



## Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Cycling Tour Series – City Centre Grand Prix Races
Date:	11 November 2009
Reporting Officer:	Shirley McCay/Tim Husbands, Interim Co-Directors of Development
Contact Officer:	Gerry Copeland, City Events Manager, ext 3412

### Relevant Background Information

In October 2009 Members requested that details of the UK Cycling 'Tour Series' budget be presented in order for the Committee to assess whether the event should receive funding from BCC. Therefore the purpose of this report is to present Members with details of the event budget and to seek approval for Belfast to become one of sixteen UK and Irish cities to host this international city centre cycling event, which will be organised in conjunction with British Cycling and Cycling Ireland.

Members are reminded that the event, known as the 'Tour Series', is organised by Sweetspot, a UK based sports events company with experience in the management and delivery of events such as the Tour of Britain cycling event and the Tour de France 'Grand Depart' in London 2007. Sweetspot approached BCC's officers in September 2009 in order to ascertain whether Belfast could become a host city in May 2010. The format for the event, which is normally supported by the host city, is free to attend and based normally in the main city centre area – the proposed six lap circuit would be around Donegall Square, City Hall and the main shopping areas of the City centre. The organisers design the course to create a carnival atmosphere, with the event being televised on the ITV network. The races are sixty minutes in duration, with the option to run amateur, youth and fun-based cycling 'races' during the evening.

The proposed 2010 programme would start in Dublin, followed by Belfast, after which the event would move to Scotland – heading to Dundee and Perth. These races would then be followed by a series of events running through England and Wales. All the races would be covered by the ITV network and broadcast to an average television audience of 150,000 for the main event, with a re-run programme generating up to 78,000 viewers. It is estimated that the value of the television broadcast would be in the region of £250,000 to £350,000.

## **Key Issues**

### Budgetary Breakdown

Members may recall that the total cost to stage the event would be £85,000. As Members requested, the breakdown of these costs is indicated below and is inclusive of the following:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Event Infrastructure	£15,600
Signage Branding	£ 1,100
Vehicles	£ 1,150
Teams and Fees	£ 9,500
Hotels and Travel	£ 4,300
TV Infrastructure	£11,000
Publicity and Marketing	£13,200
Administration	£ 2,800
Event Mgt Fee	£10,670
Stewarding Costs	£ 7,000
Health and Safety	£ 4,880
Cleansing/Waste	£ 800
<u>Insurance</u>	<u>£ 3,000</u>
TOTAL	£85,000

### 'Tour Series'

The rationale for staging the 'Tour Series' is to present Belfast as a City capable of hosting major sports events and as a key tourism destination. If successful, the event will indicate that Belfast has the capacity to host an international class event. Key benefits to Belfast would include:

- UK & Irish television exposure via ITV (Sweetspot do not pay or get paid by ITV for this input)
- Economic benefit to the host cities in 2009 is estimated on average at £490,000 for each participating city
- It is also estimated, based on 2009 figures, that an average day time visitor would spend around £34.39 at the event, while an overnight visitor's spend would be an estimated £55.35
- An average event audience of 10,000
- Bringing a high profile international class sports event to the City
- Belfast City Council branding throughout the event
- Potential for positive coverage of Belfast portrayed through a multitude of publications and websites across the UK and Ireland
- Promotion of health and sporting activity that can be linked to Belfast and NI cycling clubs. With potential connections to the City's leisure centres
- Allowing Belfast to be considered for future major cycling events, such as the Tour of Britain and the Tour of Ireland, and, if developed, to bid for the Tour De France's 'Grand Depart' which has been staged previously in England and Ireland.

### **Resource Implications**

The staging of any international sports event requires a high level of support funding. The maximum level of funding required to host a leg of the 'Tour Series' is set at £85,000. If approved, officers would actively pursue other funding opportunities, both commercially and within the public sector, in an effort to stage this event.

Members are asked to note that based on current budgets only £60,000 of this amount is available within the existing Events bidding stream of Department's finances. Therefore, the City Events Unit would seek funding from other sources to make up the additional £25,000. These sources would include DCAL, NITB, DSD, Sport NI and the private sector. Contact has been made with the public sector organisations, but there will be no formal commitment by the public sector funders until full funding applications are submitted. Members should note that the event would not proceed unless the shortfall of £25,000 can be sourced from these and other organisations.

### **Recommendations**

Members are asked to agree, subject to appropriate additional funding being secured, to the staging of the cycling 'Tour Series' in Belfast in May 2010.

### **Decision Tracking**

Further to approval a progress report would be brought to committee to update Members on the bid process with regard to additional funding and resources.

Time frame: January 2010

Reporting Officer: Tim Husbands

### **Key to Abbreviations**

NITB – Northern Ireland Tourist Board  
DCAL – Department of Culture, Arts & Leisure  
DSD – Department of Social Development

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