

Executive Report

Giving notice date: 1st November 2012
Decision to be confirmed on: 21st November 2012

Review of Festivals and Events – Outcome of the Consultation

Decision to be taken by: Assistant City Mayor, Cllr Piara
Singh Clair

Lead director: Liz Blyth



City Mayor

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: City-wide
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1. Decision Summary:

This report provides:

- a summary of the public and stakeholder consultation on the options and proposals arising from the information and data gathering stage of the review of the Festivals and Events programme
- final proposals, recommendations and decision about the future funding of the festivals and events programme.

The Assistant Mayor has decided to:

- a) Maintain funding at the current level (£9,000) and enter into a new three year funding contract and Service Level Agreement with The Spark Children's Arts Festival.
- b) Maintain the funding at the current level (£5,000) for Leicester International Music Festival and enter into a one year funding contract.
- c) Maintain funding at the current level and the 'in-house' management and delivery arrangements for Riverside Festival (£18,000), Abbey Park Bonfire and Firework Display (£14,000) and the Christmas Lights Switch On event (£16,000).
- d) Maintain the funding at the current level for Black History Month (£5,000) and develop a brief and specification and tender the management and delivery of Black History Month for (2 years) 2013 and 2014, with the option to extend for a further year.
- e) Increase the grant to the Big Difference Company for the provision of Dave's Leicester Comedy Festival from £18,500 to £23,500 for 2013/14 and that work is undertaken to develop a service level agreement that sets out how the council's contribution is used in the delivery of the festival and its leverage in terms of raising income from other sources.
- f) Confirm continuation of the funding for the St. George's Day celebration and events in and around including the city centre and cultural quarter with discussions to continue with the Cultural Quarter Business Association on the form of these celebrations.
- g) Support to the Carnival to be provided, with the Council's support focussed on the city centre procession / parade and enter into a 3 year funding contract and service level agreement with funding reducing from £100,000 in 2012/13 to £80,000 in 2013/14 and to £60,000 in 2014/15 to reflect the nature of the event.
- h) Cease to fund and organise the Humberstone Park Bonfire (2013 onwards) but provide advice and guidance through the Festivals and Events and Community Services teams to assist in the preparation and delivery of a community managed bonfire event in its place if the community want to take a lead. To assist that organisation with applications for funding from Ward Community budgets and other local funding sources as appropriate to the event.
- i) Continue to hire De Montfort Hall at its published community rate and to provide a financial contribution of £10,000 to the Leicester Hindu Festival Council toward the cost of staging the Navratri Festival at De Montfort Hall. To

supplement this in 2013 with an additional £10,000 for one year subject to review. To enter into a service level agreement that lists the elements of the festival that the council's funding is supporting and the key performance management information that is required to be provided to inform the review.

- j) Cease funding for the Dasher event, however for the Council's Festivals and Events Team to provide support and advice to the Leicester Hindu Festival Council to seek to enable them to manage and deliver the event in future years.
- k) Maintain the current level of funding (£88,000) for the Diwali Switch on and Diwali Day events and instruct officers to review the programme / budget allocation for these events to re-balance the programme to create more distinctiveness between the two days and ensure maximum efficiency.
- l) Establish a Festivals and Events networking group, led by the Council, to share good practice and develop partnership and joint working arrangements.
- m) Review of marketing in order to develop a campaign to brand the city's festival programme and to provide more 'in kind' support to festival organisations with their own marketing and PR campaigns.
- n) Support Leicester Belgrave Mela at current levels, subject to negotiation on the timing of the Festival and integration with the development of an August Bank Holiday Festival.
- o) Build on the changes implemented this year to re-brand Castle Park festival and from 2013 widen it out as part of a city centre August Bank Holiday week-end offer
- p) Undertake further work with regard to the use of the savings (£48,000 in 13/14 rising to £78,000 in 14/15) arising from the review and with the development of an August bank holiday festival containing elements of the Leicester Belgrave Mela and Castle Park Festival.

2. Why it is needed:

The Council is undertaking a review of all services provided by the Voluntary and Community sector and grant aided/funded by the Council. The City Mayor and Executive, in August 2011, endorsed a review of festivals and events. The scope of the review includes: festivals and events provided by voluntary and community organisations along with those festivals and events delivered by the Council in partnership with other organisations and those managed and provided by the Council.

The review of festivals and events has been carried out in accordance with the process developed by the Council for such reviews. It has been carried out by a cross service project team to ensure a robust process of check and challenge.

The review of festivals and events is underpinned by the need for the Council to demonstrate continued value for money in the activities and services it supports and/or provides to ensure that public funds are used for the greatest benefit and to meet the changing needs of the City's communities.

In February this year the City Mayor and Executive approved a schedule of options and proposals as the basis for Public and Stakeholder consultation. A summary of the options and proposals that were consulted on is included at Appendix One.

Public and stakeholder consultation started on Monday 23rd April and closed on Friday 27th July 2012. A summary of the on-line survey questionnaire is included at Appendix Two. A summary of the comments arising from the consultation with stakeholders is

included at Appendix Three. A summary of comments received from key stakeholders and partners is included at Appendix Four. A summary of the comments from the Ward Community meetings is included at Appendix Five.

3. Options:

The public and stakeholder consultation has demonstrated a level of support for the festivals and events programme and the options and proposals arising from the information and data gathering stage of the review. However some of the options and proposals have been amended; for consideration by the City Mayor and Executive, in response to the feedback and comments received.

In the following paragraphs the proposed changes are listed along with the rationale for the proposed changes. For ease, they are listed in accordance with the recommendations set out in paragraph 1 above. *(NB These changes were those considered by the City Mayor and Executive prior to Scrutiny Commission and they informed the final decision set out in 1 above).*

Recommendation e) Increase the grant to the Big Difference Company for the provision of Dave's Leicester Comedy Festival from £18,500 to £23,500 for 2013/14 and that work is undertaken to develop a service level agreement that sets out how the council's contribution is used in the delivery of the festival and its leverage in terms of raising income from other sources

The consultation has demonstrated a significant level of support for this annual event. The Big Difference Company in their written response present a strong argument that they are underfunded and request an increase of £15,000. To ensure the on-going financial stability and sustainability of the organisation and their continued contribution to raising the profile of the City at a national level an increase of £5,000 is proposed.

Recommendation f) confirm continuation of the funding for the St. George's Day celebration and events in and around including the city centre and cultural quarter with discussions to continue with the Cultural Quarter Business Association on the form of these celebrations.

The Cultural Quarter Business Association would welcome on-going discussion about the structure and organisation of the event to ensure that opportunities for communities and the businesses based in the area have the opportunity to maximise participation in it. Over the years attendance at the event in the Cultural Quarter has ranged from 4,500 to a reported just over 3,000 this year. It is therefore proposed to explore joint working arrangements with the city centre market's St George's day celebration – an event that has established itself over a number of years.

Recommendation g) Support to the Carnival to be provided, with the Council's support focussed on the city centre procession / parade and enter into a 3 year funding contract and service level agreement with funding reducing from £100,000 in 2012/13 to £80,000 in 2013/14 and to £60,000 in 2014/15 to reflect the nature of the event.

The public consultation demonstrates support for a reduction in the funding the Council provides to Caribbean Carnival. However it should be noted that Arts Council England (ACE), along with others stakeholders have raised concerns that the proposed

approach to the Caribbean Carnival may not generate the level of savings anticipated and that limiting the event to Victoria Park is not in keeping with the ethos and values of Carnival. In light of these comments and concerns and following discussions with the Festivals and Events team after this year's Carnival it is proposed that the Council funding should be directed to support a City Centre procession/parade and the Carnival Arts activities associated with this. Further it is intended to have further dialogue with ACE to ensure that we are both working strategically to support Carnival to achieve the required level of savings.

Recommendation h) cease to fund and organise the Humberstone Park Bonfire (2013 onwards) but provide advice and guidance to assist in the preparation and delivery of a community managed bonfire event in its place if the community want to take a lead on it. Assist the community with applications for funding from Ward Community budgets and other local funding sources as appropriate to the event if they want to take this forward.

The consultation, particularly in the ward community meetings, demonstrated a lack of support and direct opposition to the proposal to stop providing the Humberstone Park Bonfire. However the consultation undertaken at ward level did bring forward the idea that the event could continue if a) a community group is formed to take the project forward and b) if ward community funds were applied for to support it.

Recommendation i) Continue to hire De Montfort Hall, at its published community rate and provide a financial contribution of £10,000 to the Leicester Hindu Festival Council toward the cost of staging the Navratri Festival at De Montfort Hall and enter into a service level agreement that lists the elements of the festival that the council's funding is supporting and the key performance management information that is required to be provided.

A petition and substantial representation was made to the Council in response to the cessation of funding for the Navratri Festival. Having listened to these comments it is proposed to provide funding of £10,000 and to negotiate a service level agreement with the Leicester Hindu Festival Council.

Recommendation j) Cease funding for the Dashera event.

Dashera is a distinctly religious event. The consultation found that only 15% of questionnaire respondents had attended the event in previous years.

Recommendation k) Maintain the current level of funding (£88,000) for the Diwali Switch on and Diwali Day events and instruct officers to review the programme / budget allocation for these events to re-balance the programme to create more distinctiveness between the two days and ensure maximum efficiency.

The sum of £88,000 does not include the cost of around £28,000 for installation and running the lights which is paid for by Public Lighting Group budgets. The costs of Police and Fire service are NOT included in the budget as their costs are met from their own budgets. The costs of Traffic Management etc. and Ambulance services are included in the budget. In addition, the Council each year procures sponsorship in the sum of around £30,000 per annum towards the event, which brings the total cost of the Diwali events (excluding costs associated with Lights Police and Fire Service) to around £118,000. Sustaining £30,000 in sponsorship is crucial to maintain the Diwali programme in its current form and or develop it in the manner described in the

paragraph above.

Recommendation m) establish a Festivals and Events networking group, led by the Council, to share good practice and develop partnership and joint working arrangements.

All stakeholders and partners consulted support the establishment of the festivals and events forum. Some of the stakeholders have suggested that the membership of the forum should include representatives from a wider range of experience and expertise, to include representation from tourism, business, venue and retailers. Extending the membership in this way is welcomed as it will help to connect the festivals and events programme with other city activities and ventures. It would enable exploitation of the cultural tourism potential and help to maximise the positioning and economic regeneration opportunities that signature festivals bring to the city.

The festival and events forum would be responsible for developing a Festivals and Events strategy, informed by the guiding principles of the Cultural Ambition and from the Cultural Partnership Board. It will provide the vehicle to set out a clear vision and set of economic, social and cultural objectives which will include increasing tourism, developing the profile of the city, strengthening participation and engagement of/with communities and business.

Recommendation n) Support Leicester Belgrave Mela, subject to negotiation on the timing of the Festival and integration with the development of an August Bank Holiday Festival.

There is a great deal of support for the Leicester Belgrave Mela and the intention is to continue to support this event, however negotiation is intended to ascertain whether it is possible to schedule the event during the August Bank Holiday week-end to enhance the city offer and attract visitors into the city centre at that time.

Recommendation o) Undertake further work with regard to the use of the savings (£58,000 in 13/14 rising to £78,000 in 14/15) arising from the review and with the development of an August bank holiday festival containing elements of the Leicester Belgrave Mela and Castle Park Festival.

Other Key Issues:

Leicester Hindu Festival Council

Leicester Hindu Festival Council (as part of a very comprehensive response to the consultation) submitted a petition, with 2,212 signatures, on the following grounds:

“We, the undersigned fully support the work of the Leicester Hindu Festival Council, which has been promoting the Hindu Culture, Heritage, History and Religious rights through Navratri, Dasher and Diwali, to the wider community, to benefit the local social and economic interests of Leicester and we request the City Council to continue its support for the parent organisation, the Leicester Hindu Festival Council.”

In accordance with Council procedure the petition was debated at the meeting of Full Council held on 13th September 2012.

Three year Funding Contract

The three year funding contract and service level agreements that will be entered into will require the funded organisation to collect and provide information and data that demonstrates the economic, social and cultural benefits delivered and associated with their festival, event and activity. This information should be collected in a consistent manner:

economic impact will be measured using methodology, such as:

- the total value of services and supplies
- the total value of services and supplies provided from local suppliers/sources
- audience analysis
- number of FTE posts directly sustained by the organisation
- number of FTE posts indirectly sustained by the organisation

Social & Cultural will be measured using methodology, such as:

- review and analysis of audience and user feedback collected by the organisation
- focus group with users and beneficiaries of the festival/event (frequency to be determined with each individual organisation). The focus group would capture the views of a broad range of people including
 - Visitors/audiences
 - Participants
 - Artistic/creative companies
 - Business/ Events users

4. Tell us how this issue has been externally scrutinised as well as internally?

Public and stakeholder consultation on the options and proposals arising from the data and information gathering stage of the review was undertaken during the period 23rd April to 27th July 2012 (12 weeks in accord with the statutory guidance provided by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

Consultation was undertaken with :

- the general public : on-line survey (hard copies of the on-line survey were also available from the Central Lending Library and the NWC B Block Customer Service Centre, further copies were made available at Ward Community Meetings)
- Funded organisations, their membership and affiliates,
- users and beneficiaries of a festival, event or activity
- ward community meetings, where a festival, event or activity, takes place within that ward:

Abbey – Abbey Park Bonfire

Belgrave and Latimer – Diwali, Dashera and Navratri
Castle – Castle Park Festival, Caribbean Carnival, Dave’s Leicester Comedy Festival, Spark Children’s Arts Festival, Leicester International Music Festival, St. George’s Day and the Christmas Lights Switch On
Coleman, Charnwood and Thurncourt – Humberstone Park Bonfire,
Westcotes – Riverside Festival.

- key stakeholders and partners – City Centre Director and LE1, Culture Partnership Board, Leicester Promotions Ltd, Leicester Business Voice, Arts Council England, British Arts Festivals Association

The Scrutiny Commissions for Economic Development, Culture & Tourism and Heritage, Leisure & Sport scrutinised the options and proposals arising from the data and information gathering stage of the review at a joint meeting held on 3rd July 2012. The joint Scrutiny Commission meeting recommendations (as minuted) are listed below:

- a) welcome the report as a strategic cultural and community-based review rather than a budget-driven exercise
- b) welcomes the creation of a festivals forum
- c) believe the forum should consider the development of business, retail and other related links with individual festivals
- d) believe the forum should measure cultural, economic and social impacts of individual festivals. The creation of the LE1 city centre management group economic assessment work is welcomed and could usefully contribute to the festivals forum
- e) the Commission welcomes the Cultural Ambition statement and shares the vision embedded in the launch document
- f) Festivals should support and develop the use of local talent
- g) Festivals should be more inclusive within and across communities within the city
- h) Further discussions should take place to optimise the image and PR opportunities of existing events to gain best advantage from the events. This should include timings of the events to gain most publicity.
- i) Further information should be obtained on the total costs of individual festivals and the income obtained from festival users.

The Scrutiny Commissions for Economic Development, Culture & Tourism and Heritage, Leisure & Sport scrutinised the options and proposals arising from the consultation phase of the review at their joint meetings on 31st October & 14th November. The joint Scrutiny Commission draft recommendations, subject to approval by Scrutiny Commission at the next ordinary meeting, are listed below:

1. The Joint Scrutiny Commission (the Commission) supports the objectives of the review, particularly the need to reshape the existing programme and also to develop new programmes and events.
2. The consultation process in the review was considered to be important and it is recognised that many festivals can have a city-wide impact. It is accepted that the consultation on the new proposals will have taken place on a city-wide basis; consultation at ward meetings may be considered to be a further, more local, level of consultation which could in future be deployed more widely.

3. The Commission had concerns about the level of financial information provided to the commission. The business case by the council for providing funds, should be available, if appropriate, to the commission as part of a transparent consultation process.
4. The Commission recognises that the possible moving of the Belgrave MELA to the Bank Holiday weekend is a matter of negotiation with the organisers, but is concerned that any move of this event should not be to the detriment of either MELA or other events which might be overshadowed by it.
5. When considering the sustainability of an event or festival, the council should:
 - a. consider the extent to which organisers can raise funds for and from a festival or event
 - b. assess the sustainability of the organisation and the event and how capacity will be built into both the organisation and the event.
6. The Commission notes consideration by the City Mayor regarding the sustainability of the Humberstone Bonfire event, including the potential for top-up funding or support from local ward community meetings if a community led proposal comes forward.
7. The Commission welcomes the approach by the City Mayor to have talks with the Leicester Hindu Festival Council about the totality of future funding of the three festivals – Navratri, Diwali and Dasherah - with the objective that the Dasherah festival is able to continue.
8. The Commission reiterates its support for the creation of a festivals and events forum, and asks that recommendations from this meeting be referred to that Forum.
9. The Commission supports the idea of a better and more co-ordinated marketing of festivals and events.
10. The Council needs to clarify its policy in relation to the supporting of events which are considered to be wholly religious, and how this term is defined.

5. Financial, legal and other implications

5.1 Financial implications

The 2012/13 budget for Festivals and Events listed is £366,500 the proposals will cost £308,500 in 2013/14 generating savings of £58,000 in 2013/14, rising to £78,000 in 2014/15. These savings are to be reallocated as detailed in point (p) in 1 above.
Paresh Radia, Principal Accountant.

5.2 Legal implications

Detailed legal advice has already been given to officers conducting the consultation. At this stage I have nothing to add.

Nimisha Ruparelia – Commercial and General Contracts Solicitor

Previous Legal Advice given in Executive Report 22 February 2012 was as follows:

Legal advice on consultation, provided to officers responsible for commissioning in July 2010, is being updated in the light of recent case law and DCLG Statutory Guidance on Best Value (published September 2011). This Statutory Guidance extends the range of those with whom the Council must consult.

In the Leicester Compact (published October 2010), the Council gave a commitment to the voluntary sector to: "... consult widely and early enough to make a difference, allowing at least 12 weeks' consultation ... giving feedback on the outcomes." This commitment left scope for the Council's thinking to develop during the 12-week consultation process.

The Statutory Guidance, however, states that, when it intends to reduce or end support to a voluntary and community organisation or small business, the Council is to: "... give at least three months' notice of the actual reduction to both the organisation involved and the public/service users."

A failure to comply with the extended obligation would lead to a risk that the Council's consultation would be challenged.

The meaning of "actual sum" in the Statutory Guidance is not entirely clear. It probably means a specific sum that the Council is minded to apply and communicates to those with whom it consults before the three months' notice begins. This can be determined relatively early in its decision making process and so should not create a significantly greater administrative burden on the Council. There is some risk that the intended meaning of "actual reduction" in the Statutory Guidance is a specific sum determined by the Council at the end of the consultation period, after it has considered interested parties' representations, which is then to be put into effect. A requirement to give three months' notice from this point following consultation would significantly extend the process. This alternative meaning is not considered to be the likely intention of the Statutory Guidance; however, until case law or further guidance clarifies this definition, some ambiguity remains.

More detailed advice on the boundaries within which consultation must be undertaken has been provided to the author and other officers responsible for commissioning.

Gregory Surtees, Senior Solicitor, Commercial & General team

5.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications

This report does not contain any significant climate change implications and therefore should not have a detrimental effect on the Council's climate change targets.

Helen Lansdown, Senior Environmental Consultant - Sustainable Procurement

5.4 Other Implications (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

Equality Impact assessments have been undertaken for those festivals and events where a change in the funding arrangement and or delivery arrangement is proposed.

6. Background information and other papers:

Executive Report, 22 February 2012 – Review of Festivals, Events and funded Arts activities.

7. Summary of appendices:

- Appendix One – summary of the options and proposals arising from the review that formed the basis of the public and stakeholder consultation
- Appendix Two – summary of the on-line survey questionnaire
- Appendix Three – summary comments from funded organisations
- Appendix Four – summary analysis of stakeholder comments
- Appendix Five – summary of Ward Community meeting comments

8. Is this a private report (If so, please indicated the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?

No

9. Is this a “key decision”?

Yes. It is significant in terms of its effects on communities living in two or more wards in the city.