



Subject:	Belfast City Marathon
Date:	3 April 2019
Reporting Officer:	John Greer, Director of Economic Development, ext 3470
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Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, when will the report become unrestricted	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	This is an update report following on from June 2018's City Growth and Regeneration decision to endorse the Belfast City Marathon Limited's (BCM) move to a Sunday race day and the adoption of a brand new course.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is requested to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">note the contents of the report. <p>In addition, Councillors are reminded that February's meeting of the Committee agreed to a rolling reduction in the Council's commitment to the Marathon from £26,000 in 2019 to zero support by 2025/2026 (2019/20 - £26,000; 2020/21 - £20,000; 2021/22 - £15,000; 2022/23 -</p>

	<p>£10,000 and 2023/24 - £5,000) - the Council' 2019 support will be subject to agreed set targets with the BCM. BCM hopes to be in a position to self-finance the event and/or review the staging of it.</p>
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p>The change of race day originated from a request from the Belfast Chamber of Trade and Commerce (BCTC). BCTC indicated that trade, due to the Bank Holiday Monday Marathon, was greatly impacted, with figures indicating normal trading operating half of a normal Monday's business. BCTC also expressed the view that a move to a Sunday race would increase visitor numbers. It should be noted that while the change to a Sunday will hopefully reduce the level of disruption to the city's roads, there will be a significant level of road closures across Sunday 5th May – which is inevitable in complying with the Council-enforced road closure legislation. However, while the Belfast City Marathon Company are hopeful that the new race day and route will reduce traffic congestion in comparison to a May Bank Holiday Monday they cannot give full assurance until the reformatted race is delivered – even with extensive input and consultation. Members are also reminded the Committee endorsed the move to a Sunday race and the choice of route (see Appendix 1) at its meeting in June 2018.</p>
3.2	<p>On the back of the move to the new course (see Appendix 1), and race day, BCM have seen a significant increase in the number of full marathon competitors – anecdotal feedback shows that this is due to the Sunday race day and new course and underpins the Council's backing for the changes (City Growth & Regeneration Committee, 27 June 2018). In 2018, there were 2,394 runners, while 2019 there is a record number of applicants at 4,180, which is just over 1,800 additional competitors in comparison to 2018 and is a record number in the 38-year history of the race. Of the overall full marathon competitors, there are over 1,008 out-of-state runners, with 751 out-of-state runners recorded in 2018. In addition, there are 119 additional relay teams in comparison to 2018.</p>
3.3	<p>Members are asked to note that Translink are currently looking at their operational levels of the Glider and Metro services, as both will be heavily impacted by the legally required road closures. However, to date there has been a significant level of statutory (PSNI, Department for Infrastructure (Roads), Belfast Health & Social Care Trust, Translink, NI Ambulance, NI Fire & Rescue, Sport NI, Disability Sport NI and Athletics NI) and community engagement, especially with churches and business on the new route. Approximately 200 business have been directly contacted, with approximately 190 churches contacted. BCM are also working with BCC's Regulatory Services Team (they oversee the Road Closure Permit process) concerning engagement with Belfast residence and as per Committee approval of June 2018. This consultation process will continue leading up to the race day.</p>

3.4	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>February's Committee agreed to a rolling reduction in the Council's commitment to the Marathon from £26,000 in 2019 to zero support by 2025/2026 (2019/20 - £26,000; 2020/21 - £20,000; 2021/22 - £15,000; 2022/23 - £10,000 and 2023/24 - £5,000). The overall cost of staging the event in 2019 has increased from £472,500 in 2018 to £634,000 in 2019. The significant increase is due to the new day and regulatory road closure requirements.</p>
3.5	<p><u>Equality & Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>The BCM event is open to all and as such has the potential to promote good relations & equality by bringing together people from a wide range of backgrounds. There are no perceived Rural Needs implications connected to this project.</p>
4.0	<p>Appendices – Documents Attached</p>
4.1	<p>Appendix 1 – Belfast City Marathon Route</p>