

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE	Finance Policy & Resources
DATE	1 December 2017
REPORT TITLE	City Events 2018 - 2019
REPORT NUMBER	CHI/17/266
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**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT:-**

- 1.1 To seek approval for the 2018 -19 city events programme and associated budget subject to the normal budget process in February 2018.

**2. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

2.1 Members are asked to:

- (a) Approve the proposed events programme for 2018 – 2019 as detailed in Appendix 1;
- (b) Approve the proposed expenditure of £525,000 (as detailed in Appendix 1) from the existing Economic Development budget subject to the Council's budgetary process in February 2018;
- (c) Delegate authority to the Head Economic Development, in consultation with Head of Legal & Democratic Services, the Head of Commercial and Procurement and the Head of Finance to apply the criteria agreed by FP&R committee in December 2016, when considering all future event bids including three years of financial support for Nuart 2018 – 2020 subject to annual Council budget processes.
- (d) Note the impact of three key events in 2017 under the Aberdeen 365 strategy - NuArt, The Tour Series and the Great Aberdeen Run.
- (e) Approve the proposed expenditure of £100,000 per annum for three years to support the Nuart Festival, subject to the Council's annual budgetary processes;

- (f) Approve the proposed expenditure of £150,000 per annum for two years to support the Great Aberdeen Run, subject to the Council's annual budgetary process in February 2018.

### **3. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES**

#### **3.1 Place Promotion**

3.1.1 Securing the Future of the North East Economy – A 20-year Vision for the Wellbeing of the Place and Our People is the economic plan for Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. A key objective of the Internationalisation Programme area is to improve the attractiveness of the city for international trade, investors and visitors, and in response there is a commitment to develop an events strategy to target international, national and regional events.

3.1.2 Delivering culture and tourism impacts, and to facilitate diversification into new national and international events, is also a key strand of CCMP delivery through the Aberdeen 365 Events Programme, the Broad Street public realm proposals, and the focus on development of a new arena and conference centre to anchor existing international event activity.

3.1.3 This report will aim inform members of the success of the three key events delivered under the Aberdeen 365 strategy, and advise how this approach will be applied going forward.

#### **3.2 Aberdeen's Appraisal Criteria**

3.2.1 A clear set of criteria has been adopted to inform which events, should be targeted to achieve the desired outcomes for Aberdeen.

3.2.2 As the Aberdeen 365 Strategy contributes directly to the national events strategy and the regional economic and tourism strategies, it is important that any event in Aberdeen delivers the objectives of the event itself (eg sporting, cultural); but also maximises the economic and 'legacy' impacts of staging that event, and growing the city's national and international reputation.

3.2.3 In making a decision to invest in an event, officers apply the following criteria:

- Alignment to economic/tourism and events strategies – does the event contribute to the strengths of the city and wider area;
- Visitor attraction potential – does the event have the potential to attract visitors from outside the area, and overnight stays/return visits;
- Economic impact – could the event generate a substantial economic benefit to businesses in the event and wider area;
- Media profile – does the event have the potential to attract media attention, advancing Aberdeen and the region's reputation nationally and internationally;
- Place shaping – does the event celebrate the distinctiveness of Aberdeen and the north east of Scotland and the built and natural environment;

- Funding – if the Council contributes, what added-value is there from that investment in terms of leveraging external funding (e.g. EventScotland, sponsorship) and in-kind support.

3.2.4 Any reprioritisation of events may involve stopping funding of some current events, improving on some existing events that demonstrate potential against the criteria, bidding for existing high profile national and international events and stimulating the development of new proposals to be funded via partners or other sources.

3.2.5 It takes at least three years for an event to be associated with a place and the economic and tourism benefits to be maximised. Successful events therefore require multi-annual funding streams and commitment and clarity around decision making.

### 3.3 **Aberdeen 365 – Aberdeen Events Group**

3.3.1 Following the establishment of the Aberdeen 365 group in summer 2017, already we are seeing the benefits of collaborative working through better internal and external coordination.

3.3.2 The group has been successful in providing structure to a number of external stakeholders who have an interest in events locally, nationally and internationally, and has provided an open forum to:

- Work with the operator of the new Aberdeen Arena and Conference Centre, SMG Europe to ensure that their conferencing and event attraction aims are supported through the partners represented;
- Collaborate with VisitAberdeenshire on activities including destination development and future marketing campaigns;
- Partner with Aberdeen Inspired in engaging city centre businesses to maximise the commercial opportunities associated with events held in the levy footprint;
- Input through Cultural Services into the Cultural Strategy being prepared by the sector in Aberdeen, which includes Aberdeen City Councils support for existing Aberdeen Festivals;
- Ongoing development and delivery of the tourism/events activity aligned to the City Centre Masterplan, and the Aberdeen 365 theme of a vibrant and exciting city.

3.3.3 The Aberdeen 365 group are currently creating a consolidated list of all the events across the region, so a clash diary is available for reference when considering the attraction and delivery of events in the future.

### 3.4 **The 2018 – 2019 Programme**

3.4.1 In 2017 the Aberdeen 365 Strategy focussed on developing a portfolio of three new key events that could be hosted in Aberdeen that would develop the city's offering as well as continuing to meet priorities within the existing events programme supported by Aberdeen City Council in recent years.

- 3.4.2 The events detailed in the city events programme (Appendix ONE) 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.
- 3.4.3 The proposed programme of existing events for 2018 – 19 will be aligned to the principles of the events strategy and agreed criteria in the coming months, aiming for an incremental change in local authorities approach to event attraction, support and management in future years.
- 3.4.4 This will provide a standardised approach to events in the city, as well capacity in the existing programme where events are re categorised across four broad categories of:
- Headline events
  - Feature events
  - City events
  - Community events
- 3.4.5 This will provide a balance of city events that are well established in the Aberdeen calendar that continue to provide social and cultural benefits for Aberdeen that relate to the current or new facilities and infrastructure, while including new events that will support the growth and development of the events portfolio and reflect the ambitions of the city.

### **3.5 Nuart – April 2017**

- 3.5.1 Nuart Aberdeen is a multi-award winning festival and, following on from its success in 2017, Aberdeen Inspired is working to secure its future in the city as an annual flagship festival from 2018 - 2020.
- 3.5.2 Nuart is an international contemporary street and urban art festival, held annually in Stavanger, Norway since 2001. It is widely considered the world's leading celebration of Street Art among its peers, and provides an annual platform for national and international artists who operate outside of the traditional art establishment.
- 3.5.3 Nuart in Stavanger consists of a series of citywide exhibitions, events, performances, interventions, debates & workshops surrounding current trends and movements in street art practice by some of the world's leading practitioners and emerging names. The artists who attend the festival are among the most acclaimed and progressive public art practitioners in the world.
- 3.5.4 Nuart produces both temporary and long-term public artworks, as well as facilitates dialogue and action between a global network of artists, academics, journalists and politicians. Our core goal is to help redefine how we experience both contemporary and public art: to bring art out of museums, galleries and public institutions onto the city streets.

3.5.5 Nuart aims to provide an internationally relevant, challenging and dynamic environment for artists, students, gallery goers and public alike; an event that aims to reflect the culture as well as participate in helping define it.

3.5.6 Close consideration has been given to how Nuart Aberdeen fulfils and exceeds the aspirations set out in the Aberdeen 365 Strategy, and the City Centre Masterplan. These strategies set out the need to develop a programme of events that enhances the Aberdeen's growing reputation as a festival city as well as its reputation as a tourism and visitor destination.

3.5.7 Widely considered to be one of the largest BID led projects of its kind, the need to embed a long lasting legacy at its heart remains a key component of the Nuart festival in Aberdeen.

3.5.8 The festival captured the hearts and minds of people from across the city in an unprecedented way and attracted visitors from across the country. The Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce conducted an independent evaluation that shows:

- Over 80% of respondents agreed that Nuart Aberdeen had increased their pride in Aberdeen as a place to live;
- Over 85% of respondents agreed that Nuart Aberdeen made the city more progressive, advanced and radical;
- Over 75% of respondents agreed that the festival was effective in bringing communities together;
- Nearly 90% of respondents believe that the festival improves their perceptions of Aberdeen's art and culture offering.

3.5.9 The aspiration is to curate and position Nuart Aberdeen as one of Aberdeen's headline events and one of the UK's most credible and well respected street art festival, placing the Granite City at its heart. It is this aspiration for Nuart Aberdeen, as a product, that Aberdeen Inspired believe creates a significant tourism opportunity to attract visitors from across the region and the country, promoting Aberdeen as the place to visit for high quality, transformational and powerful street art. In close collaboration with key stakeholders, including Aberdeen City Council and Visit Aberdeenshire, as well as local businesses and resident artists, there are ambitions to grow the festival, incorporating an enhanced community programme that seeks to create a greater legacy within communities, working with visiting and resident artists.

3.5.10 Visitor Attraction Potential:

- Aberdeen Inspired seeks to work with numerous stakeholders, including Visit Aberdeenshire and the Chamber of Commerce to present opportunities for visitors to come to Aberdeen during and after each festival. There is strong evidence that Nuart, if delivered annually presents significant possibilities to attract visitors in particular from across the UK and Europe;
- The AGCC evaluation shows that 93% of respondents rated the festival as excellent or very good while almost 90% of respondents would return to the city if the festival were to be repeated.

- There is a plethora of evidence on social media which demonstrates the continued appetite, of the local populace and past visitors, for more Nuart Aberdeen.

#### 3.5.11 Economic Impact:

- Evidence is still being document from businesses that have benefitted over the summer from the legacy left by the festival, including venues on the Green nearby the Herakut production;
- Increased visitors have been documented as part of the weekly walking tours that have took place over the summer;
- Many local businesses have given in-kind contributions to the festival and have benefitted from increased patronage and profile.

#### 3.5.12 Media Profile:

- The festival received global interest from many international outlets including The Independent, the Huffington Post, Juxtapoz, Brooklyn Street Art and the BBC. Following the festival, PR Agency Jasmine confirmed that Nuart Aberdeen had generated a minimum of £100,000 worth of positive media;
- Discussions are ongoing as to how to maximise and targeting the potential of further positive media.

#### 3.5.13 Place Shaping:

- Even in its first year, Aberdeen has become synonymous with the Nuart brand, a brand which is globally recognised. Due to the unprecedented and transformative impact on Aberdeen city centre, Nuart Aberdeen has won multiple awards including:
- the much coveted European BID of the Year 2017 by the German Chamber Association of Commerce;
- UK Association of Town and City Management Innovation Prize;
- British BIDs Award for Place Management;
- Visit Scotland's Award for Tourism.

### 3.6 **The Tour Series – May 2017**

3.6.1 Following committee approval in December 2016, Aberdeen hosted the first Tour Series event in a three year programme in May 2017. This event was identified through the agreed criteria as providing the city with economic impact and exposure at a national and international level.

3.6.2 The event saw ten teams of the UK's best riders competing in hour long races or criteriums on a city centre circuit for an overall 'Fastest Team' in the country accolade. This was the first time that elite cycling was available in Aberdeen, and officers from across Council services worked to expand the event into a wider celebration of cycling and encouraging business, spectator and community participation. Through this model the Tour Series and in conjunction with Scottish Cycling, this event enabled the delivery of support

races and activities providing a 'celebration of cycling' and a platform for corporate participation and promotion of Aberdeen as an active city.

- 3.6.3 Due to broadcast scheduling commitments, the event was scheduled on a Thursday, and will also be held on a Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2018 in Aberdeen City Centre. For logistical reasons, Sweetspot can't commit to the Friday/Saturday in Aberdeen for 2018, as they need to head south on the Friday ahead of a race in the NE of England that weekend, as per last year's build/broadcast schedule.

Sweetspot were hoping that there would be 3 rounds in Scotland in 2018, which would change things, but that hasn't come off, however it is still something they are keen to achieve in 2019.

The Thursday, with teams staying in the city from Wed - Friday is the best workable option overall, and they are excited to work with ACC again.

They are also keen to include a women's pro race for 2018, which will be a positive addition to the event overall if it can be accommodated.

- 3.6.4 The economic impact report undertaken by Frontline of the 2017 Aberdeen event indicates the following:

- 10,000 spectators attended the event, with 29% coming from outwith Aberdeen;
- 90% of the audience described the race as very enjoyable, with 48% coming to watch the event with their families;
- The average spend per day by visitors was £47.36, with overnight visitors spending £103.97 per group;
- 63% of people said they were inspired to cycle more often following the event; with the event rated 4.8/5 for enjoyment;
- The net visitor expenditure of the event on the Aberdeen economy was £141,504.

- 3.6.5 Each round is broadcast on ITV4 (including live streaming on ITV.com and access on ITV Player) and Eurosport UK and across 60 international markets, which in turn provides an additional platform for the promotion of the regional tourism offer and the city centre. Highlight shows are run every evening after every round, and each episode provides coverage of the race and a local tourism segment.

- 3.6.6 Average viewing for the 2017 series was 204,800 with the repeat show averaging 41,400. The Tour Series highlights broadcast on ITV4 total reach was in excess of 2.4m viewers, with Aberdeen's total views at 227,000. The event receives extensive coverage in national print media, regional television and radio, as well as cycling press.

### **3.7 The Great Aberdeen Run – August 2017**

- 3.7.1 Following committee approval in September 2016, Aberdeen hosted the first Great Aberdeen Run event in a three year programme in August 2017. This

event was identified through the agreed criteria as providing the city with economic impact and exposure at a regional and national level.

3.7.2 The event saw 7,800 participants take part in a half marathon, 10k and family run. In year one all of the events reached their capacity, and relationships were formed with local partners including Sport Aberdeen, Aberdeen Journals and Northsound to support the promotion and delivery of the event.

3.7.3 No economic impact report was commissioned in year one of the event, however the post event participant survey provided the following insights:

- 95% graded the event as good/excellent on a 5 point scale;
- 20% of the runners raised money for charity – an estimated £940,000 will have been raised;
- 1,800 participants came from outwith AB postcodes;
- 80% respondents dined out in Aberdeen during their attendance at the event;
- Average spend per participant was £123.50 – 45% higher than the Great Run average of £85;
- Average party size was 3.1 – indicating approx 23,250 people attended the event on the day
- 99% respondents said they would like to see more large scale events in Aberdeen.

3.7.4 The proposed date for the Great Aberdeen Run in Aberdeen is Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> August 2018, and discussions are already underway to develop the Business Challenge, strengthen the relationship with the Active Aberdeen Partnership and grow support within the local media, and business community to encourage more people to visit Aberdeen on the day of the event.

3.7.5 Going forward the partners supporting the event will seek to open discussions regarding televising the event, to better understand the financial implications of this ambition in the future.

### **3.8 Parks and Open Spaces**

3.8.1 The City Events Team continues to manage the booking and safe delivery of events by external organisers in Aberdeen, under the terms of the report agreed by the CH&I Committee in March 2015.

3.8.2 Monies generated through the hire of public spaces is used to enhance the facilities within our public spaces so they continue to be fit for event organisers purposes, as well as support for new and existing events that meet with the agreed Aberdeen 365 criteria, as detailed previously.

3.8.3 The monies generated change annually due to the weather conditions, and the availability and suitability of the spaces in Aberdeen to host outdoor events.

3.8.4 Working in partnership with colleagues in Environmental Services, Road Services and Licensing the team are keen to raise awareness of the great



public spaces that exist in Aberdeen, while working to maintain and protect them for use of the residents of, and visitors to the city.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The Aberdeen 365 Events Strategy seeks to significantly raise the level of ambition of events in Aberdeen - the City Centre in particular - as part of the implementation of the CCMP, and to raise profile, and achieve economic and community benefit.
- 4.2 As well as the events budget of £525,000 within the existing Economic Development service budget, an opportunity has arisen to support the delivery of the Nuart Festival for a further three years. A contribution of £100,000 per annum to match Aberdeen Inspired's contribution is requested, in addition to the external funding being sought.
- 4.3 A further contribution of £150,000 is sought from the Council's budget, subject to the normal process to support the annual delivery of the Great Aberdeen Run in 2018 and 2019.
- 4.4 Economic Development will look to meet the costs of the support activity associated with the Tour Series from within existing budget commitments.
- 4.5 It should be noted that there are significant budgetary pressures placed on all individual event budgets due to the costs associated with production services, traffic management, and the provision of essential events support - stewarding, security, medical and local authority obligations under Health and Safety legislation.

#### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The risk to the Council would be managed through specific contracts for each event between the organiser and the Council. This would be drafted in conjunction with the Head of Economic Development, Head of Legal and Democratic Services and the Head of Commercial and Procurement Services.
- 5.2 Any such agreement will seek to mitigate financial risk to the Council and the necessary procurement processes will be undertaken to adhere to procurement legislation and the internal Procurement Regulations as well as the Financial Regulations.
- 5.3 There is a reputational risk to the Council if an event does not develop as planned. This is mitigated by the experience of Council officers in securing and supporting the delivery of international events and a robust internal and external communications plan for any and all events.
- 5.4 Aberdeen's city events programme is key to the destination promotion that Aberdeen City Council, VisitAberdeenShire, Aberdeen Inspired and VisitScotland currently undertake.

5.5 Should this diverse and engaging programme not continue, then Aberdeen could potentially cease to be an attractive destination for visitors and local residents with economic spend being distributed elsewhere in Scotland and event organisers considering alternative delivery locations

## **6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK**

### **6.1 Financial**

6.1.1 Any event contracts will seek to mitigate financial risk to the Council and the necessary procurement processes will be undertaken to adhere to procurement legislation and the internal Procurement Regulations

### **6.2 Employee**

6.2.1 The City Events team is currently staffed by one full-time Senior City Events Officer, two full-time City Events Officers and one full-time City Events Executive. The successful delivery of the city events programme is dependent on a fully-staffed team.

6.2.2 Events are a core part of Aberdeen City Council's business as a large number of services are responsible for supporting the organisation, management and delivery of the events programme, which is a key strand of the Regional Economic Strategy.

6.2.3 To ensure the most appropriate use of staff time and resources in delivering events in Aberdeen, officers from the team work with colleagues in other Council services including Economic Development, Cultural Services, Licensing, Environmental Services and Traffic Management to ensure the safe coordination and delivery of events.

6.2.4 The City Events team also works closely with a number of partners including EventScotland, VisitScotland, Aberdeenshire Council, Visit Aberdeenshire, the Aberdeen City and Shire Hotels Association (ASCHA) and Aberdeen Inspired so that events held in Aberdeen present opportunities accessible to local business and offer exciting activities to support the weekend leisure destination break market and maximise the opportunities for securing net additional benefit to businesses in the city and wider region.

### **6.3 Customer/Citizen**

6.3.1 Events and participation by the Council provide an opportunity to promote and enhance the long-term economic prosperity of Aberdeen and the wider region by attracting additional visitors to the city on account of the event. In turn this attracts additional commercial activity in the city and officers will work with business customers to maximise both the benefit of the event on city-centre businesses and provide information on the event itself.

6.3.2 Supporting and delivering a diverse programme of city events is expected to improve the customer experience by:

- Enhancing the reputation of the city for staging local, national and international festivals and events;

- Better positioning of Aberdeen as a leisure tourism destination for those looking for new and unique event experiences
- Providing city infrastructure that attracts and supports external event organisers

#### 6.4 **Environmental**

No risks identified.

#### 6.5 **Technological**

No risks identified.

#### 6.6 **Legal**

As above.

#### 6.7 **Reputational**

6.7.1 Collaborating with local, regional and national partners improves our use of resources and maximising financial leverage to secure an event. By working in partnership the Council is able to share the workload and take lead or supporting roles where appropriate, without compromising the level of service delivered.

6.7.2 The Council is a member of VisitAberdeenshire and Aberdeen Inspired. At a strategic level, it has a key role in the long-term development of tourism in the city and north east of Scotland. Aligned to this, is its corporate role in providing confidence to the events market that the Council supports the attraction of the 'right' event for the city, and the contribution to wider economic, tourism and City Centre Masterplan objectives.

### 7. **IMPACT SECTION**

7.1 This section demonstrates how the proposals within this report impact on the strategic themes of Aberdeen City Council and Community Planning Aberdeen, as set out in the [Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26](#) and the [Aberdeen City Council Strategic Business Plan](#).

#### 7.2 **Economy**

By applying these criteria, capacity could be created in the events programme in future to develop opportunities to secure sources of external funding to support the development of an events programme that maximises economic benefit for the city and wider region, and showcases a legacy that showcases the region's capability on the national and international event stage.

#### 7.3 **People**

Neither a Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment nor a Privacy Impact Assessment is required for this report. There may be some public/media interest in the parts of the city events programme that involve participation by Elected members and/or officers.

#### **7.4 Place**

As well as the benefits of this approach to the delivery of the events programme itself, outwith the region it will provide a positive signal that Aberdeen is a nationally and internationally competitive location for specific events (international, national and regional).

Aberdeen's city events programme is key to the destination promotion that Aberdeen City Council, VisitAberdeenShire, Aberdeen Inspired and VisitScotland currently undertake.

Should this diverse and engaging programme not continue, then Aberdeen could potentially cease to be an attractive destination for visitors and local residents with economic spend being distributed elsewhere in Scotland and event organisers considering alternative delivery locations.

#### **7.5 Technology**

The use of technology in the development and delivery of events in the city will be given consideration, as the Council moves to secure a digital partner in the future.

### **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Aberdeen Inspired – NuArt Report  
NuArt Media Report – Jasmine  
Aberdeen Chamber of Commerce NuArt Report  
Great Aberdeen Run Debrief Report  
Frontline Economic Impact Report – Aberdeen Tour Series

### **9. APPENDICES (if applicable)**

None

### **10. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS**

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