from the Common Good Fund.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Monies totaling £468,000 were secured from the E P & I revenue budget and the Common Good Fund to deliver a dynamic but compact programme of City Events for Aberdeen in 2012 – 2013 (see Appendix 1 for details of the proposed events, Appendix 2 for a budget breakdown and Appendix 3 for an indication of the main costs items). This report outlines the proposed financial implications in maintaining the programme at current levels, the introduction of a one off event in 2013-2014 and to take into account additional expenditure that requires to be met from the introduction of new legislation that impacts on the delivery of events in the city applicable from 1 April 2012.

It should be noted that there are significant budgetary pressures placed on all the individual event budgets due to rising costs associated with traffic management, Temporary Traffic Restriction Orders (TTRO), Licensing and installation of essential events infrastructure.

Similarly the costs associated with the provision of stewarding, security, medical and welfare also continue to rise annually but are a necessary

requirement to meet our obligations under Health and Safety legislation.

Appendix 3 details the breakdown of expenditure for each event currently delivered by City Events.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Staffing

Officers in the City Events team possess specialist knowledge and skills that are needed to meet the standards expected within current Health and Safety legislation and public sector guidance, as laid out in “The Event Safety Guide – A Guide to Health, Safety and Welfare at Music and Similar Events” (commonly known as “The Purple Guide”). There is therefore no direct correlation between the number of qualified staff and the number of events that can be organised by the events team. The current staff compliment represents the minimum number of qualified staff needed for a single large event and the proposed programme of work represents the maximum number of events capable of being delivered by this team.

The current team consists of 3 skilled Events Officers (1 x Senior Events Officer and 2 x Events Officers). All these officers have lead responsibilities to deliver specific events and activities within the programme and there is no capacity within current staffing levels for officers to double up should there be one or more officers unable to carry out their duties due to long term absence or illness. Should this number decrease at any significant period of time new staff would need to be recruited or, alternatively, current and additional events would require to be removed to ensure safe delivery. The team is therefore, inevitably, focused on event delivery and has no capacity to plan for the future legacy of the city events programme or its future development. Likewise, there is insufficient capacity to facilitate knowledge transfer between officers or explore opportunities to secure other income streams that would support the future growth of the events programme.

It should also be noted the Senior Events Officer will retire from the Council on 31 March 2013 and that a suitable replacement will need to be found. The next six months will therefore be a time of transition, with increased pressure on existing officers until the newly appointed Senior Events Officer becomes familiar with the role and responsibilities of this position and the current programme of events.

The current Senior Events Officer will also be on a reduced working week from October, as part of the phased retirement scheme, so this will also impact on the ability of other officer's to deliver and develop current and future programmes. Accordingly, to support the City Events Team during this time, it is proposed that one agency staff member with relevant event experience will be appointed for 10 hours

per week to assist through the phased retirement period. The work to be undertaken would relate to both office based duties and event delivery in evenings and at weekends. Costs will be met within existing E, P & I budgets.

Support for twinning and existing civic projects would continue to be core activities, with these planned to be more closely aligned to the events programme, or provide additional input to other promotional events that are being planned by external organisations or individuals.

City Twinning

There is an ambition for activities associated with Aberdeen City Council's Twinning portfolio to become more closely aligned with the work of the City Events Team and to investigate the opportunities of joint working during major events.

The twinning function will benefit from being included in the City Events Team and existing working relationships with our external twinning partners will be strengthened. This will also be mutually beneficial in future years when resources and budgets are challenged. The Twinning budget is wholly funded by the Common Good Fund and is not used to support the development of any joint working between city events and twinning. However, future support for events could be identified where these events have an international dimension.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

During the development of the Enterprise, Planning & Infrastructure Service Five Year Priority Based Business Plan, it was determined that the City Events Team would face a reduction in its revenue budget in the coming years. This report outlines the proposed programme of events the City Events Team is tasked with delivering on behalf of Aberdeen City Council in 2013 – 2014. It also identifies the associated budgets that ensure events are delivered within our legal responsibilities under Health and Safety legislation.

The City Events Team have for many years provided internal and external advice and support to event organisers to ensure that safe, secure and enjoyable events are delivered in the city for the local residents, surrounding population and those visiting the city for business or leisure purposes. There is ongoing pressure on the team to identify and develop new events in terms of developing the city's offering as well continuing to meet priorities within the existing events programme as a result partnerships with external partners are crucial going forward.

The City Events Team work closely with a number of City agencies including the Aberdeen City and Shire Hotels Association and Aberdeen BID to ensure that events that are held in Aberdeen support

local business and offer exciting activities to support the weekend leisure break market. These events also aim to attract local residents and national and overseas visitors which in turn benefit local traders within the city.

The events detailed in the City Events programme contribute to the Common Good of the city, are inclusive, maintain and develop the city's continued Civic Pride and showcase Aberdeen's ability to attract and host major cultural and sporting events.

The team continues to maximise income opportunities through the recovery of fees for advice, consultancy and event delivery time that is provided to assist external event organisers who run commercial activities in the city. Income is also derived from the hire of our parks and open spaces. Income from sponsorship has proved to be very difficult to secure, especially in these economic times, particularly since the team has limited staff resources to approach potential sponsors and do not have the required skill set to maximise sponsorship opportunities.

6. IMPACT

Corporate

Aberdeen – the Smarter City

- We will promote Aberdeen as a great place to live, bring up a family, do business and visit.
- We will ensure that Union Street regains its position as the heart of the city and move cultural activity centre-stage through re-invigorated cultural leadership.

Smarter Living (Quality of Life)

- We aspire to be recognised as a City of Culture, a place of excellence for culture and arts by promoting Aberdeen as a cultural centre hosting high quality diverse cultural events for the whole community and beyond.

Smarter Economy (Competitiveness)

- We will work with partners to promote the city as a place to invest, live, work and export from.

Community Plan

- Work with other organisations, agencies and groups, including Visit Scotland and Visit Aberdeen, to encourage tourism and the provision of facilities for tourists.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

8. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Bill Farquhar
Senior Events Officer
williamf@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Ext 3575

Appendix 1 - City Events Programme 2013-2014

BP Summer Big Screens

For over 20 years, the Royal Opera House has screened live relays from its building at Covent Garden into the Piazza to the delight of thousands and have now extended the relay to cities around the UK.

Aberdeen has now become a popular venue and gives a unique opportunity to watch world class performances live and direct from The Royal Opera House in the beautiful surroundings of the Duthie Park. Anything up to 5,000 people attend the screening, dependant on the weather conditions.

The Summer Big Screens concept is to:

- Introduce opera and ballet in relaxed surroundings to new audiences
- Give people an opportunity to see the world's best
- To provide free world class entertainment to families who might otherwise not be able to purchase tickets

The partners in the Summer Big Screens 2012 are Aberdeen City Council, Royal Opera House and BP.

The budget covers all infrastructure costs to accommodate the event such as barriers, stewarding, first aid, Scottish Ambulance Service, toilets, waste management, tower lights and chairs.

The 2012/2013 programme delivered two BP Summer Big Screens as this was an Olympic year. For the 2013/2014 programme, we will revert back to one event. There is no proposed change to this budget.

Highland Games

For over 50 years, our Highland Games has been an ever popular and long standing event in the programme. It has developed over the years to become a firm favourite for all the family and is always held on the 3rd Sunday in June. The Games are a multi faceted event that includes traditional highland games, free family activities, trade and charity stalls, Scottish traditional music, funfair, beer tent, armed forces displays, catering. The Games are striving hard to portray a family friendly environment with free activities and others that are low cost to use and participate in.

The budget income is dependant on the weather conditions and attendance can fluctuate from 5,000 up to over 15,000. Inclement weather can result in a low attendance and will have an impact on this budget. A low attendance will impact on the ability of the team to deliver the Games within budget and overall will lead to pressure to deliver the overall City Events programme within the agreed budget.

Expenditure covers infrastructure, family activities, stewarding, medical and welfare, traffic management and publicity. Most of this expenditure is spent on the lead up to the event and therefore there is little scope to reduce costs if the income comes in low.

As these infrastructure costs rise every year, it is proposed to increase the budget by £10,000 to £50,000 in order to allow the development of the Games

and to increase activities that reflect the ethos of a family friendly event. 2014 is the Year of Homecoming and in 2013, the Games would be developed to raise the awareness of Homecoming and to look at activities and marketing that will add value to the Games in the lead up to 2014.

Tartan Day

An established and popular event held in the City Centre on the last Saturday in July. The day kicks off with the Tartan Day Parade led by the massed pipe bands from the Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association and participants from the Aberdeen International Youth Festival, Wallace 700 and various re-enactment groups. Other events in the programme are the Wallace 700 Commemoration Ceremony, Tartan Concert, re-enactment displays and combat demonstrations, special film screenings, Royal Scottish Country Dancing Society, Scottish Culture & Tradition and Scottish music being played in a wide variety of intimate outside venues across the city centre.

Numbers attending this year were disappointing due to very wet weather conditions in the afternoon. Awareness of the event continues to be an issue with poor support from the City Centre retailers and businesses. Discussions will be held with Aberdeen BID to address these issues and to start the engagement with the BID's partners and members at an early stage for the 2013 event.

2014 is the Year of Homecoming. Tartan Day played an important role in the last Homecoming in 2009 with an enhanced Wallace Ceremony featuring Clan Wallace members from all over the world attending the ceremony at the Wallace Statue. There was also a Beating Retreat held on Union Terrace where there were a number ex patriots coming home to Scotland to attend. It is envisaged that the 2013 event will raise the awareness of the 2014 Homecoming with a view to increase the profile of the 2014 Tartan Day.

The budget covers traffic management, pipe bands, actors, entertainers, stewarding, infrastructure and publicity.

There is no proposed change to this budget.

Armed Forces Day

Held on the last Saturday in June, the event celebrates the contribution of our veteran and serving armed forces personnel and gives an opportunity for residents of and visitors to the City to show their support and thanks.

The event takes the form of a parade down Aberdeen's premier street consisting of veteran associations and individuals, serving personnel, cadets from all three of our armed forces and vintage military vehicles. Led by over 8 pipe bands, the parade generates great pride and emotion and attracts over 10,000 people. This is a very popular event in our programme.

The budget covers traffic management, stewarding, first aid, pipe bands, transport and promotion. There is not sufficient funding from ACC to deliver this event, however, there is an MOD annual grant applied for and successfully awarded to the Council. The grant for 2012/13 was £6k. The MOD has indicated that this funding is being reduced year on year and will finally be withdrawn. Our original funding from the MOD stood at £10k. The

grant reduction has already impacted on the event with the withdrawal of funds for refreshments for parade participants at the Bridge of Don Barracks. Any further reduction from the MOD will again impact on the event and more elements of the parade will be cut. The application process for funding from the MOD begins at the end of this year and at present, the MOD will not indicate what level of funding may be awarded. There is no proposed change to this budget.

Fireworks Night

An annual event always held on 5 November and attracting well over 15,000 spectators. Venue for the past 8 years has been Aberdeen Beach. A 20 minute display, accompanied by music, set up and delivered by a professional, licensed and competent fireworks company.

Budget covers provision and firing of fireworks, traffic management, medical and welfare, emergency planning, stewarding, park and ride, entertainment and publicity.

The 2012/2013 budget has been increased to reflect the costs associated with delivering the event within a safe environment and robust emergency planning procedures. There is no proposed change to this budget.

Christmas Lights Switch On

A very popular and firm family favourite in our events programme attracting well over 20,000 people. A carnival themed parade led by a pipe band, the Lord Provost and his special helper will travel down Union Street switching on each light as it passes underneath.

Budget covers traffic management, stewarding, entertainers, hire of costumes, infrastructure, confetti canons and publicity.

There is no proposed change to this budget.

Santa Parade

A joint delivery in partnership with Trinity Shopping Centre, this event welcomes the arrival of Father Christmas on his sleigh and being pulled up Union Street by his real reindeer. On average, 3,000 people attend.

ACC contribution covers traffic management and extra stewarding.

There is no proposed change to this budget.

Nativity Scene

A traditional nativity scene c/w with appropriate music set up in the heart of the city centre within the grounds of the St Nicholas Kirk and an opportunity for visitors to enjoy the true message of Christmas.

The budget covers the delivery, set up, dismantle and uplift of the shed and nativity figures. Although it is difficult to deduce the numbers visiting the scene over the period it is open, the team receive many positive and glowing comments from the public and specially on the traditional message that this event symbolises.

There is no proposed change to this budget.

Christmas Tree Switch On

The people of the city of Stavanger, one of Aberdeen's twin cities, very generously gift the city a Christmas tree from Norway, sited on the Castlegate

facing up Union Street. A switch on ceremony takes place to bless the tree featuring members of the Regional Ecumenical Team, the Salvation Army, Lord Provost of the City of Aberdeen and Mayor of the City of Stavanger.

Budget covers installation, dressing and dismantle of tree, transport costs and publicity.

There is no proposed change to this budget.

Carol Concerts

A very popular and free event that has grown from delivering one concert to two. Over 1000 attend the David Welch Winter Gardens to enjoy and sing along to all their favourite carols. Mince pies and mulled wine help the audience to enjoy the convivial atmosphere that the Winter Gardens offer.

Friends of the Duthie Park is an organisation set up last year to further promote, nurture and protect the Duthie Park as one of Aberdeen's jewels in the crown. The Friends supported the 2011 carol Concerts in terms of staff resources and stewarding. City Events will continue to work with the Friends as we see this as a valuable asset in the support of the delivery of events in the park.

There is no proposed change to this budget.

Festive Community Grants

City Events administer and manage the Festive Community Grant Fund. This budget allows for groups, communities and organisations to apply for up to £500 to help support any festive activity or event that they are organising. The grant can help with staff costs, venue hire, refreshments (no alcohol), publicity and promotion, presents and entertainment. The fund is very popular and in 2011 over 80 applications were received from various groups across the city. All were successful in being awarded grant funding. If demand did exceed the total grant funding, we would ensure that all applicants received some funding albeit not to the sums requested.

There is no proposed change to this budget.

Festive Weekend Entertainment

Over the years, the Team has delivered a programme of festive entertainment within the City Centre over the 3 weekends in the lead up to Christmas. A budget reduction from £30,000 to £10,000 in 2010 - 2011 meant that the programme was not sustainable over the 3 weekends. It was therefore decided to concentrate our resources over 1 weekend. Last year's weekend entertainment was delivered with a high labour resource from the City Events team. This was felt not to be a good return on this activity and it was agreed to use this budget to support other event activities in the festive season that added value to the overall experience of the Winter Festival. Talks are presently being held with various partner agencies and organisations to progress possible ideas and activities that can be supported.

There is no proposed change to this budget.

Galas

City Events administer and manage the Galas budget. This budget allows for groups and organisations that arrange and deliver a gala/fun day in their community to receive grant funding to support associated costs in delivery of

their event. The grant can support towards infrastructure costs, entertainment and publicity. This is a small budget and there is increasing pressure year on year to accommodate all requests from existing and new communities due to the increase in costs of service delivery. It is therefore proposed to increase the budget from £6,000 to £10,000 to meet the demand for support from communities.

Summer/Winter Promotions

A budget of £30000 is set aside for the promotion of our Summer and Winter Festivals. This includes advertising in various local publications such as Beach Ballroom what's on, Raring2Go, Scottish Field, Explore Scotland, Aberdeen Journals and the Leopard Magazine. We have also used radio media for specific events such as our Fireworks Display and publicised the Winter Festival on a First Aberdeen bus and panels on Aberdeen to Perth, Dundee and Inverness trains. We also produce and distribute posters, leaflets and fliers for various events and in particular publish and distribute 10,000 Winter Festival brochures across the City. The brochure will also target audiences that live within 1 hour travel time to the City.

There is no proposed change to this budget.

Equipment

City Events have equipment that is used to assist in the delivery of events. The budget covers upkeep, maintenance and replacement. Our equipment ranges from a PA Caravan, Stage Unit and a portable PA unit to generators, tables, chairs, steward vests and instant shelters. Although it only shows a budget of £10000, there is a larger expenditure to cover the maintenance and purchase of equipment including PPE. This expenditure is offset through income generated by hire costs for our parks and open spaces.

There is no proposed change to this budget.

Events Training

A small budget of £4000 allows City Events staff to maintain/increase their knowledge and experience in the event industry. Staff have in the past attended various national events seminars, workshops, conferences, and exhibitions. They also keep abreast of new trends and/or legislation in the industry and in particular attend accredited courses at the Cabinet Office's Emergency Planning College in York.

There is no proposed change to this budget.

Income

City Events deliver one event that attracts an entry fee. It is the Highland Games. All other events are free and therefore City Events must look at other streams of income generation to help meet the annual budget targets. A new system of charging for use of our parks and open spaces was introduced for 2012/13. A separate report EPI/12/145 has been submitted to Committee outlining the current arrangements in place to manage city events in parks and open spaces and the current pricing structure in place to manage the bookings. The charges are based on a set of criteria that is measured against the event to determine what daily rate will be charged. There are 3 rates of £250, £500 and £1000.

The monies generated will help to maintain, replace and purchase new equipment and also to reinvest back into our parks and open spaces to make them more attractive and fit for purpose for event hire.

Another stream of income introduced in 2012 is to charge event organisers an hourly rate fee for any member of the City Events Team that is called upon to help/support in the delivery of non ACC events within the city. Over many years, City Events have supported the delivery and success of other events in the city in terms of giving professional guidance and expertise, attending meetings both on and off site, assisting with event and contingency planning and supporting the organiser on event day(s). City Events will still commit to helping these event organisers but will agree the level of free and paid support at the point of contact. At present, City Events fees are based on an hourly rate of £20.

Expenditure not accounted for in budget

Over the years, City Events has managed to absorb any new costs that arise through changes in legislation and/or increase in current charges. These charges have covered Public Entertainment Licence (PEL), Market Operators Licence and Temporary Traffic Restriction Orders (TTRO). It has become increasingly difficult to absorb these charges within existing budgets and our ability and capacity to deliver the 2012/2013 programme.

New legislation has been introduced from 1 April 2012 for the granting of a Public Entertainment Licence (PEL) and this has resulted in more of ACC events having to have a PEL in place. Free events such as Fireworks Night, Tartan Day and Carol Concerts now require a PEL and there is an associated cost applied from ACC Licensing. It is envisaged that this will cost in the region of £2,000 per year and it is proposed that there is a budget allocated for this activity as the income received by ACC Licensing is not transferred to City Events.

New Event for 2013 – 2014 only

The regeneration of the Duthie Park is being carried out over the whole of 2012 and into the early months of 2013. Lottery funding was secured to do the works. Initial discussions have been held with the Duthie Park Manager and the Friends of Duthie Park to look at marking the completion of the refurbishment works with an event in the summer of 2013

A highly successful event was delivered in 2008 to mark the 125th anniversary of the opening of the Duthie Park with stalls, exhibitions and activities for all the family.

The Duthie Park can support an event in terms of staffing and venue but a budget will be required to deliver the infrastructure, entertainment, activities and emergency planning. It is proposed to seek funding of £10,000 from the Common Good Fund.

Summary

As costs rise year on year, City Events must ensure that event delivery is not compromised in terms of safety. At present we do not have the capacity to absorb increases in costs for service delivery that impacts on safety and in particular, stewarding, medical and welfare, traffic management and emergency planning.

The proposed 2013 – 2014 programme and associated budgets reflect the need to meet and maintain the highest standards of event safety.

Appendix 2 – Proposed Budget for City Events Programme 2013-2014

CITY EVENTS	Current Budget Revenue	Current Budget Common Good	Proposed Budget Revenue	Proposed Budget Common Good	Proposed Date(s)
Salaries (1 x G14 , 2 x G12)	£130,000		£130,000		n/a
BP Summer Big Screens	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000		TBC
Highland Games	£40,000		£50,000		16 June
Armed Forces Day		£10,000		£10,000	29 June
Tartan Day & Wallace Celebrations		£28,000		£28,000	27 July
Fireworks Display	£14,000	£14,000	£14,000	£14,000	5 Nov
Christmas Lights Switch On	£25,000		£25,000		24 Nov
Santa Parade	£4,000		£4,000		1 Dec
Nativity Scene		£3,000		£3,000	1 Dec
Weekend Festive Entertainment	£10,000		£10,000		TBC
Christmas Tree	£7,000		£7,000		1 Dec
Carol Concerts	£4,000		£4,000		21 Dec
Festive Community Grants	£25,000	£4,000	£25,000	£4,000	By 31 Dec
Galas		£6,000		£10,000	n/a
Equipment	£10,000		£10,000		n/a
Summer/Winter Promotions	£30,000		£30,000		n/a
Events Training	£4,000		£4,000		
New Event (Duthie Park)	n/a	n/a		£10,000	TBC
Public Entertainment Licence	n/a	n/a	£2,000		n/a
Total	£313,000	£75,000	£325,000	£79,000	

Appendix 3

Event	Budget	Event Infrastructure	Traffic Management and Equipment	Stewarding and Security	Medical and Welfare
Highland Games	40,000	25,480	7,250	5,270	2,000
BP Summer Screens	20,000	7,790	4,500	6,360	1,350
Armed Forces Day	13,000	6,703	3,250	3,047	nil
Tartan Day	28,000	19,820	3,850	4,100	230
Fireworks Night	28,000	10,300	10,000	5,300	2,400
Christmas Lights Switch On	25,000	14,400	6,550	3,800	250
Santa Parade	4,000	20	2,400	1,580	nil
Carol Concerts	4,000	3,050	nil	750	200
Galas	6,000	1940	4,060	nil	nil