



<b>Subject:</b>	Draft City Events Unit Programme of Events 2016/17 & strategic review of events and festivals
<b>Date:</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> February 2016
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Donal Durkan, Director of Development
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Gerry Copeland, City Events Manager

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

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	The purpose of this report is to seek Members approval for the Programme of events that will be delivered and supported by the Council's City Events Unit in 2016/17 and to make Members aware of the range of events that will take place in 2016/17.
1.2	The report also provides an update for Members on the strategic review of City events and festivals. It is hoped that, through engagement and agreement with strategic stakeholders, this process will result in future events and festivals across the city reflecting the emerging Place Positioning strategy and city narrative; and in doing so contribute to the outcomes of the Belfast Agenda.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	The Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- approve the draft City Events Unit Programme of Events for 2016/17 (<b>Appendix 1</b>) and;</li><li>- note the current strategic review of the City's events and festivals and the recommended next steps.</li></ul>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main report</b>
	<b>2016/17 EVENTS &amp; FESTIVALS PROGRAMME</b>
3.1	Over the last decade the Council's City Events Unit has delivered a series of high profile public events that are free to access by both citizens and visitors to the city. In 2015/16 it

is estimated that these events generated £4,889,802 additional economic activity and 321,000 visitors attended the events programme (these figures exclude the 2015 Tall Ships festival, which generated £17million and attracted an audience of 520,000).

3.2 The draft programme of events being delivered or supported by our City Events Unit in 2016/17 is outlined in **Appendix 1** and includes a range of events throughout the year: beginning with the 'Spring into Easter' event, through to the Christmas Lights Switch-on in November and finishing with the City's St Patrick's Day event in 2017.

3.3 The programme also includes a number of events that were previously approved by Council; including the 2016 All-Ireland Irish Dancing Championship at the Belfast Waterfront (agreed by Council in October 2010 at a cost of £250,000) and the Royal Scottish Pipe Bands Association's UK National Piping Championships at Stormont Estate (agreed by Council in January 2015 at a cost of £180,000).

3.4 The draft programme of events should generate millions of pounds of additional revenue for the City via participant and attendee expenditure. In order to facilitate effective delivery, however, preparation must begin a number of months in advance. Therefore Committee is being asked to approve the draft programme for 2016/17 and give permission to officers to begin event planning.

3.5 The estimated cost of the draft programme is £1,403,250 and this amount is contained within existing Departmental revenue estimates that were agreed at the City Growth & Regeneration Committee on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016 and subsequently at Strategic Policy & Resources Committee on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2016.

3.6 Finally, Members should also note that the Council will continue to explore opportunities for other high-profile events that align with the emerging Place Positioning strategy and that discussions are ongoing in relation to the potential for 'MTV Crashes Belfast' to be hosted in the city in September 2016. If the Committee is minded to proceed with this a decision will be required in March.

### **STRATEGIC REVIEW OF EVENTS & FESTIVALS**

3.7 In parallel with the proposed City Events Unit programme of events for 2016/17 Members will also be aware that a strategic review of events and festivals in the City is underway.

3.8 The review will consider the wide range of events, festivals and related activities that are delivered and supported by various departments across Council. As well as the City Events Unit programme this will also include for example, events in our parks, events funded as part of health development work and events promoting international relations and tourism.

3.9 The purpose of the strategic review is to define and agree criteria, and a process, for supporting events and festivals; including a mechanism to allow the Council to consider requests for support or resources from external stakeholders in order that they align with

	<p>the emerging Place Positioning strategy and Belfast Agenda. The review will also take account of relevant economic, tourism and cultural strategies such as the Belfast Integrated Tourism Strategy (2015-2020). It will therefore shape the nature and types of events that the Council delivers or promotes; ensuring they reflect our city narrative, animate the city and generate economic development.</p>
3.10	<p>Once an agreed Council position has been established engagement with a wide range of stakeholders will be undertaken in order to encourage consistency of approach and delivery across the city.</p>
3.11	<p>Work is underway to map internal Council activity and an officer workshop is planned for February. The next step in this process therefore will be to engage with elected members after Easter and then it is intended that early recommendations will be brought to Committee by the summer; with a view to implementation from 2017 onwards.</p>
	<p><u>Financial &amp; Resource Implications</u></p>
3.12	<p>Subject to agreement of the rate, resources for both the draft programme of events and strategic review will be met through existing revenue estimates.</p>
	<p><u>Equality &amp; Good Relations Implications</u></p>
3.13	<p>None - the proposed programme of events are open to all and as such have the potential to promote good relations &amp; equality by bringing together people from a wide range of backgrounds. Advice will be sought from the Council's Equality Unit throughout the strategic review.</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Appendices – Documents Attached</b>
4.1	<b>Appendix 1 – City Events Unit: Events Programme 16/17</b>