

Agenda item:

Title of meeting: Cabinet Member for Culture Leisure and Sport

Date of meeting: 17 January 2014

Subject: Victorious Music & Cultural Festival

Report by: Head of City Development and Cultural Services

Wards affected: St Thomas's, St Jude's, Eastney, Craneswater and Central Southsea

Key decision: No

Full Council decision: No

1. Purpose of report

1.1 This report is to seek approval from the Cabinet Member for Culture Leisure and Sport for a new large scale event to be held on Southsea Seafront during the August Bank Holiday 2014

2. Recommendations

2.1 That authority is given to enter into a 5 year agreement with a potential extension of a further 2 years with Victorious Festival to hold an annual 2 day event over the August Bank Holiday weekend of commencing in August 2014.

2.2 To support the organisers to hold the event within a fenced in area as defined for 2014 in the attached map (Appendix A) and to ensure that the organisers apply for a Premises Licence to comply with the Licensing Act 2003 for the provision of all licensable activities which apply to this event. In addition, the organisers must ensure that they work in partnership with the usual authorities towards a successful application for a premises licence satisfactorily promotes the licensing objectives.

2.3 That the directly provided PCC facilities of the D Day museum and Southsea Castle within this area to be offered free of charge during this event.

2.4 That a financial model is agreed with the organisers to comply with PCC's 'fees and charges' for the hire of Parks and Open Spaces and to have further negotiations with the Victorious Festival organisers to seek potential storage solutions for the infrastructure equipment with PCC then having usage of the equipment.

2.5 That officers be instructed to bring a full evaluation report of the 2014 event to the Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Sport decision meeting in autumn

2014.

3. Background

- 3.1 2014 is an especially significant year with a number of activities already planned which will place Portsmouth onto an international platform in an unprecedented way. Launching in early February with the unveiling of the Dickens Statue, the high profile events continue through June with the 70th anniversary of the D Day landings to early August with the commemorations for mark the start of the First World War and into the autumn with the 25th Anniversary of the Great South Run.
- 3.2 Additionally to the programme being directly organised by Portsmouth City Council (PCC) there are other significant events which our partner organisations are delivering which contribute to 2014 being such a significant year. Of these the opening of the new Twentieth century galleries at the National Museum of the Royal Navy in late spring and the re-launch of the New Theatre Royal in the autumn are the most notable. Overall the combination of these events presents the city with a unique opportunity.
- 3.3 PCC has recently been approached by the organisers of the very successful family orientated, Victorious Festival which has been held in Portsmouth for the last two years. This two day event offered a wide ranging platform of music based activities which attracted a paying audience of 70,000 at their 2013 event. Their successful programme mix offered six stages, including a children's performance stage and a spoken word stage, opportunities for schools involvement through the provision of art installations and a platform for performance for over 100 bands, of which 75 % were local.
- 3.4 The Victorious Festival organisers are seeking to grow and expand their event over the next seven years in the city based on both their successful track record and their market intelligence on the capacity to grow and develop audiences for success. However in order to do this they are seeking to relocate the event and have approached us with a view to using Southsea Common.
- 3.5 City Development and Cultural Services already have a relationship with the event organisers and have undertaken a series of detailed conversations regarding the event. We have also consulted with a number of other key service providers on the proposals being suggested especially on areas which will be deemed sensitive to ensure that there is a co-ordinated approach and a shared understanding of prior learning from other events and activities.

4. Proposed 2014 Victorious Festival

- 4.1 The new proposal will be for a 2 day event over the August Bank Holiday weekend on Saturday 23rd and Sunday 24th August 2014 and to combine it with the existing successful International Kite Festival so Portsmouth has an improved quality offer over the same weekend. The event is aiming to attract a minimum of 30,000 paying visitors per day.

- 4.2 The proposed site for year 1 will be based around Castle Field (see Appendix A) and will be marked with Heras fencing panels to delineate the area with one main entrance and exit. There will be a need for a limited number of road closures and the main seafront will still be open to vehicles but a turning point will need to be established adjacent to Serpentine Road.
- 4.3 The site set up for the key stage areas is being carefully considered but currently it is anticipated that there will be a main stage, facing east on Castle Field and subsidiary stages set up on the Bandstand site and adjacent to the Skatepark. It is also envisaged that the Plaza Suite in the Pyramids will be part of the overall offer. The programme will still aim to have an effective mix of headline acts and opportunities for up to 120 bands - again with a local emphasis. Additionally the organisers are looking to expand a main market area to incorporate 80+ exhibitors/stalls with a limited number of other areas being offered to stalls within the footprint of the site.
- 4.4 The core stage music programme will be enhanced with a range of free activities around the site with the emphasis being on families. These activities may include face painting, funfair rides, Punch and Judy, jugglers and interactive circus as well as roaming entertainers and art installations. If authority is given for this event to relocate to the seafront there is also potential to hold an international talent event with the Skatepark to develop an International boarding and bike event which is clearly attractive to the teenage market.
- 4.5 A specialist sound evaluation consultancy has been engaged to ensure there is as little noise pollution as possible and all speakers will be directional and state of the art. This company have had particular success in working with improving the sound for the audience whilst minimising the noise pollution aspect at a number of other key festivals. They will also be providing monitoring services during the event to respond should an issue arise.
- 4.6 The organisers have consulted with all the key attractions within the area's footprint and they have all agreed to be part of the larger event with their facilities being offered as part of the event and free of charge to ticket holders for the Victorious Festival. The organisers will therefore bring added value to the existing visitor attractions along this section of the Seafront including the Skatepark, D Day Museum, Pyramids Centre, Blue Reef Aquarium, Pitch and Putt and Southsea Castle. The organisers are intending to reimburse all the attractions within the event footprint who get involved with the event.
- 4.7 Seafront services have been made aware of the previous engagement with Hampshire police who the organisers heavily involve in the planning of their events. They have given us assurances that it will be the same level of involvement for this event. Previously a specialist company has been contracted by the organisers to 'police' their event with assistance and co-operation from a small team of dedicated local police.

- 4.8 Hampshire police will also be asked to provide support and have involvement in the planning stages of the ESMP. Last year it was reported that the operational ESMP and crowd management plans were the best the police had seen and a good relationship has been established. Nearer to the event date egress estimates for each gate and route into and out of the city based on the postcodes of where the tickets were purchased from will be reported.
- 4.9 As part of the growth and development of the event the organisers are intending to purchase a range of aspects of the infrastructure. They have approached PCC to explore a possible storage solution in return the proposal is a partnership agreement to enable seafront services to have access and usage of the equipment which would be utilised for other PCC large events. This could produce significant savings for PCC over the events calendar. Examples of equipment that may be available are toilets, fencing, temporary bars and staging.
- 4.10 The financial risk for the event will be the sole responsibility of the organisers. PCC will not be taking a fee for the use of the common as this would be deemed to be PCC's contribution to the event. There would however be a refundable deposit payable for any reinstatement costs.

5. Transport

- 5.1 In continuing with the family orientation of the Festival it has previously been actively marketed as a cycle friendly festival - one where there were plenty of facilities for storage of bikes. This will be continued and there will be a considerable quantity of secure bicycle racks to encourage cycling to the event.
- 5.2 As with all the major events during 2014 the new Park and Ride scheme will be a critical additional factor in alleviating traffic pressure. The organisers have had initial contact with the Park and Ride providers and will develop the direct links further if the event is agreed.
- 5.3 All city centre car parks within a 15 minute walking distance will be heavily promoted by the event as will the 1,236 hotel rooms which are within easy walking distance of the main site.
- 5.4 The organisers will support a designated driver scheme which will offer free soft drinks to the designated drivers throughout the event to anyone arriving with a full car to the car park on site which will ensure that the 2500 parking spaces on site cater for at least 10,000 of the daily crowd.
- 5.5 There will be extensive use of established social media to direct festival goers on the days of the event to using the most appropriate transport options and give up to the minute information to audiences as they visit the city.

6 Strategic Context

6.1 The key strategic documents for the Seafront, especially the Seafront Strategy and Seafront Masterplan clearly highlight the desire of the city to use high profile events to attract people to the area. Specifically this proposed event is supporting the following areas of the Seafront Strategy:

S1.1.1 To improve facilities for young people and families both free, and where appropriate, fee paying

S1.3.6 Consider more organised public uses which may be free at point of entry or chargeable

S3.3 Encourage more events of all scales

S4.2.4 To identify new business opportunities

6.2 We are also aware through our recent visitor research that non-visitors would be especially attracted to visit the city for a large scale event so also supporting and building on the visitor numbers we need to grow and develop.

7. Reasons for recommendations

7.1 To demonstrate Portsmouth City Council's support for major events in the city in line with the Seafront Strategy and to enhance the status of Portsmouth as a short city break destination in line with the Shaping Portsmouth Destination Marketing programme.

7.2 The proposed event would raise the national and international profile of the city with the expected media coverage generated by such an event at no direct cost to PCC.

7.3 Support Tourism jobs in the city which are already a growth sector for Portsmouth as we are aiming to increase this sector to 12.9% of total jobs employed.

7.4 Should PCC not be able to support this then it is highly likely that the event will have to move to another town or city which would be a significant loss.

8. Equality impact assessment (EIA)

8.1 A preliminary EIA will be completed for this new event once further details have been received from the event organisers.

9. Head of legal, licensing & registrars' comments

Whilst there has been an initial consultation with relevant users this engagement needs to include all relevant groups to avoid potential challenge or comment from community groups, a full EIA is envisaged.

In addition full diligence exercises will need to be undertaken to ensure that the PCC is fully indemnified with respect to claims that could be levelled in the sense that PCC remain the occupier of the site during the period of proposed activity. With respect to any storage of third party equipment it would be appropriate to add such equipment to the insured risks already accepted by P.C.C's insurers

10. Head of finance's comments

10.1 There will be no financial risk to PCC as a result of this event taking place. Due diligence will be carried out on the company organising this Victorious Festival as part of PCC's standard procedure.

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Signed by:

Appendices:

Appendix A: Full initial site plan

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on

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Signed by: