

CABINET RESPONSE TO THE 'EVENTS IN CARDIFF' REPORT OF THE ECONOMY & CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Recommendation 1

Task officers to develop a catalogue of available event spaces in Cardiff, which specifies which type of events are suitable for each space, avoiding the use of narrow spaces that funnel and tunnel attendees and promoting the use of larger spaces with clear escape routes, such as the civic centre and Callaghan Square.

RESPONSE: The recommendation is partially accepted

As a result of focused infrastructure investment over the last 20 years, the city now boasts an enhanced range of event spaces, these include Live Nation's Motorpoint Arena, Glamorgan Cricket Club's Sophia Gardens Stadium, The Cardiff City Stadium, The Leckwith Athletics Stadium, The Principality Stadium, The National Ice Rink of Wales, The Wales Millennium Centre, The Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, The New Theatre, St. David's National Concert hall of Wales, The Sherman Theatre, Cardiff University's Great Hall and numerous smaller, specialist venues such as Chapter, The Tramshed, Clwb Ifor Bach; and parks and open spaces, including: Cardiff Castle, Bute Park, Cooper's Field, The Oval Basin, Llandaff Fields, City Hall Lawn, Civic Centre the new events area at Alexandra Head and the open waters of the Severn Estuary and the enclosed waters of Cardiff Bay. This will shortly be further complimented by the additional of a multi purpose arena.

Given the scale, ownership, commercial demand and varied use of these venues the current practice is for officers to meet with event promoters to understand their event requirements and to advise on the best location having cognisance of what else is scheduled in the city at that time. It also affords officers with the opportunity to outline what is expected in terms of neighbourhood consultation and to build a relationship with the event organiser so that the wider interest of the city is considered at all stages of the planning process. This process is further supported by the requirement of all event organisers to present to the Events Liaison Panel to ensure all relevant legislative and blue light agencies are aware of and can inform the development of event plans. The value of this approach appeared to resonate with and be valued by event promoters in Scrutiny's findings so whilst we welcome the recommendation and will investigate the value and resource involved in creating and sustaining such a catalogue we would not wish to lose the invaluable relationships forged through current engagement processes.

Recommendation 2

Task officers to investigate and report back on the feasibility of removing the existing cobbled road divider on Boulevard de Nantes and replacing it with safe, flexible alternative that would allow the area to be opened up to provide a wider space for major events.

RESPONSE: The recommendation is partially accepted

There is a proposal to upgrade Boulevard De Nantes scheduled for 2021-22. This will include the removal of the central reservation to significantly improve pedestrian accessibility between the City and Civic Centre, enhancing the existing Kingsway Square and enabling further public realm improvements between key attractions in the city. However it should be noted that such works (including design), are subject to funding and consultation with potential for the work programme to slip into 2022/2023.

Suitability of the space for major events would be made on a case by case basis and after consideration of the events operational requirements.

Recommendation 3

Continue to work to deliver an Indoor Arena in Cardiff, thus enabling Cardiff to host a wider range of sporting, cultural and business events.

RESPONSE: The recommendation is accepted

Work to deliver a new Indoor Arena for Cardiff is progressing.

Recommendation 4

Task officers to develop a short precise Events Strategy, no longer than four A4 pages, that sets out the vision, aims and objectives of the Council re events. This should commit Cardiff Council to work to make Cardiff a world leader in major sporting and cultural events and in hosting business events and seek to boost the positive legacy and impact of events.

RESPONSE: The recommendation is accepted

Cardiff has an established and enviable reputation as a world leader in hosting global sporting events.

The council's investment and focus on its event strategy has seen the delivery of a diverse and high profile event programme, ranging from a host of global music stars, Motorsports, Football Finals, the 2012 Olympics to the more recent UEFA Champion's League Final.

We have hosted the Ashes, international test match and World Cup cricket. The streets of the City have been successfully used to stage the final stages of the RAC World Motor Rallying Championships, The Velothon, and the Tour of Britain Cycle Race together with a growing number of well attended mass participation events such as The Cardiff Half Marathon and the Cardiff 10K road races and a very successful one-off event to celebrate Roald Dahl – The City of the Unexpected.

In the diplomatic arena the city has welcomed a European Summit and a meeting of NATO. The National Urdd Eisteddfod and The National Eisteddfod of Wales have both visited the city on several occasions whilst Welsh language heritage and culture is annually celebrated in the city through the annual Taffwyl Festival.

There are also several other annual, or biennial, arts events such as Artes Mundi, Cardiff Singer of the World, The Welsh Proms, Diffusion – The International Photography Festival, The Sŵn Music Festival, The Inside Out Festival, The Wales International Film Festival and, the recently established, Festival of Voice. Gastronomy has been celebrated through The Cardiff International Food and Drink Festival, The Street Food Circus and numerous farmers' markets.

In 2018 Cardiff welcomed the global Volvo Ocean Race to the City, harnessing the location and assets of Cardiff Bay for a three-week period as one of the major stop-over destinations in the circumnavigation of the world. This was followed in August by the National Eisteddfod of Wales with a primary focus in the Bay area but utilizing other venues across the City – the annual event delivered its first free to enter urban festival.

Whilst not an exhaustive list, these events sit alongside the regular program of events activity that have become an established feature of the city's calendar – such as Winter Wonderland - as well as the myriad of smaller, local and community events that make a vital contribution to the vibrancy, community feeling and quality of life for the city's residents as well as enhancing the visitor offer.

Over the last 12 months much work has been undertaken to build and expand on this legacy through developing Cardiff's credentials as a Music City in parallel with the development of new initiatives to expand the city's share of the business event market. The Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions markets (MICE) is regarded as a key component of Cardiff's existing events program and, will play an even more important role in our future strategy. A revised Events Strategy will seek to capture this progress and build on this administration's stated Capital Ambition commitment to 'continue to attract major sporting, cultural and business events into Wales, ensuring that we make the most of our cultural assets and to support the best Welsh talent to emerge onto the world stage'.

Recommendation 5

Task officers to work with partners to proactively plan an events programme that smooths out the event calendar, by increasing events in the downtime, providing a variety of events, including accessible and inclusive events that enhance the quality and variety of life for Cardiff citizens, allowing local people to benefit from Cardiff's role in hosting events.

RESPONSE: The recommendation is rejected

The Council works proactively to plan the city's annual events programme with an engaging calendar of events throughout the year, our strategy is not to limit the number of events at any given time but to attract more events throughout the

year. The legacy of the city's event success places the city in much demand with promoters and event organisers. The city is proud to be able to host such a rich diversity of events, and indeed, has become adept at accommodating the full range of event requirements. Commercial consideration of all of the city's key venues will always take primacy over calendar considerations but officers will continue to work with partner venues across the city to ensure that the city can operate effectively and event schedules are influenced to maximise the yield to the city where possible. In parallel, and reflecting the development of our new event strategy the Council will re-establish its Event Focus Group to draw together the key organisations, venues and attractions in the city to assist in the wider and collaborative development of the city's event calendar.

Recommendation 6

Continue with its plans to develop a signature event that draws on the strengths of Cardiff and heeds the advice garnered by this inquiry with regard to timing, location, content, structure and length.

RESPONSE: The recommendation is accepted

Cardiff Council has been discussing with its partners options for developing and delivering a signature event(s). An event(s) that is Cardiff owned, created, curated and delivered by Team Wales. That builds on our international best practice, showcases the extraordinary creative range of talent and expertise in the city and across the Welsh nation and helps to grow business investment and entrepreneurship. In short the event(s) will be both a catalyst and gateway to the best of Cardiff and Wales. Extensive consultation has already taken place in respect of timing, location, content, structure and length, all of which will inform the final proposal that will be reported to Cabinet in due course.

Recommendation 7

Enhance the appeal and effectiveness of major events for local residents by tasking officers to develop a standardised consistent approach to communicating and involving communities involved in events.

RESPONSE: The recommendation is partially accepted

The Council has established processes for communicating and involving local communities impacted by major events in the city. This includes transport advice through local media and websites, direct mail drops, social media and public meetings. The demands of each major event can be very different and due to the scale and scope of events scheduled in the city at any given period a one-size fits all approach is not always possible. In addition, each event promoter may have different requirements, community engagement criteria and budgets. However, as part of the development of the event strategy and consideration of the event space catalogue officers welcome the opportunity to consider the recommendations put forward in the report to improve and standardise current practices where possible.

Recommendation 8

Seize the opportunities highlighted by this Inquiry regarding increasing the return on investment by maximising the marketing possibilities of events, as follows:

- a. Register with the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA) at a cost of circa £3,500 per annum and reap the benefits of global marketing and exposure of Cardiff's ability to host business events.
- b. Liaise with Always Aim High to ensure that the Cardiff Triathlon 2019 is televised to a global audience via the medium of English, at a cost to Cardiff Council of circa £8,000, and thus capitalise on the ability to promote Cardiff to a worldwide audience.
- c. Improve the events listing service provided in Cardiff by ensuring that Visit Cardiff includes business events taking place in Cardiff as well as sporting and cultural events.
- d. Work to promote sporting, cultural and community events in the city and develop ways of signposting to the City's attractions

RESPONSE: The recommendation is partially accepted

- a. *Cardiff Convention Bureau has registered for the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA) as part of the new Cardiff Business Events Partnership initiative. (Accepted)*
- b. *Decisions regarding event funding were taken as part of the budget process and a decision has already been given to Always Aim High with regard to their request for support. Cabinet cannot allow budget considerations to be overturned by specific scrutiny recommendations. However, the Council will work with Always Aim High to support the promotion and marketing of the event through its established Visit Cardiff marketing channels. (Not Accepted)*
- c. *Most business events are closed events and accordingly event owners would not normally require them to be publicised on an event listing. However, any business event owner that asks for support in promoting their events would be supported to do so. (Not Accepted)*
- d. *Visit Cardiff and Visit Wales already work in partnership with major event promoters to promote the attractions of the city and the nation with the objective of attracting people to either lengthen their stay or to revisit at a later date. In addition, there are often lead up campaigns such as the UEFA Road to Cardiff campaign for which marketing and promotional collateral is developed and promoted in advance of the event to ensure that the widest possible audience is reached to raise the profile of Wales and its capital city. (Accepted)*

Recommendation 9

Lobby UK government, via Core Cities and other appropriate mechanisms, for additional monies to meet costs to the local

authority and statutory partners that come from hosting events, which benefit the local economy and are much needed but are an additional pressure on our limited resources.

RESPONSE: This recommendation is accepted

The future sustainability of hosting major events is an ongoing discussion with partner agencies and national and UK governments.

Recommendation 10

Task officers to continue their efforts to increase the sponsorship of events.

RESPONSE: This recommendation is accepted

Whilst officers will continue to seek funding support for Council run events, it should be noted that major event promoters come with their own sponsors and accordingly there can be limited opportunities for the Council to exploit opportunities. Where there are opportunities, these are discussed with the event owner and sponsorship is and will continue to be sought. However, it should be noted that the cost of seeking and managing any sponsorship support needs to be balanced against the level of income realised to support the delivery of the event.

Recommendation 11

Hold meetings at all levels with the International Convention Centre Wales (ICCW) to ensure Cardiff accommodates and attract ICCW attendees and spin-off events.

RESPONSE: This recommendation is accepted

Dialogue is ongoing with ICCW at both Member and officer level across the Council to ensure that the opportunities afforded by both the capital city and ICCW are fully exploited.

Recommendation 12

Work with statutory partners to explore the options to boost hostile vehicle mitigation and cut long-term costs, by investing in permanent infrastructure solutions that have low community impact.

RESPONSE: This recommendation is partially accepted

Officers will continue to work with statutory partners to consider HVM requirements, but for clarity, this would need to include the identification of partnership funding to support such investment. The financial burden for such investment cannot fall on the Council alone.

