

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Finance, Policy and Resources
DATE	6 May 2014
DIRECTOR	Gordon McIntosh
TITLE OF REPORT	Offshore Technology Conference 2014 & Offshore Northern Seas 2014
REPORT NUMBER:	EPI/14/132
CHECKLIST RECEIVED:	Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report seeks approval for the Council Leader to travel to the Offshore Technology Conference (OTC) in Houston, 5th-8th May 2014 and Offshore Northern Seas (ONS) in Stavanger, 25-28th August 2014.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that Committee:

- a) Retrospectively approve the travel and associated arrangements necessary to enable the Council Leader to participate fully in the OTC 2014 programme retrospectively.
- b) Approve the travel and associated arrangements necessary to enable the Council Leader to participate fully in the ONS 2014 programme.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The approved 2014/2015 International Trade budget will meet the costs, estimated at £6,500. The additional cost may require the International Trade team to scale down another project or projects in the approved 2014/2015 International Trade Plan in order to remain within budget.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Health and Safety: The health and safety implications of all overseas journeys are taken into account during planning, with any exceptional implications to be addressed at the time. Officers regularly review the travel advice provided by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and are in contact with counterparts in-country to ensure information is accurate and up-to-date. When participating in overseas journeys, Council officers and Elected Members are covered by the Council's insurance policy. A risk assessment is carried out for each overseas journey.

Risk Management: The risk associated with not attending OTC and ONS is that Aberdeen's position as a global energy capital would be compromised if there was reduced visibility on the world energy industry stage and if profile was not maintained at key overseas trade events.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

Offshore Technology Conference, Houston

The Offshore Technology Conference is the world's largest offshore oil and gas conference and exhibition, attracting over 90,000 attendees. The event brings together the global supply chain, from operators to SMEs, and is the number one trade event in the global energy industry calendar.

The United States is a top priority current and target export market for Aberdeen companies. Aberdeen City Council's objectives for OTC include:

- Maintain and build on the city's strong profile as a global energy hub
- Support Aberdeen companies in promoting their strengths and capabilities
- Promote Aberdeen as a highly attractive place in which to invest, live or visit

In addition to attending OTC itself, the Council Leader will join a full programme of site visits, business briefings, World Energy Cities Partnership events and Aberdeen City Council-sponsored business events.

Offshore Northern Seas, Stavanger

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 attracts over 60,000 visitors over the four days and Aberdeen City Council works in partnership with Aberdeenshire Council to deliver an exhibition presence which 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 allows 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.

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.

In addition to attending the ONS exhibition and Festival, the Council Leader will join a programme of business briefings and company meetings in support of Aberdeen's position as an Energy Hub.

6. IMPACT

Corporate: The contents of the report relate directly to delivering the economic development aspects of the Single Outcome Agreement:

National Outcome 1 – We live in a Scotland that is the most attractive place for doing business in Europe

National Outcome 2 - We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people

Local Outcome – Anchor the Oil and Gas Industry

Local Outcome – Diversification of the Economy

The contents of the report also relate directly to delivering the economic development aspects of the Administration's Smarter Aberdeen vision.

An Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment is not required for this report.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

8. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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