



Subject:	St Patrick's Day Update 2023
Date:	8 th February 2023
Reporting Officer:	John Greer, Director of Economic Development
Contact Officer:	Kerry Mc Mullan, Tourism and Events Development Manager

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on St Patrick's Day 2023 to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Detail on procurement (design award) and duration- Outline programming plans
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Members are asked to note details of the report specifically the outlined programme.• Note that a report will be brought to Committee to update Members on the post event evaluation and the proposed creative commissioning process for 2024 and beyond.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members are asked to approve the allocation of up to £30,000 from the Extended Cultural Programme agreed by SP&R on 18th February 2022 to support the development and delivery of the described programme by Féile an Phobal during 1st – 17th March. • Approve a £15,000 contribution in this financial year from existing and approved departmental budgets for the Gradam Ceoil Bursary Scheme in partnership with Duncairn Arts Centre, Red Shoe productions and TG4. • Approve the financial allocations at 3.6 of £100,000 to Beat Carnival, £50,000 to Feile and Phobal and £80,000 to Duncairn Arts
3.0	Main report
<p>3.1</p> <p>3.2</p> <p>3.3</p>	<p>Background</p> <p>It was agreed by Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in January 2021, that a different approach would be taken to the future development of St Patrick’s Day. Officers designed an open and competitive process to support applications for creative development awards for St Patrick’s Day (SPD) 2022. This opportunity was published in the Council’s cultural database, promoted on social media and via Council’s website as well as through partner organisations and networks.</p> <p>Detail on procurement (design award) and duration</p> <p>Building on the strong foundation of recent years, Council agreed to develop an ambitious approach to St Patrick’s Day in the City. This opportunity was designed to allow space for real innovation and experimentation and genuine co-design with the people of the city. Rather than commissioning an external consultant to review the event it was agreed to test a different approach by directly investing in the local sector through Creative Development Awards that could then be progressed to a next stage commission for March 2022. As a result of this process, four organisations were awarded funding in 2022: Duncairn, Beat Carnival, Maywe and Feile.</p> <p>2023 Approach</p> <p>At September 2022 Committee, it was agreed that organisations who had the opportunity to pilot ideas in March 2022 with ‘testing’ in real time would be taken forward to full delivery in 2023. Officers believed that as per 2022, all four pilots merited support in 2023. Retrospective approval was granted for the 2022 procurement process, which did not include a ‘Contest Notice’ or an ‘Award Notice’ as per the Public Contract Regulations 2015.</p>

3.4	It was further agreed that a new Design Contest would be run in a timely manner for any required service contracts to support the delivery of St Patrick's Day in 2024 and beyond. This would be conducted with the support of CPS to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Public Contracts Regulations.
3.5	As in 2022, it was agreed that Council would have an overarching curatorial, programming, production and co-ordination role to produce a festival of events over multiple days and also lead on the marketing of the event.
3.6	<p>At November 2022 Committee, Members were reminded that £240,000 was approved previously by Committee in April 2022 for the St Patrick's Day 2023 event. Further approval was granted to allocate an additional £90,000 from existing Council and department budgets. This brought the overall budget allocation to £330,000. It is proposed that these monies are allocated to,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - £100,000 Beat Carnival To deliver a commission for the St Patricks Day parade 2023. Service contract to be awarded to Beat using the previous run Design Contest (competitive process). - £50,000 To deliver a music programme city wide for the St Patricks Day celebrations 2023. Service contract to be awarded to Feile using the previous run Design Contest (competitive process) approved at Committee in September 2022. - £80,000 To deliver a commission for the music element of St Patricks Eve concert 2023. Service contract to be awarded to Duncairn using the previous run Design Contest (competitive process). <p>Plans for St Patrick's Day 2023:</p>
3.7	Council Officials are currently engaged on finalising event proposals, refining both themes and event concepts for 2023.
3.8	<p>16th March 2023</p> <p>The concert on the 16th evening at Custom House Square will again take place as per 2022, with Duncairn leading the creative programming and with Council facilitating production, operational and logistical arrangements. This will be a free, but ticketed event.</p>
3.9	<p>17th March 2023</p> <p>The Events Team have been guided by health and safety advice over recent months with respect to the 2022 event and as a consequence have engaged with multi-agencies to</p>

	<p>elongate the parade route by approximately one third. This decision is in large part due to crowd density experienced around the route in 2022, minimising ‘pinch points’ and to assist in improving the visitor experience from a visibility perspective.</p>
3.10	<p>The proposed route for the 2023 parade is as follows: City Hall, Chichester Street, Victoria Street, High Street, Donegall Place and return to City Hall for de - rig. The parade will also incorporate the role of ‘punk’ music and the importance of this to Belfast, re - creating parts of the ‘Good Vibrations’ film and stage show which will tour America later in 2023.</p>
3.11	<p>St George’s Market will be fully operational on St Patrick’s Day. Ards CCE (a key partner in the bid for Fleadh Cheoil) are programming a number of musical and dance performances to take place within the market to enhance the visitor experience and expand the city - wide offering on St Patrick’s Day.</p>
3.12	<p>On 17th March within 2RA, Maywe will offer four oral history sessions with community groups, story oral recording and a showcase of stories. Additionally on March 18th, Maywe in conjunction with Ards CCE will host Celtic Storm, a globally acclaimed group of Irish traditional musicians and dancers, which has performed to audiences all over the world. The performance will be lead by a group from Ards CCÉ which includes All Ireland Champion musicians, vocalists and dancers.</p>
3.13	<p>Féile will run a series of Irish Traditional Sessions between the 10th – 17th March 2023. This will include 40+ venues across the city and city centre (venues will be confirmed by mid-February) with 30+ Irish traditional musicians performing. There will also be a showcase of Irish traditional music in the city centre on St Patrick’s Day during the parade, as well as partnership performances with Duncairn Arts in Custom House Square.</p>
3.14	<p>Gradam Ceoil Bursary Scheme</p> <p>At the City Growth and Regeneration Committee on Wednesday 8 September 2021, members agreed to support the Gradam Ceoil bursary scheme of a five-year period (2021 – 25) and contribute £15,000 each year.</p> <p>The Gradam Ceoil Bursary Scheme is a series of three annual awards awarded to young (18–25-year-old) traditional musicians in Belfast, in partnership with Duncairn Arts Centre, Red Shoe productions and TG4.</p> <p>Each award is valued at £3,000 each and the programme aims are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide support, training and mentoring • To support creativity and cultural expression

- Build capacity in online/broadcasting presentation skills (in acoustics and visuals)
- Develop capacity and profile for the traditional music sector in Belfast.

After attracting a high number of quality applications, the 2021/22 scheme selected three young Belfast traditional musicians to award. Highlights from the 2022 awards included the recipients performing at the Gradam Ceoil awards in Dublin for the Irish President, Michael D. Higgins, as well as an invite to the Lord Mayor's parlour for a reception to celebrate. It is proposed to continue this important partnership with a £15,000 contribution in this financial year.

Language as Culture

3.15

Members will recall that support up to £30,000 was allocated to Language as Culture within the Extended Cultural Programme that was approved by SP&R on the 18th February 2022, focused on initiatives exploring the diversity of language in our city through cultural activity. Officials from the Culture and Tourism team are currently engaged on the development of a programme through a partnership with Féile an Phobail to celebrate language and develop a weeklong series of events in March 2023 as part of Seachtain na Gaeilge (Irish Language Week).

Seachtain na Gaeilge is an international Irish language festival and one of the biggest celebrations of language and culture that takes place each year in Ireland and in many other countries.

The week coincides with the dates of the Spring Festival, Féile an Earraigh, which is run by Féile an Phobail. To coincide and build on this synergy, Féile an Phobail are aiming to programme events in key city centre spaces that attract footfall and will be visible to the general public. Sites under consideration include at Custom House Square, Writers Square, and Bank Square. Members are asked to approve the allocation of up to £30,000 to support this programme.

Marketing

3.16

From January 2022, the Events Team have been engaging with our internal colleagues in Marketing and Visit Belfast on the development and delivery of an Integrated PR and Marketing Plan for St Patrick's Day.

Future Planning for City Events (including SPD):

3.17	<p>Planning is already underway by the Tourism. Events and Culture Teams to uplift and future proof SPD ahead of 2024. This will also ensure that the necessary benchmarking and research delivery structures, stakeholder engagement and early procurement are confirmed at an early stage ahead of 2024.</p> <p><u>Equality & Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>All events will take equality and good relations implications into account and will be reflected in all agreements issued to partner organisations.</p> <p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>There are no new financial implications. The activities outlined in this report will be resourced from the 2022/23 budget for the Culture and Tourism section of the Economic Development division of the Place and Economy Departmental budget.</p>
4.0	Appendices
	N/A