



Subject:	Update on Tourism Events
Date:	6 th November 2024
Reporting Officer:	Lesley-Ann O'Donnell, Senior manager Culture, Tourism & Events
Contact Officer:	Kerry McMullan, Tourism and Events Development Manager

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.	
Insert number <input type="checkbox"/>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information relating to any individual 2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual 3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information) 4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter 5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained 6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction 7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime 	
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision After Council Decision Sometime in the future Never	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <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/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to provide an update to Members on a number of major events.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	<p>Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the contents of this paper. • Agree support for enhanced St Patricks day activity to be funded through Shared Prosperity funding. • Approve officers to enter into license or Service Level Agreements required for the successful delivery of the Maritime Festival.
3.0	Main Report:
3.1	<p>Christmas</p> <p>Christmas preparation continues for the switch on event on the 16th November 2024 as per update report to last month's committee.</p>
3.2	<p>Fleadh Cheoil</p> <p>A detailed update was provided to the Committee in October and as outlined, work is intensifying to secure the Fleadh for Belfast in partnership with Ards CCE in 2026, including through continuing participation in Comhaltas meetings and events, hosting visits by senior representatives and starting to put in place the necessary resources, plans and governance arrangements.</p>
3.3	<p>Oireachtas 2025</p> <p>Members of the events unit and key delivery partners attended the event this year from the 30th October to 2nd November in advance of delivery planning and preparation for Belfast to host in 2025. Working groups will continue to integrate with event organisers and update reports will be provided to members in due course.</p>
3.4	<p>Lord Mayors Day</p> <p>Lord Mayors Day will be held on a Saturday in mid April 2025. The final date will be agreed with the Lord Mayor's Office and City Hall management team. Officers will meet with Lord Mayor's team on programming in November.</p>

The aim is to create an event that is inclusive, celebrates all that is good, creative and fun about Belfast and offers something for all ages to enjoy at a neutral, easy to access venue in the city. The approved budget for 2024 was £42,000, and draft estimates are similar for 2025.

St Patrick's Day 2025:

3.5

Members will be aware that Council delivered a significant programme of events in 2024 with a number of partners and delivery input from the Council events team. In preparation for 2025, as presented to CG&R in May 2024, a small number of tenders have been issued to encourage creative sector interventions. A tender for a City Centre Music Programme has been awarded to Tradfest, and contract management has commenced.

In a similar manner, a tender for Parade content was issued for float provision, community participation and professional performers. It is anticipated that one successful contractor will provide a suite of floats consisting of 34 processional pieces and 21 professional performers, their animated production will include 68 dancers sourced via local community and amateur arts groups. It is also envisaged that two further contractors will facilitate community circus workshops; one will work with 40 children and 8 adult emerging artists and will showcase various circus skills developed at the St Patrick's Day Parade. A second will facilitate, co-ordinate and deliver a stilt walking workshop for 20 children to showcase in the parade.

A further contractor will facilitate coordinate and deliver multiple cross- community arts workshops and aim to recruit 300 plus participants from North, South, East and West Belfast to create props and work on costumes to showcase and deliver within the St Patrick's Day parade.

Feile an Phobail have been awarded year 2 of their previous tender for their Trad Trail project.

The Council team will provide wrap-around logistical support for the parade in particular. Additionally,

Members will also be aware that an element of the St Patricks day programme is delivered by Seachtain na Gaeilge which runs from the 1st – 17th March. As part of additional monies made available through the shared prosperity funds officers are recommending an additional £20,000 for enhanced activity to support a headline event on Saturday 8th of March, this would be a family celebration event to take place at Custom House Square and 2 Royal Avenue and would support Belfast City Council's delivery and engagement in the run into the Oireachtas festival at the end of October.

As in previous years, Council Corporate Communications will provide a MARCOMM's package to promote the entire programme.

Maritime Festival 2025:

3.6

Members will be aware that the event is now on a biennial basis and budget allocations reflect this. The Belfast Maritime Festival will take place on Saturday 6th and Sunday 7th September 2025. There are ongoing discussions with Maritime Belfast Trust on programming, which is well advanced. The festival footprint is currently under review, but is planned for almost the entire Maritime Mile, with the new City Quay's Gardens coming on line for the first time. Research continues on the availability and costs for visiting Tall Ships supplemented by ongoing discussions with the Royal Navy and Commissioners for Irish Lights. There are several procurement processes in respect of the creative sector participation, and Legal / Land Agreements being considered.

Committee is also asked to approve officers to enter into any license agreements or Service Level Agreements required for the successful delivery of these events. For example, use of TQ, DFI and Odyssey Trust land, and partnership programming with Maritime Belfast Trust. Legal Services require Council minutes giving this authority prior to entering into these agreements.

The Open Championship

3.7

Officers are currently exploring opportunities with Tourism NI on the role that Belfast could play during the event week. Given the significant number of visitors that will be in the city during that time and the potential to provide additional animation and activation.

4.0	Financial and Resource Implications:
	Major events are being progressed within previously agreed budgets and the budget of £20,000 for additional St Patrick's day event will be funded from Shared Prosperity funding.
5.0	Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment:
	There are no Equality, Good Relations nor Rural Needs Implications associated with this paper.
6.0	Appendices: N/A