



## Belfast City Council

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| <b>Report to:</b>         | Development Committee   |
| <b>Subject:</b>           | Junior and Cadet Fencing World Championships 2009   |
| <b>Date:</b>              | 21 February 2007  |
| <b>Reporting Officer:</b> | Marie-Therese McGivern, Director of Development, ext. 3470  |
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### Introduction

In the last ten years, Belfast has built a strong reputation for hosting major events. Prior to 1999, the visit of the Tall Ships was perhaps the one stand out major event to be hosted by the City. However, with the changes in the political climate, the City has had a renaissance in major event management. It began with the World Cross Country Championships in 1999 and gradually bids for major events became more ambitious. The next eight years saw Belfast host many significant major events such as the World Irish Dancing Championships, the World Amateur Boxing Championships, the U19 European football Championships, the Special Olympics Ireland Games, and the U-19 Rugby World Cup.

More recently Belfast City Council has agreed to support the return of the Tall Ships in 2009, the bid to capture the World Transplant Games in 2011, and support the World Police and Firefighter Games 2013, which will be easily the largest event ever to come to Northern Ireland. An approach has now been made by British Fencing and UK Sport to seek funding support from Belfast and the other surrounding local authorities to bring the Junior and Cadet Fencing World Championships to Northern Ireland from 4 to 13 April 2009.

### Relevant Background Information

#### Junior and Cadet Fencing World Championships 2009

The Junior and Cadet World Championships (U20 and U17) are held annually in April and have been in place since the late 1950s. They are run under the auspices of the world governing body, the Federation Internationale d'Esime (FIE) and are viewed as an important milestone in the elite player pathway, with many athletes seen at these events going on to perform in the Olympics.

#### Event Specifics

There will be nine days of competition with over 1,000 athletes expected from approximately 85 countries. The venue for the event would be University of Ulster High Performance Centre at Jordanstown. In addition to the athletes, there would be a significant number of officials and family members in attendance. This would result in over 10,000 bednights, the vast majority of which would be in Belfast.

The event is also preceded by a Congress to which all international fencing federations are invited. This is an ideal opportunity for the promotion of Belfast as a city and Northern Ireland as a whole as a potential host of holding and training camps in the lead up to London 2012.

The **Core Objectives** of hosting the Junior and Cadet World Championships in Belfast in 2009 would be to:

- Increase the profile of Belfast as a first class venue for international sporting events.
- Raise the profile of the region through major sports events within the media and visitor economy and get significant return on investment in the form of economic impact for the region.
- To position Belfast as a potential training camp venue for teams in the lead up to the 2012 Olympics and to capitalise on the political benefits both nationally and internationally from hosting a major sports event, particularly in the lead up to 2012.
- Increase the profile of Fencing in Northern Ireland and the UK, and promote the development of the sport. This includes the development of the fencing organisational infrastructure and workforce including skilled and knowledgeable volunteers, officials and referees
- To develop the expertise and capacity required to host major international and world class fencing events in the UK.

### **Key Issues**

This Business Plan, **Appendix A**, is submitted by the British Fencing Association in Conjunction with the Northern Ireland Fencing Union and UK Sport.

An initial meeting of partners has been held and it is recommended that all funding partners are invited to form an event Management Board to assess funding and strategic event issues.

It is anticipated that this Management Board which will act as a steering group with the following members:

- UK Sport
- British Fencing
- Northern Ireland Fencing Union
- Belfast City Council, Carrickfergus Borough Council, Newtownabbey Borough Council
- University of Ulster Jordanstown
- Event Management company

### **Financial Information**

The working budget for the event and associated development work currently stands at £541,447. The full budget is attached **Appendix B**. Members should note that Belfast is being asked for a larger amount than the surrounding Councils (£45,000) because the City will benefit most from the hosting of this event, even though the sports venue is within Newtownabbey. The University can only accommodate 200, and this will result in Belfast having the lion's share of the economic impact. This will be in the region of £1.1m although the source of this information (using the UK Sport model) has described the figure as conservative. See **Appendix C**.

### **Recommendation / Decision Required**

Members are asked to approve funding of £40,000 towards the hosting of the Junior and Cadet Fencing World Championships in 2009. In addition, approval is sought to host the international congress in the Waterfront Hall Studio at a cost of £5,000.

### **Documents Attached**

**Appendix A** - Business plan.

**Appendix B** - Budget.

**Appendix C** - Economic Impact Summary.