

Extract from minutes of –

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

16th SEPTEMBER, 2009

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**“London 2012 Cultural Olympiad – Live Sites Screen**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**‘Relevant Background Information**

In May, August and December 2008 the Development Committee received details of plans for the Cultural Olympiad to be staged leading up to and during the 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic Games. As part of the original ethos, Pierre de Coubertin, the founder of the modern Olympic Movement, mirrored the classical Greeks in maintaining that the purpose of the Olympic Games was to celebrate mind, body and spirit. From this a Cultural Olympiad was established to include all cultural events of the Olympic Movement. This Olympiad was a period when artists from around the world showcased their work in the lead up to the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Up until 1948 medals were awarded for sculpture, music, literature and art. The modern Cultural Olympiad, which will be part of the 2012 Games, will focus on the following themes:

- Bringing together culture and sport
- Encouraging audiences to take part
- Animating public spaces – through street theatre, public art, circus skills and live big screen sites
- Using culture and sport to raise issues of environmental sustainability, health and wellbeing
- Honouring and sharing the values of the Olympic and Paralympic Games
- Encouraging collaborations and innovation between communities and cultural sectors
- Enhancing the learning, skills and personal development of young people by linking with education programmes

The key to this process for the 2012 Games has been the development of a series of “live sites” which involve large LED screens being installed within public performance space across the United Kingdom. In December 2008 the Development Committee received formal details on the costs for such a project. They agreed this information be subsequently referred to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for formal consideration in January 2009. At this point the report was withdrawn due to a lack of financial resources being made available.

## Key Issues

### London 2012 Cultural Olympiad - "Live Sites" Public Screen

In August and December, 2008 the Council received details on the "Live Sites" public screens from LOCOG 2012. The proposal would see a permanent 25sq m screen, valued by the BBC and LOCOG 2012 at £500,000, positioned in the heart of the City centre. The initial proposal was for the screen to be located in Donegall Place but this has been rejected by LOCOG on the basis that the screen would not be in position until after the 2012 Olympics had been staged. Therefore LOCOG, along with DSD, are proposing that the screen be located within the grounds of City Hall – facing into the lawn from Donegall Square East. The concept would mean that the BBC, LOCOG 2012 and BCC would share broadcasting time on the screen, which would operate approximately twelve and sixteen hours a day, 364 days a year. The screen could also be utilised for major events including a number of London 2012 events. After the Council's rejection of the December 2008 report, due to its indicative costs, LOCOG and DCAL have resubmitted new proposed costs, which are stated below.

- Installation - £50k and planning £6k (DSD) one-off fee
- Screen programmer - £20 k (BCC) per year
- Event programming & management - £30k (NITB's event funding) per year for 3 years
- Maintenance - £20k (DCAL) per year for the first three years

In total BCC would have an estimated annual cost of £20,000 for a screen programmer to ensure the management of BCC's screen content. Should the Council agree to support this initiative, BCC officers have agreement in principle from DSD, as part of their "Streets Ahead" programme, to meet the installation costs which includes the cost of a 1 m x 1 m control panel in the basement of City Hall. For the four year period leading up to the 2012 Olympics the screen would be the property of LOCOG with a guaranteed link to the BBC's national public screens programme for BCC. After this period the screen would become the property of BCC with a similar link to the BBC's public broadcast network.

The installation of the screen would be subject to approval by the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee due to the use of the City Hall grounds before it would go to full Council. If passed by Council the project would also be subject to an economic appraisal by DSD, planning approval by the NI Planning Service and full legal agreement with all the relevant bodies and funders.

## **Resource Implications**

### **Financial**

The Council funding would involve a £20,000 annual fee for content and programming of the proposed screen and would be reallocated from within the annual events budget. Additional funding from DSD (£56k), NITB (£30k) and DCAL (£20k) would be sourced to deliver the project.

### **Recommendation**

Members are requested to consider the issue of funding for the project as stated above, and, if approved, also give:

- Approval for a report to go to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for the use of the City Hall grounds for the project

### **Decision Tracking**

No decision tracking with this report as report is for consideration only.

### **Abbreviations**

**BCC – Belfast City Council**  
**DCAL – Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure**  
**LOCOG 2012 – London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games 2012**  
**DSD – Department of Social Development**  
**NITB – Northern Ireland Tourist Board'**

In answer to Members' questions, the Head of City Events and Venues stated that it was intended that most major cities within the United Kingdom would have such live sites screens and that, although the screen could be erected for a trial period to gauge public reaction, the costs indicated in the report would not be reduced.

During discussion in the matter, several Members indicated that they were supportive of the idea of the screen but not if it were located in the City Hall grounds. It was pointed out that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee was responsible for the City Hall grounds and, therefore, only that Committee could agree as to whether or not the screen could be located therein.

After further discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor Stoker,  
Seconded by Councillor Rodgers,

That no funding be provided towards the costs of the live sites screen in connection with the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad.

On a vote by show of hands seven Members voted for the proposal and six against and it was accordingly declared carried."

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