

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Enterprise, Strategic Planning & Infrastructure
DATE	21 January 2014
DIRECTOR	Gordon McIntosh
TITLE OF REPORT	Offshore Northern Seas 2014 Festival, Stavanger, Norway
REPORT NUMBER:	EPI/13/250

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report details Aberdeen City Council's proposed involvement in the Offshore Northern Seas (ONS) Festival, 25-27 August 2014 in Stavanger, Norway. It will outline the cost implications of participating in the festival and the activities to be undertaken in support of the Offshore Northern Seas 2014 exhibition and conference.

Approval to attend the Offshore Northern Seas exhibition and conference, which the festival complements, will be dealt with as part of the Economic & Business Development Trade Development report also being considered by this committee.

Funding approval is required from the current 2013-14 Economic & Business Development budget to support the delivery of Aberdeen's presence at ONS 2014.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That members:

- note the content of this report.
- approve the Council's involvement in the Offshore Northern Seas Festival in 2014 and commit existing funding of £20,000 from the Economic & Business Development budget.
- approve the proposed direction for the promotion of Aberdeen at Offshore Northern Seas in 2014.
- approve the participation of the relevant staff as detailed in the Trade Development report to support both the management of a joint Aberdeen City and Shire stand at the exhibition and deliver a strong festival presence.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Total cost for participation at the Offshore Northern Seas Festival is £70,000; however, Aberdeen City Council's total contribution will be £20,000. The costs for the Offshore Northern Seas Festival are budgeted for £20,000 from the Economic & Business Development budget with match funding from Aberdeenshire Council and the remaining monies to be met through sponsorship and other income generation opportunities.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

People: Existing resources from within the Economic & Business Service undertake the activities associated with the delivery of Aberdeen City Council's presence at the ONS14 exhibition and conference and the supporting Festival.

Finance: Total cost for the council's presence at Offshore Northern Seas Festival 2014 as identified within the Economic & Business Development service budget is £20,000.

Health & Safety: There will inevitably be some risks associated with the organisation of a presence and attendance at this festival. All measures relevant to the venue are taken to reduce any risks and local, professional contractors are employed to build and dress the Festival pavilion in line with current health and safety legislation, building standards and temporary structure erection.

Risk Management: A high profile presence at Offshore Northern Seas 2014 promotes Aberdeen City Council's opportunities for Economic & Business Developments existing international links and trade development activities. If Aberdeen City Council did not participate at this key global energy exhibition and conference, this could result in a failure to identify and capitalise on new market opportunities for oil and gas companies in Aberdeen and the across the region.

The financial risks associated with participation at the exhibition and Festival are shared jointly with Aberdeenshire Council.

The City Promotions Team apply standard project management processes and monitor the project for the 12 months prior to the event to ensure the critical path of activity is strictly adhered to.

Social: The Festival provides a unique opportunity to promote the city to an international audience and strengthen the existing social and economic bonds with our twin city Stavanger. The Festival pavilion provides a venue for these activities to continue each evening, following the closure of the exhibition hall.

Economic: Attendance at the exhibition is critical in asserting and building upon Aberdeen's status as a Global Energy Hub and is therefore critical to the future health of the local economy. Trade development activities and the promotion of the city as a destination will support economic growth and increased employment opportunities. By presenting Aberdeen as a growth market this guarantees the regions image as a viable investment opportunity.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

Offshore Northern Seas (ONS) in Stavanger, Norway has been in existence for almost 40 years. Alternating with Offshore Europe, which is held in Aberdeen every two years, this international energy event attracts a global audience. ONS takes place again in Stavanger from Monday 25th to Thursday 28th August 2014.

ONS attracts over 60,000 visitors over the four days and Aberdeen City Council will, as in previous years, seek approval through the Trade Development report to secure a presence at the exhibition for the event in 2014. The City Council will work in partnership with Aberdeenshire Council and local companies will be recruited to exhibit on our stand. The financing for this exhibition presence is shared with Aberdeenshire Council and offset by income generated from stand sharers purchasing exhibition space for the local authorities. City Council funding for the exhibition presence will be allocated from the 2014/2015 Economic and Business Development budget. The exhibition stand offers the opportunity for local energy related companies to promote their company, identify business opportunities and experience the benefits of support from the Council's International Trade team.

Running alongside the ONS 2014 exhibition and conference is the globally recognised ONS Festival. Held on Stavanger Harbour Quayside from Monday 25th to Wednesday 27th August 2014, in previous years this event has attracted over 40,000 exhibition delegates, visitors and Stavanger residents over the 3 days. The Festival is designed to complement the exhibition with a cultural, musical and entertainment celebration from the Norwegian and invited host cities.

Lord Provost George Adam has accepted an invitation by the ONS Festival to take one of only eight guest city pavilions on the harbour side at the heart of the festival activities. Each purpose built pavilion is strategically placed to attract maximum footfall from the Festival attendees. The pavilions are intended to present a platform for each country to present all that is best in hospitality, entertainment, cuisine, food and drink. It provides the opportunity to:-

- demonstrate its commitment to the energy industry

- showcase Aberdeen City as a destination for business and leisure
- promote the area as a world class business location and a desirable place to invest, live, work, study and visit
- use the pavilion for facilitating business to business introductions
- signpost potential investors to local companies who are sponsoring the pavilion
- host VIP & international delegation networking events
- showcase council services to Aberdeen City delegates
- showcase our unique music, food and drink

Aberdeen City has strong ties with its twin city Stavanger. This is now the fourth time Aberdeen has been afforded the opportunity to host a pavilion at the Festival. This is a showcase to the global energy industry underlining our Energy Hub status and our exceptional talent for hospitality. It would allow us to demonstrate our professionalism and also our commitment through Smarter Aberdeen to be at the forefront of the energy industry. This is a key opportunity for us to promote the city locally, to the business community who travel from Aberdeen City and Shire to the event, nationally and internationally.

Feedback, through questionnaires, from our Aberdeen companies who use the pavilion to entertain and network have been excellent. The international delegates, our sponsors and business colleagues, as well as the Festival organisers, have all agreed that the Aberdeen pavilion is exceptional in content, presentation and professionalism.

Internationalisation, product and market diversification are key elements of the city's ongoing city development strategy and the Aberdeen Festival pavilion plays an important role in supporting this strategy. Both the Aberdeen exhibition and Festival pavilion presence is staffed by Economic and Business Development personnel across multi-disciplined teams.

6. **IMPACT**

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 the pavilion has a cross section of cultural, entertainment and cuisine that reflects the heritage of Aberdeen.

Smarter Living (Quality of Life)

- We aspire to be recognised as a place of excellence for culture and arts by promoting Aberdeen as a cultural centre hosting

high quality diverse cultural events for business and leisure tourists

Smarter Economy (Competitiveness)

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

Community Plan

- We will work with other organisations, agencies and groups, including VisitScotland and VisitAberdeen, to encourage tourism and the provision of facilities for tourists.

7. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Lynda Raitt
Senior IVSA Officer
Tel: 523286
Email:Lyraitt@aberdeencity.gov.uk