

CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

17 MARCH 2011

**REPORT OF REGENERATION
AND TRANSPORT SELECT
COMMITTEE**

CABINET DECISION

Arts, Leisure & Culture – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Mrs Womphrey
Regeneration & Transport – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Cook

EIT REVIEW OF EVENTS, ARTS, AND TOURISM

1. Summary

This report presents the findings of the Regeneration and Transport Select Committee following the EIT review of Events, Arts and Tourism undertaken between May 2010 and February 2011.

One of the Council's key development priorities for 2010 – 2013 is to “develop our events programme, to involve local people and raise the profile of the area.” The primary aim of the review therefore was to identify ways in which the service can be organised that will deliver efficiencies and that will sustain or improve the visitor experience and encourage more visitors to Stockton Borough, maximising the social and economic benefits.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended to Cabinet that:

1. The Council commit to a programme of events and festivals and develop a co-ordinated and cohesive Strategy and Events service. This will provide the basis to:
 - develop a 5-10 year Events/Festivals strategy
 - confirm a programme which will allow smarter procurement / efficiencies
 - adopt a project management approach in the delivery of the events programme and define roles under a delivery framework
 - improve marketing and communication of events including website improvements and a single point of contact through a comprehensive communication plan
 - develop a Medium Term Financial Plan including increasing income via a charging regime, offering season tickets, etc.
 - develop a business sponsorship framework to re-invest into events
2. Officers work up detailed proposals on the savings from Arts Development budget that will be delivered over the next five years.
3. The current vacancy within the tourism team is deleted from the structure.
4. Consideration is given to providing tourist information outlets at the Customer Service Centres in the three town centres when they are available.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations/Decision(s)

To identify options for future strategy / policy / service provision that will deliver efficiency savings and sustain / improve high quality outcomes for SBC residents.

4. Members Interests

Members (including co-opted members with voting rights) should consider whether they have a personal interest in the item as defined in the Council's code of conduct (paragraph 8) and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with paragraph 9 of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest in the item, he/she must then consider whether that interest is one which a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest (paragraph 10 of the code of conduct).

A Member with a prejudicial interest in any matter must withdraw from the room where the meeting considering the business is being held -

- in a case where the Member is attending a meeting (including a meeting of a select committee) but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence, provided the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose whether under statutory right or otherwise, immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence as the case may be;
- in any other case, whenever it becomes apparent that the business is being considered at the meeting;

and must not exercise executive functions in relation to the matter and not seek improperly to influence the decision about the matter (paragraph 12 of the Code).

Further to the above, it should be noted that any Member attending a meeting of Cabinet, Select Committee etc; whether or not they are a Member of the Cabinet or Select Committee concerned, must declare any personal interest which they have in the business being considered at the meeting (unless the interest arises solely from the Member's membership of, or position of control or management on any other body to which the Member was appointed or nominated by the Council, or on any other body exercising functions of a public nature, when the interest only needs to be declared if and when the Member speaks on the matter), and if their interest is prejudicial, they must also leave the meeting room, subject to and in accordance with the provisions referred to above.

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SUMMARY

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One of the Council's key development priorities for 2010 – 2013 is to "develop our events programme, to involve local people and raise the profile of the area." The primary aim of the review therefore was to identify ways in which the service can be organised that will deliver efficiencies and that will sustain or improve the visitor experience and encourage more visitors to Stockton Borough, maximising the social and economic benefits.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended to Cabinet that:

1. The Council commit to a programme of events and festivals and develop a co-ordinated and cohesive Strategy and Events service. This will provide the basis to:
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DETAIL

1. The attached report presents Cabinet with the findings of the EIT review of Events, Arts and Tourism undertaken by the Regeneration and Transport Committee between May 2010 and February 2011.
2. The review forms part of a three year programme of EIT reviews covering all services provided by the Council. The programme aims to ensure that all services are reviewed in a systematic way to ensure that they are provided in the most efficient manner, provide value for money and identify opportunities for service improvements and transformation.
3. The primary aim of the review was to identify ways in which the service can be organised that will deliver efficiencies and that will sustain or improve the visitor experience and encourage more visitors to Stockton Borough, maximising the social and economic benefits.
4. The Committee were presented with and considered substantial evidence on how and why the services were delivered, acknowledged the significant social and economic benefits that came as a result and recognised the contribution that the services made to marketing Stockton as a good place to live, work and visit.
5. Following consideration by Cabinet an action plan will be developed and submitted to the Select Committee setting out how the approved recommendations will be implemented and the timescales.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6. Recommendation 1 - Indicative Savings - £55,300 as follows:

Infrastructure Expenditure

Procurement of technical supplies will be co-ordinated and commissioned for all signature/medium events over a 3-5 year period, maximising the Council purchasing powers. The savings from procurement will not be achieved in the first year due to the need to develop specifications and tendering process. Efficiency savings are estimated at circa £20,000 over the five year period.

Subsidies

Reduction in subsidies provided by 5% (in line with Arts Development subsidy reductions) as follows:

£15,000 - SIRF

£300 - Billingham Show

Charging

Reduce subsidy to Fringe Festival by full amount. This to be offset by charging for headline acts. - £20,000

Overall efficiency savings

£55,300 representing an overall saving of 10.5%

7. Recommendation 2 – Reduction in subsidies by 5% providing indicative Savings of £13,500 in 2011/12 representing an overall efficiency saving of 12.5%.
8. Recommendation 3 – Delete the vacant post within the tourism team generating an efficiency saving of £29,000 equating to approximately 23%.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9. None

RISK ASSESSMENT

10. This scrutiny report is categorised as low to medium risk.

COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS

Economic Regeneration

11. Attract visitors / tourism development.

Children and Young People

12. Enhance the involvement and participation of children and young people, parents and carers in community life.

Arts, Leisure and Culture

13. Strengthen the arts infrastructure supporting the development of arts programmes and events.

14. Continue to develop SIRF and Riverside Fringe.

15. Continued active involvement in the national carnival project.

16. Increase events and activities in parks and open spaces.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

17. The EIA has a neutral effect.

CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS

18. Three Viewpoint focus groups were held, two with older residents and one with young people to gather public perception of events. Their feedback included

- Events and Festivals are held in high regard with minimal cost to residents.
- Specific mention was made to the commitment of Stockton Council to events and this helped to improve the quality of life for residents.
- The panel enjoyed the variety of events on offer.
- Recognition is given to the difficult financial state facing the Council and events are likely to be affected but should, wherever possible, be retained to continue the enhancement of the borough especially for residents.
- Payment to see events is generally accepted so long as the price is commensurate with the event. Willing to pay (£15 - £20) for quality headline acts
- Make better use of social network sites to advertise events
- Resident satisfaction with overall events is 92%
- 93% of visitors think events are good for promoting Stockton
- Over 90% would attend again and 98% would recommend to a friend

Graham Birtle

Scrutiny Officer

Telephone No. 01642 526187

Email Address: graham.birtle@stockton.gov.uk

Background Papers

None

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors

None

Property

None