



<b>Subject:</b>	Belfast City Marathon 2019 and Onwards – Request from Belfast City Marathon Ltd
<b>Date:</b>	7th February 2018
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Donal Durkan, Director of Development, ext 3470
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Gerry Copeland, City Events Manager, ext 3412

<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</b>	
<b>After Committee Decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>After Council Decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Sometime in the future</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Never</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
<b>Is the decision eligible for Call-in?</b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	<p>The purpose of this report is to seek Council's support for changes to the Belfast City Marathon. These changes are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- a new course from 2019 and onwards (<b>as per Appendix 1</b>)</li><li>- for the event to move to a Sunday from 2019 and onwards</li></ul>
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Support the Belfast City Marathon Limited in regard to proposed changes to the course and for the event to be staged on a Sunday from 2019 and onwards.</li></ul> <p>The Committee is asked to note that the Belfast City Marathon Limited is a free standing, legally constituted organisation that has no legal connection to Belfast City Council, other</p>

	than funding arrangements.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	The Belfast City Marathon Ltd was set up in 1982 by Council and Athletics Northern Ireland. The aim of the company was to hold a Marathon Event in the City of Belfast on May Day. The Event was sponsored by Guinness and in its first year over 3,000 participants ran a two loop course. The Belfast Marathon was repeated in 1983 and as its popularity grew, it has become an annual fixture in the events and athletics calendar of Belfast.
3.2	Over the last 36 years, due to the success of the Belfast City Marathon and to encourage more people to get physically active, the organisers have introduced other additional elements to the day. This includes: the Team Relay – for teams of 2-5 people running the same course as the main Marathon Race across 5 legs with distances ranging from 3 to 7 miles; an 8 Mile Walk – a non-competitive event permitting people of all ages (16 years and over) to walk part of the Marathon Route; and a Fun Run – a 3 mile race which takes in a different route to that of the Main Marathon, but still starts and finishes at the same locations (City Hall and Ormeau Park). This event is targeted towards families and school children.
3.3	The Belfast City Marathon Ltd company is now totally independent of the Council with no Elected Representatives or Officers on its Board. This position occurred as part of BCC's review of Councillor and Officer representation on statutory and non-statutory bodies, which was part of the recent Local Government reform process. However, the Council has funded the event via BCC's City Events Unit budgets, with the contribution for 2018 event proposed at £26,000. The overall Marathon on average attracts 18,000 competitors, making it the biggest mass participatory sporting event in Northern Ireland. It is estimated that each year the Belfast Marathon creates over £1 million additional economic activity for the city and over £1.5 million for charities connected to the event.
3.4	Over the last thirty-six years, the marathon has used various routes which have been designed to incorporate the entire city. It has also had to adapt to incorporate a changing city. These changes have meant that the current staging of a marathon on the May Bank Holiday Monday is difficult to sustain, with recent requests from the Belfast Chamber of Trade and Commerce (see <b>Appendix 3</b> ) seeking to move the event to a Sunday. This call is due to the level of traffic disruption created on what is now an important business day in the retail calendar. In addition, the overall level of vehicular traffic on the May Bank Holiday has also increased over the last 36 years. There is also a need to meet costs incurred by PSNI on the May Bank Holiday Monday, which are double the normal rate in comparison to a standard working day. Members are asked to note that since 2013, the organisers staged a secondary event from the Belfast City Marathon – the Belfast City Half Marathon. This race, which

	<p>annually attracts approximately 4,000 people, takes place on the third Sunday of September, with limited negative impact.</p> <p>3.5 Given the above issues the Belfast City Marathon Limited company wish to garner Belfast City Council's support for a new route and a change of day which would see the event take place on Sunday, 5 May 2019, and then annually on the Sunday of the first May Bank Holiday weekend. This change of day would reflect other major European and global marathons which all take place on a Sunday – Berlin, Boston, Chicago, Dublin (in 2016, the Dublin Marathon saw an increase in competitors from 14,000 to 20,000 when they moved to a Sunday), London, Paris, etc. It is anticipated that the new route and the switch to a Sunday would increase participant numbers, positively impact on the economic returns to the city and decrease traffic congestion</p> <p>3.6 It would be the intention of the Belfast City Marathon to consult on the new course and the move to a Sunday. This consultation would include stakeholders and the various churches directly and indirectly affected by the proposed new course (see <b>Appendix 2</b>).</p> <p>3.7 Members are reminded that the strategic review of Events and Festivals is nearing completion with an outline draft to be presented at this Committee meeting. However, the Belfast City Marathon envisage that their proposed changes would need to be planned for regardless of the events and festivals review outcomes, as the timelines to develop and deliver the changes presented need to be implemented twelve months out from the 2019 event.</p> <p>3.8 <u>Financial &amp; Resource Implications</u>  Subject to agreement of the city rate, resources for 2018 event would be £26,000. However, there is no financial commitment, by Council, to the Belfast City Marathon, beyond the 2018/19 financial year.</p> <p>3.9 <u>Equality &amp; Good Relations Implications</u>  The proposed programme of events is open to all and as such has the potential to promote good relations &amp; equality by bringing together people from a wide range of backgrounds.</p>
<p><b>4.0</b></p>	<p><b>Appendices – Documents Attached</b></p>
	<p>Appendix 1 – Proposed NEW Belfast City Marathon Route Map  Appendix 2 – Proposed NEW Belfast City Marathon Route with Churches Referenced  Appendix 3 – Belfast Chamber of Trade and Commerce letter</p>