



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Development Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Post Events details re St Patrick's Celebrations 2014
<b>Date:</b>	17 June 2014
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Gerry Copeland, City Events Manager, ext 3412

<b>1</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
1.1	<p>The purpose of this report is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Provide feedback to Councillors on the 2014 St Patrick's Celebrations.</li><li>- Seek guidance on events for 2015 with special reference to the date for the Council's main parade and concert.</li></ul>
1.2	<p>In May 2013 Members agreed to move the main council St Patrick's parade and concert to the nearest Sunday to St Patrick's Day rather than on the 17<sup>th</sup> March. The rationale behind the move was based on the resources connected to events on the 17<sup>th</sup> March especially in regard to the carnival element. In addition the move was seen as assisting in attracting visitors to the city given that St Patrick's Day is not a public holiday in Belfast. The shift was also deemed to assist the council's St Patrick's events to stand out in its marketing given the prevalence of activities elsewhere on the 17<sup>th</sup> March.</p>
1.3	<p>The 2014 programme of activity created by the council included a parade and concert, alongside events run by the Ulster and Waterfront Halls. In addition to this Members agreed to host the annual Ullans Academy St Patrick's Day Breakfast at City Hall and promote the New York based Sober St Patrick's Day initiative. The following are the key statistics generated by the concert and parade events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Total cost to council was £140,000 (£40,000 less than 2013 due to budget constraints)</li><li>- It is estimated that 23,000 people attended the event (8,000 concert attendees over three hours and an audience of 15,000 for the parade). This figure is very similar to 2013.</li><li>- Estimated economic return of over £508,000. Again very similar to 2013.</li><li>- Return on council's investment of £3.62 for every £1.00 invested. This is slightly higher, but is due to the reduced 2014 budget.</li><li>- 7% of attendees were out-of-state (9% in 2013), 33% (33% in 2013) outside Belfast and 60% (60% in 2013) from the Greater Belfast area</li><li>- An average positive rating of 71% for the overall event was given</li><li>- It is estimated that 55% (51% in 2013), of attending were from a: Catholic background; 26% Protestant (no change from 2013) and 19% from other backgrounds (22% in 2013).</li><li>- Just over half (53%) agreed that the St Patrick's Celebrations should be held on a</li></ul>

	Sunday however a proportion disagreed especially amongst the 55+ age group.
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<b>2</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
2.1	Members are being asked to give guidance to whether a similar family orientated programme should be delivered in March 2015. The programme would be based on many of the activities highlighted including the annual Ullans Academy St Patrick's Day Breakfast and the Sober St Patrick's Day initiative. However, Members are also being asked if they wish to continue with the format that would see the annual parade and concert operating on the nearest Sunday to St Patrick's Day rather than on the 17 <sup>th</sup> March given some of the feedback in the above statistics.

<b>3</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
3.1	<u>Financial</u> The 2015 programme would be delivered within the £140,000 as agreed by Members in February 2014.
3.2	<u>Human Resources</u> There would be no additional staff resources connected to this initiative and all activity could be managed with the current personnel levels.
3.3	<u>Asset and Other Implications</u> There would be no implications in this area.
3.4	<u>Marketing</u> If agreed, the 2015 programme would include a marketing campaign to promote all publicly accessible St Patrick's celebrations in the city.

<b>4</b>	<b>Equality and Good Relations Considerations</b>
4.1	As with all major civic events, public events like the above have the potential to bring together people from a wide range of backgrounds and therefore promote good relations in the city.

<b>5</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
5.1	Members are requested to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Note feedback on the 2014 St Patrick's Festival.</li> <li>- Give guidance on the format of the event in 2015 and on which day the events should be staged on – 17<sup>th</sup> March or the nearest Sunday to this date.</li> </ul>

<b>6</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
If approved, officers will monitor and evaluate the outcomes of the project and provide post-project details as part of the Department's annual review. These outcomes will be presented to Members as part of the City Events Unit key performance indicators.	
Timeline:	March 2015                      Reporting Officer: Gerry Copeland