



Report to: Development Committee
Subject: 2014/15 Events Programme
Date: 18 February 2014
Reporting Officer: John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officer: Gerry Copeland, City Events Manager, ext 3412

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	<p><u>Purpose of the Report</u> The purpose of this report is to seek approval from Members to deliver the Council's annual programme of events for 2014/15 (see Appendix 1). The finance for this programme was agreed at January's Strategic, Policy & Resources Committee along with the rest of the Development Department's finances for the 2014/15 period and at the Development Committee on the 14 January 2014.</p>
1.2	<p>This report also seeks approval from Members to the creation of a protocol in dealing with one-off applications for event funding that are not addressed as part of the Council's events grant schemes.</p>
1.3	<p>Members are also requested to approve the screening of a series of events on the Belfast Big Screen at City Hall, inclusive of international football matches, national and international rugby competitions and Gaelic games. Members should note that any approval would be subject to broadcast rights for such matches and would be inclusive of the 2014 FIFA World Cup (opening match, semi finals and final).</p>
1.4	<p>In addition Members are asked to note that Officers are seeking approval to remove the hospitality elements from the 2014/15 events, inclusive of Christmas Lights Switch-on pre and post event function. This is due to increased costs attached to the staging of the Council led events.</p>
1.5	<p><u>Background</u> Over the last decade and a half, the Council has delivered a series of high profile public events that are free to access by both citizens and visitors to the city. In 2013/14 year it is estimated that these events generated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- £7,113,297.00 additional economic activity- 226,369 attended the events programme <p>*The above figures do not include data on the committee's Support for Sport scheme or the 2014 St Patrick's Day event.</p>
1.7	<p>The draft outline programme (for 2014/15) is indicated in Appendix 1. The year round schedule would, subject to Council approval, and operate from Easter 2014 through to the Christmas Lights Switch-on in mid-November and finish with St Patrick's Day event in 2015.</p>

2	Key Issues
2.1	<p><u>City Events Unit's Budget for 2014/15</u></p> <p>The total cost of the annual events programme (approved by Council) is £1,456,124 (agreed by Council as part of the Department's estimates) plus £580,000 from the Council's specified reserves for the Giro d'Italia and the UK National Pipe Band Championships. Along with the events detailed in Appendix 1 the finance also covers: the Circuit of Ireland Rally; the operations of the Belfast Big screen at City Hall (see point 2.3); funding of the Belfast City Marathon; support for the Ocean Youth Trust (essential in staging the 2015 Tall Ships event) and Council's Support for Sport grant scheme. Members are asked to note that there is no planned New Year's Eve event, which is as per the last four years.</p>
2.2	<p>On a yearly basis the Committee are asked to look at funding and supporting one-off events that are not part of the pre-agreed events programme. Such requests normally require additional monies not within the Department's estimates. Therefore, Members are requested to approve the following format for such items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Any applications for funding will only be considered after the Department's half year financial review has been approved by Strategic, Policy and Resources Committee and if the monies required can be identified within any potential Development Department underspend. This would mean that any requests are funded within the confines of the Development Committees agreed budget.
2.3	<p>Since 2011 the Council has operated the Big Screen at Belfast City Hall. The screen, which transferred ownership from the London 2012 Games to the Council in 2013, is designed to be used to compliment large-scale events, animate festivals and relay major sporting occasions. Therefore, the Committee is being requested to approve that in 2014/15 that the Big Screen is used to relay a series of events, inclusive of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - International football final matches - Ulster and International rugby games - Ulster and All-Ireland Gaelic competition finals - Wimbledon men and women's finals - 2014 FIFA World Cup opening match, semi finals and final
2.4	<p>Members should note that any approval would be subject to broadcast rights to such matches and would be inclusive of the. Members should also note that the World Cup matches are late night broadcasts with the earliest game commencing at 10pm. In addition the screen would be used for activity around the 2014 Giro d'Italia.</p>
2.5	<p>In the last number of years costs for all aspects of the Council funded and operated events have increased. Costs attached to items like stewarding, generators, first-aid, barriers, temporary structures, etc. have all seen rises yet budgets have decreased. These increases have applied to all events inclusive of the Christmas Lights Switch-on. As per all the events Officers have attempted to profile the agreed Council budgets to suit by removing non-essential elements of the projects.</p>

3	Resource Implications
3.1	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>The financial implication for the 2014/15 Events Programme is £1,456,124 (agreed by Council as part of the Department's estimates) plus £580,000 from the Council's specified reserves for Giro d'Italia and the UK National Pipe Band Championships.</p>
3.2	<p><u>Personnel</u></p> <p>None</p>

