



<b>Subject:</b>	Events Update
<b>Date:</b>	08.10.2025
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Keith Forster - Director of Economic Development
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Lesley-Ann O'Donnell – Senior Manager Culture, Tourism & Events

<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.</b>	
Insert number <input type="text"/>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Information relating to any individual</li><li>2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual</li><li>3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information)</li><li>4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter</li><li>5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained</li><li>6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction</li><li>7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime</li></ol>	
<b>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</b>	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report / Summary of Main Issues</b>
1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To update members on Culture Night 2025</li> <li>To seek approval from Members for a dedicated workshop session to support the development of Belfast City Council's Events Action Plan, ensuring alignment with strategic objectives and effective stakeholder engagement.</li> <li>To seek approval from Members to facilitate a site visit to Dundalk to view festive lighting scheme as part of planning for future years.</li> </ul>
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	<p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Note the update on Culture night</li> <li>Approve request to facilitate members workshop for events action plan</li> <li>Approve request for site visit associated to festive lights</li> </ul>
<b>3.0</b>	
3.1	<p><b>Culture night</b></p> <p>Members are advised that Culture Night Belfast 2025 was successfully delivered on 19<sup>th</sup> September, with a diverse programme of cultural activity taking place across the city centre and neighbourhoods. The event featured over 100 individual performances, exhibitions, workshops and community-led activities, delivered in partnership with artists, cultural organisations, local businesses and residents.</p> <p>Attendance was strong, with thousands of people engaging in events throughout the evening, reinforcing the festival's reputation as one of Belfast's flagship cultural celebrations. The programme highlighted the breadth of creative talent across the city and promoted wide public participation, supporting both the cultural sector and the night-time economy.</p> <p>Officers are now progressing the final evaluation and reporting process. This will include detailed analysis of outcomes, audience reach and impact, alongside reflections from</p>

	<p>stakeholders and delivery partners. Recommendations for the future development of Culture Night will be prepared and brought back to Committee in due course for Members' consideration.</p>
3.2	<p><b>Events action plan</b></p> <p>Officers are continuing to work on the development of an events action plan.</p> <p>Belfast's programme of events plays a vital role in shaping the city's identity, attracting visitors, supporting the local economy, and fostering civic pride. As the Council looks ahead to the next phase of delivery, it is essential that a refreshed Events Action Plan is developed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflect the ambitions of the Belfast Agenda and cultural strategy.</li> <li>• Respond to changes in the events landscape post-pandemic.</li> <li>• Support wider city recovery, tourism, and place-making objectives.</li> <li>• Ensure an inclusive and sustainable approach to event planning and delivery.</li> </ul> <p>The development of the Action Plan will require input from Members to ensure that the priorities and outcomes reflect the ambitions of the Council and the needs of communities across the city.</p> <p>It is proposed that a workshop be convened with Members (dates to be circulated via democratic services) to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide an overview of the current events programme, highlighting successes, challenges, and areas for improvement.</li> <li>• Explore opportunities for enhancing the city's events offering, including community events, cultural programming, and signature events.</li> <li>• Consider themes such as sustainability, accessibility, economic impact, partnership opportunities, and international positioning.</li> <li>• Discuss priorities and desired outcomes for inclusion in the draft Events Action Plan.</li> <li>• The workshop will be designed to be interactive and informative, giving Members the opportunity to shape the direction of the Plan at an early stage. Feedback from the session will be used to inform the drafting of the Action Plan, which will be presented to Committee for approval later in the year.</li> </ul>
3.2	<p><b>Festive lights – site visit</b></p> <p>As part of the planning and development for future iterations of the festive lights scheme it is proposed to conduct a site visit to Dundalk at some point between the 2-9<sup>th</sup> December to see</p>

	<p>an installation that our suppliers have previously delivered as we move towards planning for 2026, and a subsequent members planning workshop in January</p> <p>Dundalk's "The Northern Light Show" presents a valuable opportunity for Belfast City Council to gain insights into the planning, delivery, and impact of large-scale festive lighting installations. Dundalk's success in creating a visually captivating and community-driven experience offers a practical model for enhancing Belfast's own seasonal lighting strategy.</p> <p>Aligning with the objectives of the Belfast Lighting Strategy, particularly in relation to innovation, placemaking, and increasing civic pride. With Belfast introducing new Christmas lights supplier this year, there is a timely opportunity to explore how immersive lighting can be used not only during the festive season but also extended to other key calendar events such as Halloween. These extensions would allow for year-round engagement, encouraging repeat visits and boosting local economic activity.</p> <p>The learnings from Dundalk's approach, particularly around community involvement, sustainability, and creative design can inform Belfast's own delivery model, ensuring that future lighting installations are both impactful and inclusive.</p> <p>The Dundalk installation, which formed the centrepiece of the Brigid1500 Festival , attracted an estimated 48,000 visitors within its first few days (<a href="#">Dundalk Democrat</a>) , demonstrating the strong public appetite for high-quality, visually impactful light experiences.</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Financial and Resource Implications</b>
	There are no immediate financial implications associated with this paper.
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment</b>
	The cultural strategy, A City Imagining has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) and a Rural Needs Assessment (RNA).
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Appendices – Documents Attached</b>
	None