



Leicester  
City Council

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD**

**6 NOVEMBER 2008**

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**Report of the Culture & Leisure Scrutiny Task Group – Final Report**

**“Festivals and Events Review”**

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**Report of Councillor Naylor, Task Group Leader**

**1. Summary**

- 1.1 This report provides the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board with the findings of the Culture and Leisure Task Groups review into the Festivals and Events held in Leicester. This review was undertaken to ensure that the range of events offered encourages wider public participation; value for money; and to review the Council’s criteria for funding.
- 1.2 During the past few years, Leicester City Council has experienced the reality of delivering the programme of festivals and events against a background of increasing licensing costs, changing health and safety requirements and generally rising costs of organising and staging events. There are also pressures on staff time needed to manage and operate a larger number of major events, but a need to maintain the quality of events.
- 1.3 This report sets out the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the Festivals Task Group. This was the Culture & Leisure Scrutiny Task Group’s second review topic.
- 1.4 This report includes an executive summary highlighting the key findings of the review. The following index will assist members to navigate through the report.

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **1.0 Introduction**

In September 2007 the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board agreed that the Culture & Leisure Task Group should undertake a scrutiny review of 'Festivals and Events in Leicester'. This is an executive summary of the key findings and recommendations.

### **1.1 Purpose of Review**

- Review Criteria for LCC funding to Festivals and Events.
- Review the programme of events in response to revised criteria.
- Look forward to the opportunities presented by Special Olympics and the Cultural Olympiad.

### **1.2 Key Findings**

A number of key findings have emerged from the review. The views of those involved in organising festivals and events have been essential in shaping these findings. Findings include:

- The biggest challenge facing events organisers is sustainability and funding due to increased costs required to comply with new legislation and increasing infrastructure.
- There is a need for festivals to pay particular attention to increasing the artistic and creative content when developing festivals programmes.
- There is an essential need to provide Festivals and events organisers with support and training, to prepare them to attract external funding sources, in order not to be totally reliant on council funding.
- Festivals and Events Organisers have, with limited exceptions, had limited success in attracting commercial sponsorship and other means of financial support.
- There is a lack of distinction and definition between 'Arts' and 'Religious' Festivals.
- Festivals and events are heavily reliant on volunteers, who over the years have built up their skills, talent and knowledge. However, there is a need to expand their skills and share good practice.
- Current resources supporting festivals and events management in the council are overstretched in trying to deliver, increasingly, a more varied and demanding festivals programme.
- A number of existing festivals and events in the city have succeeded in attracting funding and increasing participation, there is a need to share these good practice models.
- In terms of supporting and promoting smaller festivals and community events, the Festivals Unit received great praise, however, Leicestershire Promotions was not perceived to be providing active support.
- A common viewpoint shared by many festivals providers was the need for a networking forum to share good practice and forge links.

- The newly formed Youth Performing Arts Network should be supported as it provides Children and young people in Leicester with opportunities to showcase their talents in a wide range of events and festivals.
- Festivals are run by Leicester City Council, the Grant aided sector and voluntary organisations, so marketing and sponsorship is not well co-ordinated across the programme, therefore creating a fragmented approach within festivals.

Many of the issues raised in the full review report would benefit from further research, to not only identify trends in festivals and events activity, but to also have a better understanding of festivals management, as well as addressing the issues raised in the SWOT analysis undertaken by festival organisers.

### **1.3 Key Recommendations**

Recommendations to cabinet include:

- That the new criteria for funding festivals and events be adopted by the council for the festivals funding strategy 2009-13.
- That the Festivals Unit be provided with extra resources to help and prepare event organisers to become self sustaining in the future.
- That the Festivals Unit commission external help to develop a strategy to secure sponsorship and funding in the future, the likely cost to be £15,000 to £20,000.
- That the Children and Young People's Service be provided with extra resources to continue and further develop the Youth Performing Arts Network.
- That a research programme be funded, in conjunction with De Montfort University, to further improve festivals management.

Factors that the task group would like the festivals unit to consider are:

- Raising awareness of the councils' festivals website.
- Creating opportunities for Leicester Creative Business Depot to contribute to the festivals development programme in the city.
- To build on existing partnership working to incorporate more community arts participation.
- To engage with Leicestershire Promotions Ltd to improve working together at a strategic level.
- To encourage activities that unite both our outer estate communities and the city as a whole embracing the 'One Leicester' ethos.

## **2. Full Recommendations**

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board is asked to endorse the following recommendations of the Festivals Task Group.

- 2.1 To recommend to cabinet that the new criteria for funding festivals and events be adopted by the council. This is recommended to cover a four-year period, 2009 to 2013, rather than three, since this provides continuity for festival organizers throughout the Cultural Olympiad period.
- 2.2 To recommend to cabinet that the Festivals Unit be provided with extra resources to adopt a business approach to providing training to festivals and events providers to prepare them to access external funding streams, enabling them to become self-sustaining.
- 2.3 To recommend to cabinet that the Festivals Unit be provided with extra resources to explore the viability and value of creating a festivals and events forum for the purpose of encouraging and supporting new networking opportunities for festivals providers, locally and possibly regionally.
- 2.4 To recommend to cabinet that the Festivals Unit approach an external professional company to help to commission a piece of work to develop a strategy to secure sponsorship and funding in the future. The cost of this is likely to be £15,000 to £20,000.
- 2.5 To recommend to cabinet that the Children and Young People's Service be provided with extra resources to continue and further develop the Youth Performing Arts Network (YPAN) to improve opportunities for young people to perform in the events and festivals in the city.
- 2.6 The Festivals Unit to raise the profile of the councils' Festivals Website, which provides guidance and advice on all aspects of organising an event.
- 2.7 Future reviews of the councils Marketing Strategy to take into account the findings of this report in terms of providing a corporate and consistent approach to advertising, promotion, publicity and fundraising functions.
- 2.8 The Festivals Unit to engage relevant officers and members to meet with Leicestershire Promotions Ltd to work together at a strategic level and to address the issues highlighted in this report.
- 2.9 The Festivals Unit to build on their existing work on creating partnership relationships to widen development opportunities for festivals and events programming to incorporate more community arts participation.
- 2.10 The Festivals Unit to further explore the groupings of festivals in order to avoid confusion and in order to clarify the differences between 'Arts' Festivals and 'Religious' Festivals.
- 2.11 The Festivals Unit to consider creating opportunities for Leicester Creative Business Depot to make a positive contribution to the festivals development programme in the city.

- 2.12 The Festivals Unit to support festivals and community events providers to build the skills capacity and to assess the training needs of organisers and volunteers.
- 2.13 The Festivals Unit to build on the festivals and events programme to encourage activities that unite both our outer communities and the city as a whole as one, embracing the 'One Leicester' ethos.
- 2.14 To recommend to cabinet that a research programme is developed and funded (in conjunction with De Montfort University) which supports the aspirations of the council and its Festivals Unit through revealing in detail the management, economy and other features/practices of festivals and events and how these outcomes can be maximised for their organisers, participants, audiences and ultimately for the city.

### **3. Background**

- 3.1. At its meeting in September 2007 the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board agreed for the Culture & Leisure Task Group to undertake a review of Festivals and Events in Leicester.
- 3.2. The Task Group met on 6 occasions during the period from October 07 to September 08. In addition to these meetings the Task Group also carried out a consultation exercise for the purpose of gathering evidence.
- 3.3 A progress report to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board in February 2008 provided an update of the Task Group's work.

### **4. Membership of the Task Group**

- 4.1 The members involved in the Task Group were: Councillors Allen, Gill, Hall, Johnson, Newcombe, Palmer, Patel, Shah, and Naylor (Chair).
- 4.2 The Officers from the Regeneration & Culture Department involved in this review are: Richard Watson – Service Director, Sarah Levitt – Head of Arts and Museums and Maggie Shutt – Head of Festivals Unit.

### **5. Acknowledgements**

- 5.1 The Task Group wishes to thank the officers involved in this review; the festivals and events organisers; interested parties and those individuals who contributed to the consultation exercise.

### **6. Aim of the Review**

- 6.1 The Festivals and Events Scrutiny Task Group was set up to:

- a) Review the criteria for funding of the existing programme
- b) Review the organisational arrangements and funding of existing programme
- c) Review performance of existing programme

## 7. Method of Investigation

- 7.1 The Task Group gathered its evidence through the following methods:
- a) A presentation on the Festivals current level of service and on the current Festivals and Events Strategy 3 Year Programme 2006/07 to 2008/09.
  - b) A workshop to consider criteria for funding Festivals and Events.
  - c) Consultation with Festivals and Events organisers and interested parties.
  - d) The knowledge and experience of the Task group members.
  - e) A presentation on the economic and social benefits of cultural festivals by Christopher Maughan, De Montfort University.

### 8.1 Existing and Proposed New Funding Criteria

- 8.1.1 Members heard that there had been a recent festival review, which focussed on funding criteria, therefore the task group would not be looking in detail at funding, but are asked to review the existing funding criteria.
- 8.1.2 A key part of this review was for Members to consider the current festivals programme, which was divided into three groups, with festivals being grouped according to their criteria and subsequent funding. It was noted that there were many worthwhile events, but funding for that event depended on the necessary criteria being met. Members of the task group examined the existing funding criteria for supporting festivals and events.
- 8.1.3 Task Group members gave consideration to whether they supported the main criteria for funding festivals and events or whether they wished to vary it in anyway. The Task Group undertook this detailed work by:
- a) Members participated in a workshop to consider the various factors involved within the criteria for funding and to review the criteria and weighting in relation to the Festivals and Events Strategy.

The following 3 key criteria were discussed:

- *Help community cohesion and empowerment by bringing people together to share common interests.*
  - *Demonstrate economic benefit to the city through job creation and visitor spend.*
  - *Demonstrate innovation, quality and creativity to raise the profile of the city and improve satisfaction among residents.*
- b) Members considered some examples of completed self assessment forms (*this meeting was held in a private session due to the confidential*

*nature of the topic*). The members found this to be a valuable exercise as they were guided through the scoping process for the different groups of festivals.

8.1.4 As a result of this exercise and the workshop discussions, the task group members agreed to review the criteria for funding and agreed to vary the weighting (the summary of changes made are set out on pages 9 & 10).

8.1.5 The Council's first Festivals and Events strategy covered three years up to March 31 2009. This strategy was developed using a set of criteria, against which each festival was scored. The scored were then used to establish the funding categories.

### 8.1.6 Existing Criteria

The existing criteria were expressed as questionnaires for festival organizers, and requirements expressed in a separate scoring guidance document. These have been presented here as statements for ease of comparison with the proposed new criteria.

<b>1.</b>	<b>Help community cohesion, and empowerment by bringing people together to share common interests (5 points)</b>
1.1.	The festival or event offers a culturally diverse programme.
1.2.	The festival or event uses different methods to attract a culturally diverse audience.
1.3.	The festival or event is successful at attracting a culturally diverse audience and can demonstrate this through audience surveys.
1.4.	The festival or event is free or has a strong element of the programme that is free.
1.5.	The festival or event includes an education programme and details can be given of how it operates.
1.6.	There is evidence that the festival or event attracts people from multiple wards.
<b>2.</b>	<b>Demonstrate innovation, quality and creativity to raise the profile of the city and improve satisfaction among residents (5 points)</b>
2.1.	The festival or event has an artistic element which the organiser can identify and explain.
2.2.	If the festival or event has an formal artistic policy a copy can be provided.
2.3.	The festival or event does not have a written artistic policy the organisers can describe how the work they do supports an informal artistic policy.
2.4.	The festival or event is actively supported by residents of Leicester and

	the level of participation is clear from surveys the organisers have carried out in the last two years.
2.5.	The organizers can provide evidence that the festival or event is recognized by the media as a major event in the City and can provide copies of any media coverage it has enjoyed as evidence.
2.6.	The organisers believe the festival or event has something to offer that is unique, and can demonstrate how this unique quality has been recognised by the media or other arts funding bodies.
2.7.	The artistic programme has been financially supported by other agencies and details can be given.
<b>3.</b>	<b>Demonstrate economic benefit to the city through job creation and visitor spend (Score 5)</b>
3.1.	The festival or event actively promotes inward tourism and details are provided.
3.2.	The festival organisers can provide data or statistical evidence of the tourism generated by their festival/event and can describe how their festival or event impacts on tourism.
3.3.	The festival provider's organisation attracts or secures funding from other bodies apart from Leicester City Council and details can be supplied.
3.4.	The organisers secured sponsorship, preferably in cash rather than in kind, last time they ran their festival or event.
3.5.	The organisers work with partners in the delivery of their festival or event and can provide evidence of partnership working to demonstrate shared costs.
3.6.	The organisers can provide details of paid staff recruited for the current year's festival or event to assist in the delivery (for example, one administrator for 3 months, or x 6 stewards on the day of the event).
3.7.	The organisers have recruited volunteers specifically to assist in the delivery of their festival or event for the current year and can explain what part they played in its delivery (e.g. x 6 volunteers for half a day to conduct festival survey).
3.8.	The organisers report how many people they attracted to their festival or event for the current year and can give evidence from published user figures or details of ticket sales.
3.9.	The organisers can report the number of artists employed to perform at, or otherwise directly benefiting from working with, their festival or event for the current year.

### 8.1.7 Proposed Criteria

<b>1.</b>	<b>Helps community cohesion and empowerment by bringing people together to share common interests. (30% of total)</b>
1.1.	The festival or event attracts a wide range of people from different backgrounds and age groups.
1.2.	Audiences are attracted from more than one community.
1.3.	The festival or event is a general cultural attraction rather than being primarily a religious activity.
1.4.	There is evidence of community involvement in development and delivery.
1.5.	The festival or event is proactive in attracting a citywide audience.
1.6.	Awareness of the festival or event is raised amongst the wider community, and participation is encouraged, for instance through workshops, educational programmes and other activities.
<b>2.</b>	<b>Demonstrates innovation, quality and creativity to raise the profile of the city and improve satisfaction among residents. (45% of total)</b>
2.1	Artistic, creative and innovative elements are included in a high quality programme.
2.2	The festival or event has a positive profile in the media, and amongst local and regional residents, and enhances community pride.
2.3	There is a high level of customer satisfaction.
2.4	The event supports the One Leicester Sustainable City Strategy.
<b>3.</b>	<b>Demonstrates economic benefits to the city and local communities through job creation and visitor spend. (25% of total)</b>
3.1	Organisers appreciate the tourism benefits of their festival or event and its economic importance to the city.
3.2	Information on audience profile and numbers is systematically collected.
3.3	Funding is secured from bodies other than Leicester City Council, for example through grants, sponsorship and/or in kind support.
3.4	There is evidence of partnership working.
3.5	Jobs and/or volunteering opportunities are created.

### 8.1.8 Summary of changes

- The funding criteria are expressed more clearly and transparently.
- Funded activities will need to meet all the criteria to qualify for support.
- The three overarching criteria remain but are “weighted” as follows, whereas previously they all had equal importance:
  1. *Helps community cohesion and empowerment by bringing people together to share common interests. (30%)*
  2. *Demonstrates innovation, quality and creativity to raise the profile of the city and improve satisfaction among residents. (45%)*
  3. *Demonstrates economic benefits to the city through job creation and visitor spend. (25%)*

### 8.1.9 Criteria 1

- This includes a new requirement for the activity to be a cultural attraction with broad appeal rather than a specifically religious activity. This does not preclude a link with a religious activity or having a religious activity within the overall programme, but we would not fund specific acts of worship or devotion by one group, which others would not wish to participate in.
- Evidence of community involvement has been moved from the old criteria 3 where there was a reference to volunteers. It fits more appropriately here.
- The need for an education programme is widened to include audience development. Organizers should encourage the wider community to take part.
- The reference to free or paid for activities has been removed because both have a place in our programme. They are not comparable so this is not a useful question.

### 8.1.10 Criteria 2

- “A high level of customer satisfaction” replaces a requirement for surveys. This is what we need to know, rather than the mechanism for doing it. However the information needed will come from the council’s own surveys as much as from evidence provided by the organizers.
- Requirements for artistic policies and unique elements are removed since they are unrealistic.
- “Financial support by other agencies” is repeated in criteria 3 so is taken out here.
- Support for the One Leicester Sustainable City Strategy has now been included.

### 8.1.11 Criteria 3

- The reference to tourism has been made more realistic. The Council needs to work with all festivals to identify their contribution to the local economy, but this is a joint activity.
- We fund both large and small festivals so the number attending is not a relevant question and has been omitted. However we will continue to collect the number of people attending as part of our routine work.

The task group agreed to recommend to cabinet that this new criteria for funding festivals and events be adopted by the council.

## 8.2 Festivals and Events Funding Strategy

### 8.2.1 Festivals and Events Strategy 3 year programme 2006/07 to 2008/09

Task Group members considered the Festivals and Events Strategy 3 year programme. Members agreed this after hearing that the programme was drawn up in response to a dilemma over the best way for the Council to support festivals and events in view of the increasing costs and a static budget.

### 8.2.2 Festivals and Events Strategy 4 year programme 2009 to 2013

A revised set of funding criteria has now been developed which the Task Group recommends as the basis of the festivals funding strategy 2009-13. This is recommended to cover a four-year period rather than three, since this provides continuity for festival organizers throughout the Cultural Olympiad period (*Recommendation*)

### 8.2.3 Comments of the Task Group

Leicester is going through a change, adopting the 'One Leicester' strategy. The task group felt that the city's events and festivals programme should be more focused on bringing the city and its communities together as one, understanding and accepting our differences and diversity, but highlighting our similarity and connectivity as citizens of Leicester; that we all live and contribute to the city and have a role in building the capacity of the city through community interactivity. This intercultural idealism will add strength to the 'One Leicester' ethos and has the ability to further breakdown the barriers within communities that exist.

### 8.2.4 In conclusion, the task group members felt strongly that the festivals and events programming should reflect the new 'One Leicester' strategy.

### **8.3 Consultation with Festivals and Events Organisers**

The task group wishes to emphasise that the views and opinions in this section of the report do not necessarily represent the views of all the festivals in the city. This consultation only covers the views of a small sample of people involved in festivals.

#### **8.3.1 The task group consulted with:**

Leicester International Music Festival  
Dragon Boat Race Festival  
Spark Children's Festival  
Youth Performing Arts Network (YPAN)  
Leicester Hindu Festival Council  
Leicester Creative Business Depot  
Creative Partnerships  
Leicester Comedy Festival  
Creativity Works  
Summer Sundae  
The Big Session  
Leicester Caribbean Carnival  
Chris Maughan – De Montfort University

8.3.2 A summary of the responses to this consultation have been recorded by the task group in a 'Questions and Answers' document, this is attached, *APPENDIX A*.

8.3.3 The task group collected a variety of booklets, reports and documents as evidence for the purpose of this consultation, a list is attached, *APPENDIX B*.

8.3.4 Additionally, some of the task group members undertook some fieldwork by attending the Caribbean Carnival and the new Curve Theatre to view the backstage operations set up.

8.3.5 The consultation exercise was to broadly capture views and opinions on:

- The challenges faced by organisers
- Where improvements can be made
- Funding and sponsorship
- Uniting communities through festivals
- Creating opportunities for young people
- The economic impact and tourism

8.3.6 In Leicester there is now a broad and diverse range of festivals and events taking place all over the city. These play a major part in terms of helping local people to share their culture and identity; increasing business opportunities for local businesses and attracting visitors and increasing tourism.

**8.4 SUMMARY OF FINDING (swot analysis)**  
**The EMERGING ISSUES from this consultation exercise are:**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Strengths</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Leicester has a good events programme, something for everyone</li> <li>2) Plenty of knowledge and experience exists in Leicester amongst the established festivals providers</li> <li>3) Big events and Festivals have created local, national and international recognition for Leicester.</li> </ol>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Fragmented approach exists within the Council in relation to engaging with potential Sponsors and funders.</li> <li>2) The Artistic/Creative side of events Management is perceived to be poor by Some events organisers.</li> <li>3) There is a vital funding gap for festivals/ Events from regeneration companies and Organisations.</li> <li>4) There is a lack of engagement from Councillors and lead officers with Festivals and Event providers.</li> <li>5) There is a lack of distinction and definition between Arts Festivals and Religious Festivals.</li> <li>6) Leicestershire Promotions is perceived as poor at promoting events and supporting event providers, even though it is responsible for promoting the city.</li> </ol>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The regeneration agenda plus Curve and Highcross centre creates new opportunities</li> <li>2) Encourage more community and street festivals to unite communities and build pride/ownership.</li> <li>3) Scope for increased partnership working with public and private sector organisations.</li> <li>4) Event providers expressed that a networking event would be beneficial.</li> <li>5) Explore cross-promotion of events to widen publicity.</li> <li>6) Introduce a mentoring scheme to support the development of street and community festivals.</li> </ol>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Threats</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Changes in traffic management and policing of events will impact on health &amp; safety issues and increased costs.</li> <li>2) Existing resources are limiting in allowing scope to widen participation, apply creativity and innovation to future festivals programme as a model of excellence.</li> <li>3) The city council will lose out on potential funding and sponsorship deals without extra resources to address this issue.</li> <li>4) Festivals and events competing to attract audiences across the city and region.</li> </ol>

## **The following sections 8.5 to 8.14 are the key findings**

### **8.5 Sustainability, Funding and Income Generation**

#### 8.5.1 SELECTION OF COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM EVENTS ORGANISERS:

- **We** are finding it more difficult to manage our festival without any financial help from city council and because of the changes in traffic management, health and safety and licensing.
- **Some** of the long standing festivals and events in Leicester have become stale and predictable, 'same old, same old' is the term used by some who attend regularly.
- **We** are totally reliant on volunteers to co-ordinate our event, but how long this goodwill from the community can continue for is an uncertainty.
- **Increased** audience participation does not always equate to increased funding and vice versa.
- **Event** financed by ticket sales (although tickets are not cheap), Income also raised from stall holders and merchandise.
- **A limited** amount of income comes from food/beverages.
- **Festival** is totally funded by the council, but organised and administered by a working party with community involvement.
- **Venue** for religious festivals is subsidised and/or given free of charge by the council, however, more support should be provided.

#### 8.5.2 Comments of the Task Group

Task Group members heard that festivals organisers are often working under pressure, with limited time and resources and working within the constraints of legislation. Many of the festival organisers do not have much time to reflect on how they do things and how they would like their event to develop in the future.

8.5.3 Members heard that the biggest challenge facing events organisers is sustainability and funding e.g. Leicester Caribbean Carnival has been a major event in Leicester for many years, but due to a significant increase in costs required to comply with new legislation and increasing infrastructure, it has had difficulties. This is a similar picture for many other festivals in the city.

8.5.4 The task group found evidence that without the continued support provided by the councils Festivals Unit some of these festivals would not survive.

- 8.5.5 The task group noted that not all events and festivals that take place in the city receive council funding. Some groups organise their own funding from a number of different funding streams.
- 8.5.6 Income for festivals and events normally comes from a mix of sources. Some organisations generate income from ticket sales, merchandise etc. but most need to raise additional income from fundraising activity which is likely to include some or all of the following:
- Grant giving public bodies
  - Local authorities
  - Charitable Trusts and Foundations
  - Business sponsorship, and
  - Individuals
- 8.5.7 Interestingly, the research report 'Festivals and the Creative Region', states:  
*'67% of the local businesses had not been formally approached by a festival with requests for any form of input or support. Therefore, this is a key area for development for festivals across the region'.*
- 8.5.8 The task group asked organisers to think of other ways they could fund events in the future, these are some of the comments received:
- **Intend** to approach the new shopping centre, Highcross, for future funding.
  - **The** regeneration agenda is a target for us. We need more data on the economic impact of the festival and present this to regeneration funders.
  - **We** are pursuing other Trusts and Foundations.
  - **Yes**, can think of other ways, but do not have the resources, capacity or skills to take this forward.
- 8.5.9 The Dragon Boat Race festival in Leicester has been successful in raising money for charity and for generating income in kind for its event. This is due to the unique nature of a festival being held for charitable purposes (in aid of ProstAid cancer). Members were impressed with the Dragon Boat Race organisers who have built up networks and sponsors e.g. local businesses, companies, individuals, participants and volunteers.
- 8.5.10 The Dragon Boat Race organisers would like the members to show their support by organising a team of councillors to participate in next years Boat Race, all in the aid of charity. The task group are looking for volunteers!!
- 8.5.11 In terms of sustainability, the task group agreed that if festivals and events wanted to succeed and keep audiences interested, they

needed to be more experimental in providing variations of an exciting, fun and creative programme.

- 8.5.12 In terms of funding, task group members agreed that in order for the council to make future festivals and events programme sustainable and viable, festivals organisers needed to demonstrate their ability to attract external funding or generate income.
- 8.5.13 Task Group members agreed that there needs to be an audit of existing training that is offered to support events organisers. The Festivals Unit be provided extra resources to conduct an audit and to then be in a better position to provide appropriate help, training and advice to support events organisers to attract other funding sources in order not to be totally reliant on council funding (*Recommendation*)

## 8.6 Skills Capacity and Volunteers

### 8.6.1 SELECTION OF COMMENTS FROM EVENTS ORGANISERS:

- **The** Festival Board takes on all the management of the festival and the lunchtime concerts on a voluntary basis.
- **Our** religious festivals are managed by committee members and community volunteers, some paid staff are engaged e.g. security staff.
- **Committee** members rely on community volunteers and helpers for this carnival to take place, there is a great sense of community pride.
- **Do** not have the resources, capacity, or skills to explore other funding sources.
- **We** need to develop a sponsorship package, but support is required to develop the skills to do this.

### 8.6.2 Comments of the Task Group

The task group were in no doubt that without the support of the Festivals Unit, aswell as the dedication and hard work of volunteers many festivals and events across the city would struggle to survive e.g Leicester International Music Festival and the Caribbean Carnival. The Leicester Hindu Festival Council expressed that this was evident with the 3 religious hindu festivals of Navratri, Holi and Deshera that takes place annually in Leicester. The task group were informed that due to decreasing support from the council, the organisers are heavily reliant on the goodwill of local groups, community volunteers and local temples to lead these events.

- 8.6.3 The task group heard evidence of the level of skills and talent that existed amongst the festivals providers. The task group heard that people who have arranged events, as volunteers, for many years were more aware of the processes, were self taught and confident, whereas

others were very reliant on the Festivals Unit to provide help and support. All the organisers consulted were very keen to further expand their skills and share good practice.

- 8.6.4 The task group agreed that the Festivals Unit would require additional resources to continue the level of support provided. The Festivals Unit should consider adopting a business approach in providing training, knowledge, skills and tools to enable and encourage festivals providers to become self-sustaining in the future (*Recommendation*)

## 8.7 Economic Impact and Tourism

- 8.7.1 The task group heard how the organisers of Summer Sundaе Weekender festival attracted new funding from the Arts Council by offering their audience a chance to explore other parts of the city. The idea was simple, but effective, an open top bus, from De Montfort Hall circling the city centre music scene whereby festival goers could get on and off at different venues. This was great for Leicester because it created an increase for licensed businesses, attracted visitors and injected life into the city centre.

- 8.7.2 The research report 'Festivals and the Creative Region' (East Midlands) found that:

*'Local businesses that took part in the survey had a very positive attitude towards festivals, they saw them as:*

- *Good for the town/area and local communities*
- *As making a good contribution to the development of tourism*
- *Enhancing the image of an area as a place to live'*

- 8.7.3 The task group found that this positive attitude was echoed by many of the major festival organisers in Leicester e.g. Comedy Festival, Summer Sundaе, Caribbean Carnival and Diwali Festival.

- 8.7.4 This is especially visible in the case of the Summer Sundaе major three-day Festival, taking place annually at De Montfort Hall. This event has won the Best Small Festival Award at the UK Festival Awards 2006. It also received a 5 star review in The Independent in 2007. Also, the Leicester Comedy Festival was cited as being one of the top five comedy festivals in the world!!

- 8.7.5 Another event which puts Leicester on the map culturally, is the two Diwali Festivals (switch-on ceremony and diwali day celebration), which takes place on the 'Golden Mile' in Belgrave, where there is a concentration of local businesses such as retailers and restaurants. The task group heard that these local businesses do experience the economic benefits through increases in number of customers and in turnover. This festival has grown in popularity and attendance levels over the years, attracting local, national and international visitors.

#### 8.7.6 SELECTION OF COMMENTS RECEIVED:

- **Hopefully** puts Leicester on the map in the East Midlands with Dragon Boat Racing.
- **Best** small festival award in 2006 and received Kite Mark for outstanding environmental practice in 2007.
- **Considerable**, but its hard to measure accurately. We don't have the resources to measure it like other cities do.
- **We** are getting increasing numbers of our audience from outside the region. Visitors from Bristol, Norfolk and Cambridge were noted last year. Our regular mailing list holds almost 200 addresses outside the county. This year the Belmont hotel is offering festival and accommodation packages nationally.
- **Exploring** links with a city abroad in the Caribbean. This will have potential to provide a two-way exchange of information, promotion of festivals and impact on tourism.
- **As** a city we should do better to capitalise on our major events and festivals.
- **Possibilities** for economic regeneration is huge, but city needs to change the way it puts on events and festivals.
- **Cultural** Quarter development should not stand along, but should be key to linking the whole city.
- **There** is great potential for Leicester to increase visitor numbers, income generation, sponsorship deals etc, and put Leicester on the map, especially with the new Highcross Shopping Centre and the Curve.

### 8.8 Marketing and Sponsorship

#### 8.8.1 SELECTION OF COMMENTS RECEIVED:

- **Would** benefit from the support of a marketing specialist in order to gain wider publicity across the city.
- **We** have never had any significant support from Leicester Promotions, but you would think that an organisation which promotes the city would take an interest in a festival which has an international reputation.
- **Would** like advice on how to widen publicity to cover the East Midlands area.
- **Sponsorship** is weak in the East Midlands region in terms of the Arts, compared to Liverpool where companies give millions.

- **There** should be consideration of cross-promotion so that festivals know about each other and have the opportunity to promote each other in their publicity material.
- **The** success for our festival is down to an external marketing agency engaged to manage all the promotion and publicity for us.
- **The** costs of approx. £5,000 for a marketing and publicity agency, ensures that the event is publicised well, locally and nationally.
- **We** have increased our networking, contacts, funds and sponsors by joining the Chamber of Commerce.
- **Our** main sponsor is the Alliance & Leicester, other sponsors include Sony television and retailers.
- **No** financial support or sponsors for this religious community festival, it is staffed and managed by volunteers.
- **Some** of our funds are raised through sponsorship deals.
- **Arts** Council funding secured specifically to encourage people to visit other parts of the city during our festival.
- **Private** sector needs more encouragement to support festivals and events. There has to be something in it for both sides for a sponsorship deal.
- **Events** are not being promoted effectively due to a lack of marketing skills and expertise within the festivals unit.

#### 8.8.2 Comments of the Task Group

Hearing evidence from the Leicester Comedy Festival greatly inspired the task group. The task group have labelled this arts festival as a model of good practice as it has excelled in all aspects e.g. promoting talent, providing entertainment, attracting visitors, holding events across different venues in Leicester and engaging with all communities. This festival has achieved success locally, nationally and has aspirations for the international stage. The Comedy Festival shared their formula for success with the task group explaining how they have engaged an external marketing agency to manage all the promotion and publicity. The expertise of this agency has raised their profile and secured sponsor deals.

8.8.3 In terms of promoting smaller festivals and community events in Leicester, organisers praised the council's festivals unit in supporting them. However, some organisers were critical about Leicestershire Promotions. The perception was that Leicestershire Promotions concentrate on promoting the major festivals each year, but do not provide sufficient promotion, support or help for smaller events. However, it must be noted that this evidence is one sided as the task

group did not approach Leicestershire Promotions to gather their views during this consultation.

8.8.4 The task group were rather concerned about the comments made about Leicestershire Promotions and recommended further work to be done to look into these issues. (*Recommendation*)

8.8.5 The task group considered other ways in which smaller festivals and events organisers could be helped to promote themselves. The task group agreed that the creation of a festivals and events forum could positively develop links and encourage networking for events organisers locally, plus in the future this could be widened to a regional basis, if feasible. (*Recommendation*).

8.8.6 Marketing and Sponsorship – Leicester City Council

The task group heard evidence of how Leicester City Council is fragmented in its approach to dealing with marketing and sponsorship issues, these have been recorded in following table:

<p>Successful fundraising for Leicester City Council – <b>THE BARRIERS THAT EXIST</b></p>	<p><b>SELECTION OF COMMENTS RECEIVED:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Currently departments and services seem to be working in isolation when approaching potential funders and businesses, thus losing valuable opportunities.</li> <li>• Council staff who are not marketing experts may secure external sponsors for one off events, but the potential to build a relationship or share this contact is lost.</li> <li>• A number of council leaflets/brochures for festivals and events are produced externally, thus creating a fragmented approach.</li> <li>• The authority is missing out as there are potentially many new and existing businesses (public &amp; private) that are not approached for funding/sponsorship purposes.</li> <li>• Bad public relations leads to poor sponsorship management.</li> </ul>
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Successful fundraising for Leicester City Council –  
**THE WAY FORWARD**

SELECTION OF COMMENTS RECEIVED:

- A corporate marketing, publicity and fundraising team would increase income generation for the authority and would provide consistency with a professional business like manner with experienced staff with marketing expertise.
- Successful fund-raising is not magic; it is simply hard work on the part of people who are thoroughly prepared and experienced
- A relationship with potential funders needs to be nurtured and built upon, it takes time, patience, and planning to raise money.
- **Some potential funders can be persuaded to fund not only one event, but other events, projects and services in other parts of the authority.** This kind of marketing approach requires experienced marketing personnel with a corporate remit.
- An example of good practice is 'The Diwali Guide', which is produced by creativity works by successfully filling advertising space. **These are all potential contacts that could be approached for other fundraising purposes in the council.** The Festivals Unit secures the external sponsors for this event (such as Alliance & Leicester).
- To address the lack of linkage throughout the authority in terms of sharing fundraising knowledge and contacts for fundraising.
- For Arts festivals to be successful in Leicester, a vision document is required. All festivals should not be grouped under one heading, but in future there should be 2 categories:  
1) Arts Festivals, 2) Religious Festivals.
- The new Leicester branding 'One Leicester – One Passion' should be reflected in terms of improving the image and ethos of the council.

- 8.8.7 According to the survey 'Festivals Mean Business':  
*'Festivals are demonstrating that they are successful businesses; able to attract investment from a broad range of public and private sources - THE BRITISH ARTS FESTIVALS ASSOCIATION'S MEMBERS ATTRACTED £30 MILLION OF INVESTMENT IN 2006 -2007'*

Although, interestingly, according to this survey:  
*'The East Midlands is worst region for sponsorship'.*

8.8.8 Comments of the Task Group

The task group members raised concerns after hearing evidence that potential fundraising and sponsorship opportunities may be overlooked or not explored within the council. They heard examples of how some service areas in the council make regular contacts with potential funders, but operate in isolation, creating a fragmented approach in the way the council markets itself.

- 8.8.9 The task group agreed that a more coherent, consistent and corporate approach is required to develop and improve the marketing, fundraising and sponsorship functions in the council. The task group agreed that these issues should be reviewed as part of the councils marketing strategy. (*Recommendation*).

The task group recognises that the Festivals Unit currently has a limited capacity in developing the sponsorship and marketing work. The Festivals Unit currently works with their internal marketing team e.g. update of Festivals Website, secure sponsorship for directly managed festivals, launches and promotion work. The Festivals Unit works with internal communications teams on media related issues.

The task group concluded that if the council wants to attract high levels of sponsorship, then it needs to ensure people are offered a high quality service e.g. quality and world-class events and benefits.

The task group also concluded that the council needs to improve its marketing and sponsorship work in order to secure a healthy festivals programme in the future. The task group felt that the council should apply a business approach to this area of work and agreed that the council should seek external professional help to develop a strategy to secure sponsorship and funding in the future (*Recommendation*).

The task group recognised Leicester Comedy Festival as best practice in that they have 16 years experience of successfully working with national and local sponsors and are therefore well placed to offer advice.

## 8.8 **Uniting People and Communities**

### 8.9.1 SELECTION OF COMMENTS RECEIVED:

- **Our** festivals are important to raise cultural awareness.

- **All** our festivals are religious festivals, but are seen as community family events, are well attended and open to everyone.
- **Traditionally** comedy is seen as white male orientated, but this is not the case in Leicester, as a variety of acts are performed by women and people of different backgrounds.
- **Festival** is made up of lots of smaller events across the city involving all communities and our target audience is kids and parents/families.

8.9.2 The major themes in the Leicester Community Cohesion Strategy include:

- Supporting and working with young people; e.g providing appropriate “things to do” for young people.
- Building confidence and a sense of belonging about living in Leicester; e.g. supporting cultural festivals and celebrations to open up contact across communities.
- Supporting the social integration of communities in Leicester e.g. providing local activities for local people.

8.9.3 Culturally diverse cities, such as Leicester are also attractive to visitors and to potential investors.

8.9.4 Comments of the Task Group

The task group agreed with evidence from ‘cultural strategy documents’ *Cultural services are a key driver to community cohesion as they provide activities where communities can ‘bridge and bond’ and explore, challenge and celebrate heritage and identity.*

8.9.5 A good example of celebrating heritage and identity is the Caribbean Carnival, which has always been one of Leicester’s enjoyable family attractions that unites people of all ages and backgrounds. It takes place in Victoria Park with a parade through the city centre and it is an uplifting event of colourful costumes, music and dancing.

8.9.6 The carnival has created a platform for the Caribbean community in Leicester to come together and share their social and cultural differences with the local community.

8.9.7 The 2008 report ‘Building Intercultural Bridges Between Diverse Communities, by Contact Cultures on behalf of the East Midlands Economic Network, looks at methods of creating community cohesion with some examples of what has been done in Leicester sited in the report. One section in the report refers to ‘Bringing Communities and people’ together, Comedia identified that in looking at the Arts and Festivals they found both to be predisposed to be intercultural although some, particularly festivals and melas tended to be ethnic centred rather than being promoted as intercultural. They found however that the Edinburgh Festival was, through good management and a desire to build bridges, becoming more intercultural.

- 8.9.8 Further investigation by the task group chair, found valuable explanation for a change in ideal, moving from multiculturalism which has a tendency to create a “pocket” approach to dealing with the city’s diversity issues, to interculturalism which works towards focusing on similarity of all diverse groups, enabling such groups to come together as one, in line with the new strategy for change. A good example of this has been the recent ‘One Leicester Dance Festival’.
- 8.9.9 Another good example of bringing communities together is the ‘Belgrave Mela’, which in recent years, with the support of the Festivals Unit, has widened its audience participation to include people from all backgrounds and cultures. This has been achieved by relocating their event into a central location, thus bringing entertainment, culture, music and dance into people’s lives who come into the city centre.
- 8.9.10 The task group agreed that festivals and events should encourage activities that unite both our outer estate communities and the city as a whole, embracing the ‘One Leicester’ ethos. (*Recommendation*)
- 8.9.11 The task group received common viewpoints on how generally people were confused in understanding the differences between a festival and an event? Task group members suggested that the groupings of festivals would need to be explored further by the Festivals Unit to clarify this confusion. The 2 groupings suggested were: 1) ‘Arts’ and 2) ‘Religious’ festivals.

## **8.10 Leicester’s Growing Creative Industry**

- 8.10.1 According to the Government, creative industries include advertising, architecture, art, computer and video games, craft, design, fashion, film and video, music, performing arts, publishing, TV and radio.
- 8.10.2 The task group discovered that in Leicester the Leicester Creative Business Depot is a creative workspace at the heart of Leicester’s Cultural Quarter, home to a number of key arts organisations for the city, including Leicester Comedy Festival, the Spark Children’s Arts Festival and the Leicester United Caribbean Association, amongst others.
- 8.10.3 Cultural activity provides employment and generates inward investment. It attracts retail businesses through high quality leisure provision and encourages the re-population of run down areas by creating clusters of creative industries such as the Leicester Creative Business Depot in the St Georges’s area.
- 8.10.4 Leicester Creative Business Depot also manages enterprise programmes in disadvantaged communities, creative learning programmes in secondary schools, and a year round creative programme of exhibitions, events and creative networks. Overall they work to help creative companies to develop and grow as viable

businesses, but are passionate about connecting the cultural quarter to Leicester's diverse communities and showcasing the city's cultural offer.

- 8.10.5 A common viewpoint is that festivals need to pay particular attention to the following to be successful:
- Event management
  - Artistic and programme development
  - Business development - to run a festival as a viable business
- 8.10.6 The task group were very interested to hear about out how Leicester Creative Business Depot (LCB) could support the development of festivals in the city. They heard how this can be achieved by creating opportunities for LCB Depot to make a positive contribution to a Festival Development programme.
- 8.10.7 Any such programme would need to target:
- (a) new and emerging festivals,
  - (b) established festivals and
  - (c) Young potential festival promoters, as these groups have different support and development needs.
- 8.10.8 LCB Depot could provide the following, subject to resources:
- (a) Base for a Festival Development Programme  
A festival development team could be based at Leicester Creative Business Depot or at least deliver support from the building. Certainly the active engagement of the city's key festivals would be important to make any such initiative a success, and a number are already based here. Leicester Creative Business Depot would also be good place to encourage networking/ peer to peer learning between festival organisers. Providing a physical focus for support could also provide a platform for delivery of joint support initiatives such as sponsorship, marketing or funding support.
- 8.10.9 (b) Business Development Support  
Leicester Creative Business Depot could add value to any business development support provided to festival promoters. They have considerable experience of managing flexible and bespoke enterprise support programmes for creative organisations. They are also currently developing external funding proposals for a Creative Enterprise Hub - delivering enterprise support within the Cultural Quarter. This will bring forward a range of complementary initiatives to support creative industry companies, in partnership with a range of support providers and agencies (De Montfort University, Business Link, the Princes Trust, Creative LeicesterShire, EM Media, Culture East Midlands, Skills for Enterprise). There may be potential to deliver specific business development support to festivals funded by the Creative Enterprise Hub and this will be explored.

- 8.10.10 c) Support to young potential festival promoters - Classroom in the Cultural Quarter  
 Classroom in the Cultural Quarter (CCQ) is a designated space at LCB Depot in which young people and adults involved in regeneration work and learn together. Activities in the Classroom are designed to help young people develop their creative enterprise skills by contributing to the city's transformation.
- 8.10.11 Leicester Creative Business Depot have an application pending to Mediabox to develop a young people's manifesto for regeneration in Leicester both in terms of the physical developments happening in the city but also the cultural programme that brings it alive. The proposed project will be delivered in the Classroom in the Cultural Quarter (CCQ), and includes funding for a team of young people to visit other cities (i.e. Liverpool) and look at cultural events and activities, and inspire them about ways in which they would like to animate Leicester. A young people's management group will be able to act as commissioners of cultural events and activities, working in partnership with festivals and events organisers in the city. Young people will be able to show publicly that they want to contribute their ideas and energy to changing our city for the better.
- 8.10.12 The Classroom in the Cultural Quarter could support the development and implementation of Leicester City Councils strategy for festivals and events in the city.
- 8.10.13. Comments of the Task Group  
 The task group agreed that the benefits and the input of our creative industries enabled further regeneration and increased tourism to strengthen our cultural offer in the city and that future strategies for the city embrace this.

## **8.11 Creating opportunities for all – putting children at the heart of Creative Development**

- 8.11.1 Creative industries have a natural appeal for many young people, focusing on areas where they choose to spend their leisure time – music, film, games, new technology etc...
- 8.11.2 A recent poll commissioned by the The Talent and Enterprise Taskforce of 1,000 children and young people in England, revealed they don't recognise talent in themselves because they link talent with celebrity. When asked to define talent, 34% said 'being able to sing and dance' and 14% said 'football and sport'.
- 8.11.3 Children and young people in Leicester should be encouraged to showcase their talents in a wide range of events and activities, showing that there is much more to talent than celebrity.

- 8.11.4 Back in May, the Culture Secretary, Andy Burnham announced the Government's £25 million 'Find Your Talent Programme' and said:
- "This is a truly exciting initiative that could open minds and change young lives. Enjoying and exploring culture and the arts is not a luxury, or an add-on, for young people. It matters in its own right and can be a way of developing essential life skills like communication and creativity, and contribute to personal development and self-esteem"*
- 8.11.5 Those festivals that do attract external funding need to thrive and add to the general well being and profile of Leicester, for example the Spark Children's Arts Festival have recently secured funding from the Arts Council England. Spark has developed strong partnerships across the East Midlands. This year the sixth festival runs for 15 days and features plays and puppetry on big and small stages across the city and county, music in city parks, storytelling trails and visual arts exhibitions and workshops. This new investment will help Spark to keep improving the quality of their programme.
- 8.11.6 Comments of the Task Group  
Task Group members heard how Spark have been creatively promoting themselves e.g. giving bookmarks to school children, and how this festival has increased in popularity over the years. Their acclaimed work with children and schools in Leicester must be supported to grow and develop.
- 8.11.7 Members were inspired by Spark and what it has achieved and agreed that other events in the city that have an educational outreach element should be encouraged and supported.
- 8.11.8 The task group were also impressed with the efforts of a newly formed group - The Youth Performing Arts Network (YPAN) - established since January 2008 to develop youth performing arts by supporting leaders and enhancing opportunities for young people to participate and enjoy the performing arts. Detailed information relating to this project with some evaluation data was provided to the task group, *APPENDIX C*.
- 8.11.9 The task group could see the positive benefits for young people in the city because Youth Performing Arts Network (YPAN) provides young people with a whole range of essential transferable skills such as improved communication, teamwork, leadership and self-confidence. YPAN said that they would also support local performing arts.
- 8.11.10 The Youth Performing Arts Network have successfully delivered a pilot project 'Box' and want to build on their success to continue supporting youth performing arts in Leicester. However, they are currently at the stage where they are investigating options to ensure the long-term sustainability of the group.

- 8.11.11 Though Youth Performing Arts Network is very much still in its infancy, the task group supported the idea of positively bringing all performing arts groups who work with young people together.
- 8.11.12 Further investigation by the task group chair and deputy found that a mapping exercise currently being looked at was similar to another being undertaken by 27a Access Artspace. This mapping exercise would benefit a number of groups based at the Leicester Creative Business Depot, especially Leicestershire Partnerships, who have gained substantial funding to develop the 5 hour offer of culture to young people in both the city and county.
- 8.11.13 The way forward would be to bring these partners together to see if there are benefits to cross-group work/intervention to improve access to performance and performing arts for young people.
- 8.11.14 In terms of the position of the Youth Performing Arts Network, further work is required to explore YPAN being formulated as a separate group with consideration given to securing their position beyond March 2009 (*Recommendation*).

## **8.12 Partnership Working with our Creative Industry**

- 8.12.1 Creative Partnerships is the Government's flagship creativity project for schools and young people. Local councils through their cultural services provide the foundation blocks of the creative economy.
- 8.12.2 Leicester City Council has a key role in making things happen – through their support for the cultural economy and creating places where people can thrive. Leicester City Council works well with key partners across the city including cultural organisations, artists and the creative industries.
- 8.12.3 The Task Group believes that the next step is to further develop arrangements that enable Leicester City Council to strengthen the support they can provide to the local creative economy. This will involve acting more creatively and being ambitious e.g. ensuring that public spaces are welcoming to visitors.
- 8.12.4 There are many different sub-sectors within the creative economy in Leicester, for example is the emerging film industry 'Leicester - The British Bollywood'.
- 8.12.5 The creative economy not only provides economic prosperity, it builds social cohesion and defines lives. They have a much wider social importance – the buildings and architecture, cultural festivals and sports events, open spaces add museums and libraries – all shape an area's identity.

8.12.6 The task group agreed that creating partnership relationships helped to widen development opportunities for festivals and events programming and to incorporate more community arts participation (*Recommendation*)

### 8.13 Improving Festivals and Events Management in Leicester

#### 8.13.1 SELECTION OF COMMENTS RECEIVED:

- **The** festivals and events programme needs a new lease of life, it requires an injection of new events and creativity and it needs constantly refreshing.
- **Leicester** should be comparing itself to other cities e.g. Birmingham, Liverpool, and should be raising the expectations each year in terms of events planning.
- **National** perception of Leicester is poor and branding is poor, a national profile needs to be built up.
- **The** creative element of events and festivals should be outsourced to Artistic/Creative Directors.
- **Events** management in the city is excellent – just need more events to interest everyone.
- **Future** large-scale events in open spaces require big screens for crowds to have a better viewing of stage shows.

#### 8.13.2 Comments of the Task Group

A common viewpoint shared by the majority of festival providers was the need for a networking forum to share ideas and forge links. A networking event would bring together festival organisers with representatives of Leicester City Council, and institutions funding festivals and events.

8.13.3 Many festivals and events recognised that they themselves could, and should improve in a number of areas, including marketing and PR, festival programming, business organisation and especially fundraising/sponsorship.

8.13.4 A number of events in Leicester have become very popular over the years and attract local, regional, national and international visitors e.g. Diwali event, Big Session, Comedy festival, Summer Sundae etc...

8.13.5 A recent research study into 'Leicester's Night-Time Economy' makes references to festivals in the city centre, in particular giving consideration to hold festivals during the evening, but that this would require a leap of faith by the council and its partners if something were to change in the city centre. The review group were impressed by the

suggestion by the Leicester Comedy Festival, for a sub-group of partners that would develop late night events, and the role this could play in helping change the perception of the city's night-time economy. Good behaviour displacing the poor behaviour as people of all ages and backgrounds are attracted into the city centre.

8.13.6 Members heard from officers who manage events that in the future there was an intention to look at any gaps in the variety of festivals held in Leicester and at how these gaps could be filled.

8.13.7 Task group members concluded that the current resources supporting festivals and events management in the council are overstretched in trying to deliver, increasingly, a more varied and demanding festivals programme.

8.13.8 **Presentation on Festivals Research**

The task group invited Chris Maughan, Principal Lecturer at De Montfort University to give evidence on the findings of the research study 'Festivals and the Creative Region', a recent study of eleven cultural festivals in the East Midlands, a summary of the report findings are attached, APPENDIX D.

8.13.9 The task group also invited Chris, to provide his viewpoints and share data, as an expert in the field, on the main issues impacting on councils in terms of festivals and events management and planning.

8.13.10 The key points discussed:

a) **Economic Impact Measures** – Festival and Audience expenditure, Contribution to the local economy, e.g. jobs created, food/drink, hotels, taxis, other arts/tourism enjoyed.

The British Arts Festivals Association conducted the largest survey of arts festivals to date in the UK, (a summary of this survey at APPENDIX E) revealing a sector that is dynamic and vibrant, according to this survey:

*'Festivals greatest economic contributions is through their visitors' expenditure on local retail, accommodation and hospitality (in 2004 Brighton Festival demonstrated that visitors contributed 22 times more into the local economy than they spent on festival tickets)'.*

*'Festivals are important employers (BAFAs member organisations are estimated to have: 395 permanent staff, 12,120 seasonal workers and freelance staff and 3,900 volunteers)'.*

b) **Social Impact Measures** – Social cohesion, Businesses perceptions, Media coverage, Education programme, Visitors perceptions: Cultural tourism, Local population's perceptions (including artists) and Impact on civic pride.

According to the British Arts Festivals Association survey:  
'In 2006 to 2007 the association members created 1,910 education, community and outreach events and projects involving 523,000 people (63% of the education events were created specifically for young people)'.

c) **Environmental Impact Measures** – Carbon Footprint, Recycling, Public transport, Energy efficiency, Alternative technology and Environmentally friendly practices statement.

The task group recognises that the environmental impacts related to festivals and events is one of the more challenging issues that all council's will be required to address. The task group agreed that the Festivals Unit should build on its existing work in this area and should raise awareness of environmental impacts with events organisers.

#### Comments of the Task Group

The Group noted that many of the issues raised in this report would benefit from further research. Such research would identify trends in festivals and events activity that would deepen understanding of critical aspects in all ten of the key findings as well as address issues raised in the SWOT. The Group learnt that such research would be one of the first studies undertaken in the UK across the full range of a city's offer. Research has been completed into the economic and social impact of the Big Session and Summer Sundae Weekender festivals in 2008 and it is noted that this could be replicated for these and other festivals and events (on a selected basis) as a longitudinal study. The Group noted that the festivals research team at De Montfort University has several years experience of such work, some of it at an international level, and that it is eager to be involved in supporting the development of festivals and events in the city through working with the Festivals Unit. Preliminary discussions have already taken place concerning the process, outcomes and benefits for the city of such a research programme. (*recommendation*).

### **8.14 The Festivals Unit – Budget and Staffing**

8.14.1 The Festivals and Events Unit directly manages a wide range of festivals and events including Abbey Park Bonfire and Leicester's Diwali Celebrations. The Unit also works in partnership with independent organisations to co-promote and deliver festivals and events.

8.14.2 Members of the Task Group were provided with an overview on the current level of service, main points covered:

- During 2006/2007, 654 events took place on parks and open spaces with 390,000 attendees.
- The growing demand for festivals and events had also resulted in a need for additional staffing in the Festivals and Events Team.

- The Festivals and Events Team managed nine major festivals and events each year, and also managed parks, open spaces and city centre sites. The team also offered advice and support to community and professional organisers who staged outdoor event and festivals.
- The Festivals Strategy Funding allocation is £354,600. It was explained that there had been an overspend in the budget which was partly due to an increase in the infrastructure due to health and safety and new legislation relating to event management.
- The meeting heard that the costs in staging a festival were mostly spent on the infrastructure, for example on the provision of toilets, cleaning and traffic arrangement.
- Measuring the performance of the overall programme of festivals is difficult due to a number of issues relating to the process in which data /information is obtained e.g. events being open and not ticketed, language barriers, daytime/evening events.

## **8.15 Conclusion**

8.15.1 At its final task group meeting, the task group leader felt that there was a need to create a vision statement for festivals in the city. The task group commented that a vision statement should be created and owned by a wider audience of festivals and events organisers in the city.

8.15.2 The task group agreed that a formal vision statement should be worked up, in conjunction with the creation of a festivals and events networking forum. The task group provided a draft vision statement for this purpose.

### **8.15.3 DRAFT Vision Statement for Festivals and Events in the City:**

***Leicester's Events and Festivals encourage people to come together in its regenerated city bringing stimulation, cultural and lifestyle awareness, entertainment, excitement, vibrance and fun into the lives of all its communities.***

8.15.4 Our festivals and events will, develop and showcase artists and engage and grow audiences by providing an outlet for expressing and experiencing a wide range of cultural and artistic activity which will demonstrate and develop cultural and community confidence and aid social cohesion. They will perform a vital role in the development and sustainability of the creative and cultural industries within the city. This includes being a major driver of the cultural, community and City economy as well as valuing and providing a vital outlet for volunteer input which provides essential skills and resources for effective governance and management.

## **9. Lessons learned for future reviews**

- 9.1 This is the second topic that has been investigated and completed by the Culture & Leisure task group since the introduction of the new scrutiny system. The task group concluded their work by reflecting on the way in which this Scrutiny review was undertaken.
- 9.2 The length of time it has taken to complete this review has caused some frustration, but a number of factors have contributed to this delay, e.g. consultation exercise took longer than anticipated and the Christmas & summer holiday seasons slowed progress.
- 9.3 A quarter way through the review, there was a danger of the review topic expanding and steering away from the scoping report. However, this was soon rectified and back on track. This is where the good planning of the scoping document is crucial to the success of a focussed review.
- 9.4 The hands-on approach adopted in this review allowed members to experience first hand the views and opinions of events organisers. Members agreed that this resulted in a positive experience and demonstrates that this formula is a model of best practice for future task groups.
- 9.5 Members of the task group have contributed a significant amount of time to this review, which in return has added value to the final report. Councillors Naylor, Newcombe and Shah were involved in carrying out interviews adopting a hands-on approach and committing extra time and effort to engage with festivals providers (councillor Allen was also present for 2 of the interviews). Many of the organisers that were consulted commented that they were pleased to have had the opportunity to talk to members and provide their views and opinions.

## **10 Financial Implications**

The report recommends for cabinet to consider providing extra resources. to the Festivals Unit

## **11 Legal Implications**

There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

## **12 CONTACT**

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