



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Titanic Centenary Programme 2012
Date:	16 September 2009
Reporting Officer:	Marie-Thérèse McGivern, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officer:	Tim Husbands, Head of City Events and Venues, ext 1401

Relevant Background Information

Over the last ten years BCC has delivered a range of major events, from the World Cross-Country Championships in 1991, the World Amateur Boxing Championships in 1999, the World Amateur Boxing Championships in 2001 and most recently the 2009 Tall Ships Atlantic Challenge. All of the events have brought significant economic benefits to Belfast with the 2009 Tall Ships event having an estimated £15m return to the City's economy. In parallel with these major events, BCC has been at the forefront in developing the Titanic offering in the City. This has included the development of a highly successful Titanic Made in Belfast event and the instigation of other Titanic related tourism products such as tours, trails and the development of a strategy for a 'must see' visitor attraction based around the Titanic story. All this work has received significant support and input from public, private and voluntary organisations, such as NITB, Titanic Quarter Limited and the Belfast Titanic Society.

The next significant step will be the marking of the centenary of the vessel in 2012. In October 2007 Members approved in principle a centenary programme connected to the 100th anniversary of the RMS Titanic over a twelve month period. The purpose of this report is to request Members final approval for this twelve month programme from the end of May 2011 to end of April 2012.

Key Issues

Programme

The proposed schedule of activity is based around the successful tours, talks, exhibitions and creative arts undertaken by Council as part of the Titanic Made in Belfast festival over the last nine years. In addition to these there would be a re-branding of current BCC events to fit with the Titanic theme and the creation of a programme of one-off concerts, plays and other forms of creative arts for the year long programme.

Key Headline Elements

It is recommended that as part of the overall key historical dates in RMS Titanic's story should be marked. The first of these, if the programme is agreed, would be a centenary to mark the launch of the ship. This would be followed by the fitting out of

the vessel in the Thompson Dock; then the leaving of the vessel from Belfast on 3 April 1912 and, of course, the sinking and subsequent disaster. It would be the intention to mark the latter event with a major outdoor concert with a significant international act as the headline performer. It would be the hope to utilise facilities developed as part of the Council supported Titanic Signature Project for this concept.

Creation of a Titanic Memorial Garden at Belfast City Hall

One of the significant proposals as part of the programme would be the physical bringing together of three memorials, which are currently in the grounds of City Hall into some form of 'Titanic Garden'. The three statues being: Titanic Memorial; Edward Harland's Statue & Lord Pirrie's Plinth.

Dates

The start of the proposed twelve month programme would take place on 31 May 2011, which marks the 100th anniversary of the launch of the RMS Titanic. This would involve special screenings of a number of key Titanic movies and programmes from post World War One to the modern day at various locations around the City. The following months would be interspersed with a series of activities reflecting Belfast's elements of the Titanic story culminating with the leaving of the ship from this City to the subsequent disaster of its sinking.

Titanic Cities

As part of the Titanic centenary it would be the recommendation to members to work with UK, Irish, French and North American locations connected to the story. This arrangement is underpinned with a Memorandum of Understanding (agreed by Council in 2008) between Belfast, Liverpool, Southampton, Cobh, Cherbourg and Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Stakeholders and Partners

In order to deliver this project, BCC's City Events Unit will utilise its significant links with local, national and international groups connected to the 'Titanic industry' and within the general events industry. Key to these will be external sources of public funding which would include HLF, DSD, NITB and DCAL. On the private sector front, the City Events Unit will liaise with TQL and other potential private sector organisations to lever additional resources. The City Events Unit will also strongly link to Belfast Titanic Society, the Nomadic Trust and other voluntary and art groups working in this area.

Resource Implications

Financial

The overall estimated costs required to deliver this twelve month programme of activities would be £600,000.

If the Council agreed to the programme, it would be the intention of the City Events Manager to source match funding from organisations such as HLF, DSD, DCAL and NITB to facilitate the delivery of the project. In addition to these BCC would pursue resources from TQL and other private sector groups for additional finance. The delivery of any programme would be tailored to budgetary requirements with BCC input being evaluated at £150,000.

Recommendations

Members are asked to approve, in principle, for a draft programme, costed at £600,000, prepared to mark the Titanic's 100th anniversary, with BCC's financial contribution to be capped at £150,000. If agreed by Committee, subsequent update reports for approval would be brought to Members in relation to the planning and preparation of the

programme.

Decision Tracking

Further to approval for a draft programme, an update report in relation to planning and preparation will be brought to Committee.

Timeline: December 2009 Reporting Officer: Tim Husbands

Key to Abbreviations

DCAL – Dept of Culture, Arts & Leisure

NITB – Northern Ireland Tourism Board

TQL – Titanic Quarter Limited

BCC – Belfast City Council

HLF – Heritage Lottery Fund

DSD – Department of Social Development

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