ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE Enterprise Strategic Planning &

Infrastructure

DATE 12 November 2013

DIRECTOR Gordon McIntosh

TITLE OF REPORT City Events & Twinning 2014 - 2015

REPORT NUMBER: EPI/13/185

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek approval for the City Events & Twinning programme 2014 - 2015 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 support the proposed City Events programme for 2014 2015.
- 3. That members support the proposed budget of up to £928,850 in total to deliver the programme for 2014 2015.
- 4. That members support funding for an Events Executive G10 from within the ESP & I revenue budget that would grow and develop the existing income generating activities of the service, subject to the normal HR recruitment process.
- 5. That this report is referred to Finance & Resource Committee to consider the request for monies from the Common Good Fund and General Fund should members approve the relevant expenditure.
- 6. That members receive a further report in summer 2014 outlining the creation of an Events Fund in 2015 that would maximise the opportunities for attracting new events to Aberdeen of a national and international calibre.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This report outlines the proposed financial implications from the ESP & I revenue budget, Common Good Fund and General Fund to deliver a dynamic but compact programme of events for Aberdeen in 2014 – 2015.

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

The EP & SI revenue budget also has to accommodate the costs associated with the Performing Rights Society for Music (PRS) fees that a number of Aberdeen City Council's events are legally subject to. Previously these costs were met from the local authority's General Fund.

Additional pressures are also placed on all the event budgets due to the increase in expenditure associated with the securing and staffing of parks and open spaces across the city that are regularly occupied by the travelling community. As a result stewards, overnight facilities and infrastructure has to be deployed to ensure that Aberdeen City Council can deliver its core programme of events for the citizens of and visitors to Aberdeen. In the 2013-14 financial year, City Events have spent approx £3,000 securing its public spaces for its own purposes.

Members are asked to consider meeting some of the costs associated with the delivery of this programme from the General Fund through the annual budget setting process with Finance due to the existing pressures currently placed on service budgets and the Common Good Fund.

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 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 at this time.

The current team consists of 3 skilled Events Officers (1 x Senior City Events Officer and 2 x City Events Officers) and 1 City Events Assistant. 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 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.

In order to address these issues, it is proposed that an additional post is created within the City Events Team that would support the opportunities for income generation within the service including the charges associated with parks and open spaces, thus allowing senior officers in the team to focus on the establishment of an Event Fund, event attraction and sponsorship generation around existing and new events in Aberdeen.

City Twinning

Since 2012 there has been a significant strengthening of the relationship between City Events and Twinning, with twin city partners actively participating in a number of the events delivered by the team, adding an international and cultural dynamic that hasn't existed previously.

This has also resulted in reciprocal arrangements where organisations from within Aberdeen have been invited to participate in events, activities and projects overseas benefiting our local communities and citizens.

The twinning programme continues to grow and develop annually and actively encourages engagement from groups who have never accessed support either financial or in-kind from Aberdeen City Council previously.

Members are provided with the opportunity each EP&SI Committee to determine which twinning projects should be supported and also receive regular updates about the growth and development of the programme.

In 2014-15, the programme of twinning support will continue to grow with twin city partners already agreeing to work collaboratively on projects to commemorate the Great War, educational knowledge transfer as well as participating in Aberdeen's Summer and Winter festivals.

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 2014 – 2015. 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 and as a result, partnerships with external partners are crucial going forward.

The City Events Team work closely with a number of City agencies including Visit Aberdeen, the Aberdeen City and Shire Hotels Association and Aberdeen Inspired to ensure that events that are held in Aberdeen support local business and offer exciting activities to support the weekend leisure destination 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.

Where possible 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 Aberdeen's parks and open spaces.

Income from sponsorship has proved to be very difficult to secure, particularly since the team has limited staff resources to approach potential sponsors, are lacking in available capacity to develop skills that will support the generation of sponsorship and are unable to develop a long term event delivery plan due to the annual budgetary process.

As well as proposing an increase in staff within the team to generate capacity for senior officers to develop a programme of new events and sponsorship, support is sought for the establishment of an Events Fund to be created in 2015 that would provide a financial resource to

maximise the opportunities for attracting new events to Aberdeen in the future.

The budget, criteria and framework for the fund have yet to be determined but it is proposed that a further report be brought to Finance & Resources Committee in summer 2014 which provides members with the detail required to determine whether such a fund will provide the city with the opportunity to develop its core event programme to match the city's future ambitions as a dynamic, cultural hub.

This will also afford officers the opportunity during 2014 to review the existing events programme, determine those events which should be ceased or delivered by other means in the city other than Aberdeen City Council and advise the relevant organising bodies accordingly.

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.
- MANAGEMENT OF RISK
- 8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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Appendix 1 - City Events Programme 2014-2015

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.

Due to the current workload of the City Events Team it is proposed that beyond 2014 they no longer support the delivery of galas to maximise their resources in identifying and attracting high quality events to Aberdeen,. As a result Aberdeen City Council needs to determine whether ongoing support should be maintained for the galas and if so, how authority can offer the relevant support with minimum resources.

Summer/Winter Promotions

A budget is set aside for the promotion of our Summer and Winter Festivals. This includes advertising in various local publications such as relevant What's on, Raring2Go, Scottish Field, Explore Scotland and Aberdeen Journals. The team also uses radio for specific events such as the Fireworks Display and have publicised the Winter Festival on First Aberdeen buses and panels on Aberdeen to Perth, Dundee and Inverness trains. City Events also produce and distribute posters, leaflets and fliers for various events and in particular publish and distribute 10,000 Winter Festival brochures locally, nationally and internationally in conjunction with our partners at Aberdeen Inspired, Visit Aberdeen and the Aberdeen City and Shire Hotels Association. During 2014/15 it is proposed to continue to develop the services online presence through website development and social media.

Highland Games

For over 50 years, Aberdeen's Highland Games has been an ever popular and long standing event in the annual 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 combines traditional highland games, free family activities, trade and charity stalls, Scottish traditional music, a funfair, beer tent, armed forces displays and catering.

The Games provide a safe, family friendly environment with a range of affordable or free activities so they are inclusive to as many of those who attend the event.

The budget income is dependant on the weather conditions and attendance can fluctuate from 5,000 to over 15,000 people. Inclement weather can result in a low attendance and will have an impact on the income derived for the entrance fees on the day of the event.

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 realised on the day is low.

In 2014 the City Events Team will again look to increase activities that reflect the ethos of a family friendly event whilst incorporating the Year of Homecoming and the summer of sport from key events across Scotland.

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 2,000 people.

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, in previous years there has been an annual grant awarded from the MOD of £6k. The MOD has indicated that this funding will be reduced in future years and finally 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.

Beyond 2014 it is proposed that officers work closely with the AUOTC in transferring the organisation and delivery of the parade for future years, so there is no City Events involvement.

BP Big Screen

For over 20 years, the Royal Opera House has screened live relays from its building at Covent Garden to cities around the UK.

Aberdeen is a popular venue for this occasion and provides 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 Big Screen concept:

- Introduces opera and ballet in relaxed surroundings to new audiences
- Gives people an opportunity to see the world's best performances and performers
- Provides free world class entertainment to families who might otherwise not be able to access tickets

The partners in the Big Screen 2014 project are Aberdeen City Council, the Royal Opera House and BP.

Aberdeen City Council's financial contribution covers all infrastructure costs associated with the event including barriers, stewarding, first aid facilities and staff, toilets, waste management, lighting and seating.

As these infrastructure costs continue to rise, it is proposed to increase the budget in order to allow the event to maintain its high standard of delivery and safety.

Aberdeen's Winter Festival-City of Aberdeen Fireworks Display

This annual event at Aberdeen Beach is always held on 5 November and attracts well over 15,000 spectators. A 20 minute display, accompanied by

music, set up is delivered by a professional, licensed and competent fireworks company and regularly receives positive feedback from its attendees.

The budget for this event covers provision and firing of fireworks, traffic management, medical and welfare, emergency planning, stewarding, park and ride services, an independent safety advisor, pre-entertainment and publicity.

An increase in this budget is proposed to ensure the City Events Team continue to deliver this event within a safe environment with robust emergency planning procedures.

Aberdeen's Winter Festival-Christmas Lights Switch On

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

The budget for this event covers traffic management, stewarding, entertainers, hire of costumes, infrastructure, confetti canons and associated publicity. In 2013 more money was made available to increase the content of the parade to include additional community groups and would hope the money would be available in future years to continue the parades growth and development.

Aberdeen's Winter Festival-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.

The budget currently available covers installation, dressing and dismantle of tree, transport costs and publicity.

Aberdeen's Winter Festival-Nativity Scene

A traditional nativity scene with appropriate music is displayed in the heart of the city centre within the grounds of the St Nicholas Kirk and provides 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 specifically on the traditional message that this event symbolises.

The current budget covers all costs associated with the installation, removal and storage of the scene on an annual basis.

Aberdeen's Winter Festival-Carol Concerts

A very popular and free event that has grown from delivering one concert to two to meet demand.

Over 1000 attend the David Welch Winter Gardens to enjoy and sing along to all their favourite carols in the run up to Christmas.

The Friends of Duthie Park continue to support the delivery of these concerts through staffing support and the City Events Team will work with them in 2014 to determine whether this event can be fully delivered by the group without further support from Aberdeen City Council.

This budget covers the provision of PA equipment, seating, stewarding and hospitality.

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 2012 over 80 applications were received from various groups across the city. All were successful in being awarded grant funding though demand did exceed the total grant funding, so all applicants received some funding albeit not to the sums requested.

It is proposed that the City Events Team cease the management and delivery of the Festive Community Grant Fund after winter 2013, as the main function of this activity is administration based and does not require specialist event knowledge to administer this process. Discussions will be undertaken at a service level across the council to determine who could/should manage these grants in the future thus creating capacity within the City Events Team to focus on the attraction and delivery of new events with economic impact.

Aberdeen's Winter Festival-Hogmanay

Featuring a large fireworks display launched from the roof of HMT and a small outdoor stage on Union Terrace to entertain the crowds prior to the arrival of the new year, this event continues to attract 3,000 people onto the streets in Aberdeen city centre.

In 2013/14 this budget also supported the delivery of additional activities in Union Terrace Gardens during the winter festival including an additional Christmas tree, Santas Grottos and outdoor entertainment stage for local group performances.

It is the teams' intention to continue to deliver this activity in support of Aberdeen's strong winter festival offering.

Equipment

City Events have in invested equipment that is used to assist in the delivery of events across the city. The budget covers the upkeep, maintenance and replacement of equipment in order to meet all health and safety legislation relevant to infrastructure used in the successful delivery of events. Our equipment ranges from a PA Caravan, Stage Unit and a portable PA unit to generators, tables, chairs, steward vests and instant shelters .Expenditure on equipment is offset through income generated by hire costs for our parks and open spaces.

Events Training

A small budget allows City Events staff to maintain/increase their knowledge and experience in the event industry. Staff have in the past attended various national event 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.

Income Generation

City Events deliver one event, the Highland Games that attracts an entry fee. 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 will be submitted to Committee in January 2014 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 in the future.

The monies generated 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.

New events

Aberdeen Day

It is proposed that a new event be introduced to build on the strong cultural base which exists within three of Aberdeen's most prominent buildings and to offer a new platform to celebrate local culture. Aberdeen's rich heritage will be celebrated though a series of public events held in and around the Central

Library, St Mark's Church and His Majesty's Theatre - known colloquially as "Education, Salvation and Damnation".

The event will comprise performances, exhibitions, workshops, and other activities which showcase the local artistic community, provide opportunities for participation and learning, which celebrate life in Aberdeen and promote the talents of our citizens. This event will replace Tartan Day.

Talks are presently being held with various partner agencies and organisations to progress possible ideas and activities that can be incorporated into this event.

The proposed budget is to cover traffic management, entertainers, stewarding, infrastructure and publicity. It is requested that a budget of £20,000 from the Common Good Fund be allocated to this new event.

Events only in 2014

Summer of Sport

Following discussions with our partners in Visit Aberdeen, Aberdeen Inspired and other city sporting venues, the group have agreed to investigate the installation of large outdoor screens across the city to encourage people to gather and enjoy the programme of sport in 2014.

From the World Cup, Commonwealth Games and the Ryder Cup there are a number of opportunities to broadcast these occasions for public enjoyment.

All partners would be responsible for the costs associated with this initiative and Aberdeen City Council would provide in-kind support and advice on safe and suitable locations for this activity and may wish to provide some financial support subject to financial commitments to ensure this can be delivered safely for the benefit of Aberdeen's citizens.

4 Scots Homecoming Parade

As per the parade delivered in 2011 down Union Street, a request has been received to again provide parade support to this returning group from the armed forces.

The requested budget would cover traffic management, stewarding and staffing for the occasion.

Queens Baton Relay

Glasgow will be hosting the 20th Commonwealth Games on the 23rd July to 3rd August. As part of the build up to the games, a single baton will travel around all the Commonwealth countries and will then pass through each local authority in Scotland before being handed over to her majesty for her to read the message contained in the baton.

We have been asked to create a route that the baton will travel within Aberdeen on Monday 30th June 2014 and an end of day event. This end of day event will be shown during the BBC coverage of the baton and in a live link with the 'One Show' programme on BBC1 from 7.00 – 7.30pm.

The Commonwealth Games Team have advised that no financial assistance is available to support and deliver the batons journey through Aberdeen City and that due to existing commercial agreements in place the ability to raise sponsorship to support the delivery of the occasion will be limited. Guidelines have yet to be received so we can determine where opportunities may exist to attract partnership agreements but our best efforts will be made to reduce the costs to ACC where possible.

Members are asked to consider 3 options in relation to the end of day celebration:

Option 1: Indoor Aberdeen Sports Village-£30,000 This celebration will see a programme of sporting and cultural events come together in the facility to welcome the baton and showcase the best of talent in Aberdeen.

This location will demonstrate partnership working, showcase the facility and provide access to a maximum of 2,500 to enjoy the occasion.

Option 2: Union Terrace Gardens-£50,000

As above but in an outdoor location with fewer numbers due to the topography of the site and the need to secure the infrastructure at street level on Union Terrace.

Access to attend and weather proofing of the event will attract additional costs to ensure the event can be delivered safely while presenting Aberdeen in a positive light to a national and international audience.

Option 3: Aberdeen Beach-£70,000

An outdoor event that will look to connect the sporting facilities grouped around the beach through a programme of come and try, entertainment and cultural activities. Costs will be significantly higher as we will look to affect road closures to ensure the delivery of the event within a safe environment.

Again adverse weather will need to be taken into consideration however a significantly larger crowd can be accommodated at this location.

The batons journey around the city from 8am – 6.30pm will be managed through rolling road closures, so significant traffic management costs should be avoided and the final route will be selected with this in mind.

Further consultation will be undertaken with members when possible routes across/around Aberdeen are identified.

Events being stopped

Tartan Day

After 10 years of this event, it is believed a new focus on local culture and heritage would be of greater benefit to the city. A gradual decline in numbers recognising and participating in Tartan Day have led to the proposal that this event be reinvigorated as Aberdeen Day at different time of year.

Aberdeen International Youth Festival and Wallace Day Celebration organisers will be required to make new arrangements for their events which previously provided supplementary activities to the Tartan Day programme across the course of the day.

Santa Parade

Delivered jointly with Trinity Shopping Centre, this event welcomes the arrival of Father Christmas on his sleigh being pulled up Union Street by his real reindeer. On average, 3,000 people attend.

Going forward it is proposed that this funding be stopped with the understanding that Aberdeen Inspired work with the Trinity Shopping Centre in continuing and developing this activity.

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, however this has proved labour intensive for very little return, so this activity will be cancelled in future years with the team focusing on the core winter festival activities.

Appendix 2 – Proposed Budget for City Events & Twinning 2014-2015

CITY EVENTS	Date	Revenue Budget	Common Good Fund	General Fund
Salaries (1 x G14 , 2 x G12, 1 x G10, 1 x G8)	n/a	£182,000		
Highland Games	15 June	£80,000		
Armed Forces Day	29 June		£10,000	
BP Big Screen	15 July	£20,000		
Aberdeen Day	End Aug/Sept		£20,000	
Aberdeen's Winter Festival- Fireworks Display	5 Nov	£14,000	£25,000	

Aberdeen's Winter Festival-	23 Nov	£25,000		
Christmas Lights Switch On		,		
Aberdeen's Winter Festival-	27 Nov	£7,000		
Christmas Tree				
Festive Community Grants	Nov-Dec	£25,000	£4,000	
Aberdeen's Winter Festival-Nativity	1 Dec		£6,000	
Scene				
Aberdeen's Winter Festival-Carol	20 Dec	£4,000		
Concerts				
Aberdeen's Hogmanay Celebrations	31 Dec		£200,000	
Galas	May-Aug		£10,000	
Equipment		£10,000		
Summer/Winter Promotions		£30,000		
Events Training		£4,000		
Twinning Projects			£137,350	
Performing Rights Society for Music		£30,000		
(PRS)				
2014 Events Only				
Summer of Sport 2014	June - Sept			£10,000 Maximum
4 Scots Homecoming Parade	19 June		£5,500	
Queens Baton Relay	30 June			£70,000 Maximum
Total		£431,000	£417,850	£80,000