

Title of Report: Foyle Maritime Festival Update	Officer Presenting: Head of Culture Author: Festival and Events Manager
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1 Purpose of Report/Recommendations

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update members regarding the planning and delivery of the Foyle Maritime Festival in July and early August 2020.

2 Background

- 2.1 Members will be aware that Derry City and Strabane District Council have signed a contractual agreement with Clipper Ventures to host the Clipper 2019-20 Race in its Foyle Marina in July 2020
- 2.2 The continued partnership between Council and Clipper Ventures confirms it as an integral part of Council's international campaign to showcase the city and region as a world class destination for visitors and investors alike
- 2.3 In order to ensure an effective and strategic delivery of the festival Council Officers will work closely with festival partners Foyle Port, Loughs Agency, Visit Derry and Tourism NI as well as other key stakeholders through a steering group for the festival chaired by the Head of Culture.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1.1 The Clipper Race yachts are due to arrive in the city from Thursday 23rd July 2020. Council is working with a range of external promoters, organisations and local businesses to develop a programme of events alongside animation and activity programmed directly by Council to mark the arrival of the race resulting in up to eleven days of programmed activity. There will be a range of activity from boat arrivals every day with the festival at full capacity from Wednesday 29th July until Sunday 2nd August from 12 noon until 10pm daily, except on Friday 31st when hours are extended to 11.15pm to facilitate the showcase event.

- 3.1.2 Council is curating its own LegenDerry Street Food Festival as one of the key events set to take place during the opening weekend of the festival. This event will run from Friday 24th until Sunday 26th July and will be located on the riverfront at the Foyle Marina where the boats will be berthed, this is an area where high footfall is expected as the boats arrive in the city.
- 3.1.3 The fact that there is such an appetite within the private sector to independently programme events as soon as the boats arrive, acknowledging the possibilities that such an international sporting event brings to the city, is testament to the growing success and sustainability of the event.
- 3.1.4 The festival will run for 11 days delivering an enhanced level of activity over the five major days which will be facilitated primarily by a full road closure along Queens Quay for the 2020 event. This is a new and exciting development as in 2018 there was only a partial road closure.
- 3.1.5 In 2018 we facilitated a partial road closure however due to the large numbers of people on the peak later days a few issues became apparent including some concerns around the pedestrian crossing at the City Hotel end of Queen's Quay as one lane of traffic was still accessing the quay and the crossing confused visitors. The physical infrastructure required to facilitate the partial road closure left several riverfront businesses feeling 'cut off' from the event and that their ability to target the large number of visitors on their doorstep was limited.
- 3.1.6 A full closure will reduce any risk to pedestrians crossing the road in this zone and enable riverfront businesses on Queens Quay to build out into the festival zone creating a new outdoor dining experience there. The infrastructure necessary to facilitate a full road closure could not be facilitated for more than 4-5 days maximum given the wider impact it will have on city centre traffic. Officers will continue to work with partners and businesses both directly and indirectly affected in order to minimise disruption and impact.
- 3.1.7 Early Programme Highlights will include Clipper Race Arrivals from 23rd July, the 'We Are Together Festival' at Ebrington Square 25th and 26th July and 1st and 2nd August, LegenDerry Street Food Festival 24th – 26th July and Pianocean 25th July – 2nd Aug. There are also potentially two other events in the city at that time that officers are currently working with organisers to align with the overall festival, both these events are yet to be announced and are proposed for 24th - 26th July.
- 3.1.8 Officers are also in discussions with BBC producers regarding two potential live broadcast events that are being bid for internally within the BBC during the festival week.

- 3.1.9 The theme for the 2020 Foyle Maritime Festival (FMF) is 'Tall Tales of the Sea' in homage to the mythical, magical and unbelievable stories that our oceans and seas have given us. Core programme highlights include Museums 'Voyages' Marquee, Life's a Beach, Return of Dopey Dick, Science of Water, Tall Ships & Navy, Clipper Race Tours & Excursions, Foyle River Races, On-Water Displays, Taster Sessions & Trips, Maritime & Merchant Markets, Maritime Melodies, The Underwater Garden, Big Wheel & Funfair and Showcase Spectacle.
- 3.1.10 Our showcase event for the festival has now become as synonymous with the Foyle Maritime Festival as the Clipper Race and this year's event promises to deliver another large scale landscape piece of theatre that encompasses land, water and air including a parade of light on the water with over 35 ships and boats and a pyrotechnic show on the water. In keeping with the festival theme and as we commence a year of events in celebration of the 1500th anniversary of his birth, the subject of the 2020 showcase event is Saint Colmcille. Support for this has been confirmed from the North West Development Fund.
- 3.1.11 Officers are working closely with the Loughs Agency regarding their plans to upscale their on-shore animation at the 2020 event and also to build the capacity of service providers for on-water activities with a Business Engagement event specifically for this sector which occurred on 8th January this year.
- 3.1.12 A range of procurement exercises following the procurement procedures and processes of Council have been undertaken so far with service providers being appointed for the Festival Bar, Continental Market and Showcase Event. Other requirements are the subject of current tendering exercises. A number of ships and installation pieces are currently in the process of being secured.
- 3.1.13 Officers are working with Clipper Ventures, Invest NI and Tourism Ireland (USA) regarding Council activation at two international stopovers – Seattle and New York.
- 3.1.14 Trading opportunities at this event will be through the Maritime and Merchant markets.
- 3.1.15 The Maritime Market will be managed and operated by an external service provider featuring a range of European food, craft and bespoke goods located along Queens Quay facilitating at least 200 meters of trading opportunities. Trading opportunities within this market will be through an application process to the selected service provider and priority will be given to individuals and businesses that are registered outside the DCSDC area.

3.1.16 The Merchant Market will be managed and operated by DCSDC featuring a range of products from foods to crafts and fast selling items. This market will be located at a number of locations across the festival zones. Businesses and individuals need to apply to be part of this trading opportunity and priority will be given to:

Regular monthly Walled City and Strabane Market traders and

Individuals and businesses that are based/registered in the DCSDC area.

3.1.17 In line with current legislation, no trading can take place within a ten-meter distance of a public footpath without a Street Trading Licence. No Street Trading Licences will be issued for trading independently at the festival. Businesses and individuals wishing to trade at this event must apply to one of the markets listed above.

3.1.18 A separate application process will be carried out for mobile units specialising in ice cream and mobile traders with balloons/fast selling items, seeking a commercial fee payable to council. This will be a competitive process and consideration will be given to the level of revenue stream offered to council from the respective tendering companies. Submissions will be ranked and the highest scoring company will be given choice of preferred location. Only Individuals and businesses that are based/registered in the DCSDC area can apply to trade via this selection process.

3.1.19 A Business Engagement event is currently being organised for Tuesday 10th March 2020 to inform attendees on the festival programme to date and how businesses can maximise on opportunities the festival will bring.

4 Financial, Equality, Legal, HR, Improvement, Rural Needs and other Implications

4.1.1 In July officers identified a total budget of £852,216 for the delivery of the Clipper Race Stopover and Foyle Maritime Festival and includes £500,000 from rates with the balance from income and support from Tourism Northern Ireland which has yet to be confirmed.

4.1.2 Officers have submitted an application for funding support of £150,000 to Tourism Northern Ireland. This is the maximum budget that an international event can be awarded.

- 4.1.3 It should be noted that in previous years officers have been able to identify a dedicated marketing budget of £87,500 from existing budgets however with an increased profile of Halloween in particular as it has moved to a more international event more budget has been required to support this marketing effort. Officers have looked into all possible options to realise savings within existing budgets, seek additional resource including sponsorship and ensure the income targets are met. The new programming arrangements mean that the new overall budget would be around £700,000.
- 4.1.4 Officers may have to appoint through Single Tender action some specialist international acts to enhance this year's programme. Officers will report back with an updated report and record in the register of decisions. Other smaller items will be procured by way of quotation request subject to our existing policy and procedures. All other items required are covered on current annual tenders.
- 4.1.5 DCSDC has leveraged part funding of £30,000 for the delivery of the festival showcase through the North West Development Fund, in conjunction with and supported by The Executive Office and The Irish Government.
- 4.1.6 Despite reducing the trading days for the festival it is still anticipated there will be a high festival revenue as the value and reach of the event is recognised within the commercial sector. With the enhanced activity across the core five days, the planned LegenDerry Street Food festival on the first weekend and the additional activity being led by the private and community sector, officers are confident that the event will still have a positive economic impact.
- 4.1.7 For previous festivals there has always been a percentage decrease in bed-nights midweek. We are confident that the revised scheduling will reverse this trend, achieving a higher percentage of occupancy across all nights, delivering a higher return on investment and raising the economic impact of the event locally.
- 4.1.8 Council Officers are working to attract a range of sponsors for the event hoping to secure at least £48,000 in sponsorship to support programming. In 2018 sponsorship was successfully agreed with DuPont Kevlar, Diageo and the North West Regional College.
- 4.1.9 The income target of £90,000 required from the event is expected to come from trade income, corporate bookings, bar takings and sponsorship.

4.1.10 Officers are working on an overall budget of £700,000 utilising the £250,000 annual major events budget. This budget includes programming, marketing and the fee to Clipper Ventures. Where officers can they are working to ensure savings and realise income which will allow any additional budget to be allocated to meet the required additional investment in the now annual international Halloween festival.

5 Recommendations

5.1.1 Members are asked to approve the programming and financial arrangements set out in the above report.

Background Papers