



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Development Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Tall Ships 2009 Post Event Report
<b>Date:</b>	9 December 2009
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Tim Husbands, Acting Director of Development ext 1400
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Gerry Copeland, City Events Manager ext. 3412

### Relevant Background Information

In September 2007 Members agreed to support the hosting of the Tall Ships Atlantic Challenge Race in Belfast in August 2009 at a cost to the Council of approximately £1.1m. In addition, one fixed term contract member of staff was appointed and the City Council's Events Unit led on the delivery of the project via a Special Purposes Vehicle (SPV) established to oversee the event. Two members of the Development Committee were nominated to become Directors of 'Belfast Tall Ships 2009 Ltd', a company established by the SPV.

The Tall Ships Races are organised by Sail Training International (STI). The host port however, is responsible for the public celebratory aspect of the visit, and for ensuring that crews are provided with a significant social programme.

It was anticipated that over the four days of the Tall Ships visit, from 13 to 16 August, if the weather conditions proved favourable, as many as 400,000 could be expected to visit Belfast,. In order to deliver the event a new marina was built, this investment has left a lasting legacy for other harbour based events such as the Council's highly successful Maritime Festival. The cost of hosting the event was significant, £2.4m, however the economic return was expected to be unprecedented for Belfast.

This report will highlight the significant economic and legacy benefits generated by the Tall Ships and summarise the successful delivery of the Tall Ships by the Events Unit.

## **Key Issues**

### Governance

The structure and processes put in place to deliver the Tall Ships, the largest event the City has ever hosted, proved successful. The project was overseen by a special Assurance Board comprising the Chief Executives of Belfast City Council and Belfast Harbour Commissioners and risk managed by the Audit, Governance and Risk Services Section of BCC. The Council introduced and established best practice processes within the delivery mechanism. This resulted in the City Events Unit acquiring additional knowledge and demonstrating a high quality service delivery.

### Project Delivery

The City Events Unit and its many partners have gained significant skills, industry knowledge and experience through the delivery of the Tall Ships event. The standards established by the City Events Unit have the potential to have a positive influence on any future bids for large scale events such as the World Police and Firefighter Games.

### Budget Information

Undoubtedly the biggest challenge of the project management was delivering the event on budget within an economic climate which almost diminished the prospect of commercial sector support.

DCAL, DETI and DSD made a joint contribution of £1m which almost matching Belfast City Council's £1.1m contribution to the project. The division of monies within the project resulted in the majority of central government funding being used for the development of a marine infrastructure system within Abercorn Basin. Belfast City Council's contribution was allocated to the delivery and promotion of the event. The final event expenditure budget was in the region of £2.4m.

### Event Benefits

- Approximately three quarters of a million people attended some element of the Tall Ships
- Almost half a million people attended the Belfast celebrations.
- Almost a quarter of a million out-of-state visitors attended the event.
- Economic impact to Belfast is in excess of £15 million.
- The economic impact survey attached as appendix 1 does not include spend from the audiences around Belfast Lough during the Parade of Sail, nor the many thousands who visited the early arrivals of the ships in other ports around Northern Ireland. If these regional figures are included the figure would be closer to £17 million.
- 94% of visitors rated the event positively
- 89% stated that the event had met or exceeded their expectations
- Half the respondents came in a family units
- Almost all respondents agreed that events such as these encourage people come to Belfast, and that there should be more events like Tall Ships in Belfast.
- The event would in actual terms have sustained 902 jobs for Belfast and Northern Ireland.
- A physical legacy in terms of the new marine infrastructure within Abercorn Basin, will be used for future marine based events.
- Considering the poor weather conditions, these figures and results are a measure of the overwhelming success of the event.

### **Resource Implications**

The staging of any international event requires a high level of support funding, however, Members are asked to note that for every £1 invested by the City, an additional £15 was generated for the local economy.

Members are also asked to note that STI have already suggested to Belfast that there will be an opportunity to bid for a North Sea Race in 2015. It is anticipated that a similar level of investment as in 2009 would be required of BCC.

In total the event cost £2.4million, with income streams coming from BCC, NITB, DCAL and DSD. Additional revenue was generated from commercial sponsorship and by concessions such the Continental Market, the fun fairs and exhibition areas. In total the overall incomes were £2.4million, so providing a balanced end of event budget.

### **Recommendations**

Members are asked to note the contents of the report and the Tall Ships economic impact report.

Members are also asked to agree in principal, subject to a detailed report and appropriate approvals, that Belfast enters the bidding process to host the Tall Ships Race in the future.

### **Decision Tracking**

Further to agreement in principal for Belfast to enter the bidding process for a future Tall Ships Race, a detailed report is brought to committee to update members on the bid process with regard to Belfast staging this event in 2015.

Time frame: August 2010

Reporting Officer: Tim Husbands

### **Documents Attached**

Appendix 1 – Tall Ships Economic Impact Report

### **Abbreviations**

BCC – Belfast City Council  
SPV - Special Purposes Vehicle  
NITB – Northern Ireland Tourist Board  
DCAL – Department of Culture, Arts & Leisure  
DSD – Department of Social Development

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