

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL SERVICES

FESTIVALS AND EVENTS IN SUNDERLAND

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update regarding events activity that took place within the city, including Coalfield Area, for the period 1 April – 31 August 2008.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The city provides a wide ranging Festivals and Events programme which provides high quality well attended events which always attracts substantial media interest and significant economic spend.
- 2.2 A report was submitted to Cabinet on 16 February 2005 and Members approved an allocation of £1,000,000 to develop a series of events in the city over a three year period in order to increase the city's profile nationally.

3.0 SUNDERLAND: SWITCHED ON FESTIVALS AND EVENTS

3.1 LAUNCH OF AQUATIC CENTRE

- 3.1.1 The Sunderland Aquatic Centre was launched on Thursday 17 April with a two part programme featuring both an indoor and an outdoor event.
- 3.1.2 The contract for the programme and delivery was awarded to Magnetic Events who worked closely with the city's Events Team and local artists to present a spectacular launch event.
- 3.1.3 The indoor element of the programme was made up of dancers, gymnasts, swimmers and divers from regional groups and clubs of all ages and abilities.
- 3.1.4 The audience was made up of 700 invited guests including representatives from organisations involved in the design and build of the Centre, funding partners, City Council representatives, sporting personalities and organisations, local community, education and voluntary organisations.
- 3.1.5 The outdoor event featured specially commissioned music and dance alongside a visual montage of the history of Sunderland projected on the side of the building. Pyrotechnics accompanied the programme.

- 3.1.6 Despite the wet and cold conditions 4,500 spectators turned up and enjoyed a fantastic, unique experience.
- 3.1.7 Media coverage for the event was excellent with both BBC Look North and Tyne Tees Television news, all local radio stations and regional press covering the event.

3.2 BUPA GREAT NORTH WOMEN'S RUN/JUNIOR COASTAL RUN

- 3.2.1 The BUPA Great Women's Run was held on Saturday 15 June at Seaburn and Roker along with the Junior Coastal Run.
- 3.2.2 The event, now in its third year, is delivered in partnership with Nova International.
- 3.2.3 The race attracted a field of 2,500 runners, with a strong contingent of international elite runners competing. This year's event was won by former Olympic silver medallist Geta Wami of Ethiopia.
- 3.2.4 The Junior Great Coastal Run covers a 2.8km course and is open to young people aged between 8 and 14 years. This year 389 runners took part.

3.3 GREAT NORTH WALK

- 3.3.1 The Great North Walk took place on 29 June attracting approximately 3,000 walkers from all over the region.
- 3.3.2 The walk began at Herrington Country Park and the route took in large expanses of the park itself, Penshaw Monument, Penshaw, sections of the River Wear Trail and Cox Green.
- 3.3.3 A wheels friendly route was also available inside Herrington Country Park utilising the many footpaths within the park with almost 500 people participating.
- 3.3.4 The event was extremely successful on the day and provided an excellent opportunity to showcase both the country park and the city's beautiful countryside.

3.4 INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIP FESTIVAL, INCORPORATING THE KITE FESTIVAL

- 3.4.1 The International Friendship Festival took place at the Northern Area Playing Fields in Washington on Saturday 1 and Sunday 2 July from 11.00am until 5.00pm each day.
- 3.4.2 The event attracted kite flyers from the UK, Japan, Italy, France, Canada, Holland, Israel, Sardinia, Tasmania and Germany.

- 3.4.3 A full music programme took place on an outdoor stage. The Saturday programme featured community and professional musicians including performances by choirs from the City Sings 2008 competition. Bands from Washington Music Collective and Oxclose Music Project also participated. Sunday's programme included music from the Davy Lamp Folk Club, Mutandi – an African drumming group, the Wildcats of Kilkenny and Orkestra del Sol.
- 3.4.4 Partner and voluntary organisations were invited to take up display space within the food marquee as a promotional opportunity for their services.
- 3.4.5 The Family Activities Marquee was extremely popular and offered children the opportunity to participate in kitemaking and junk music. The Football Reading Game with poet Tom Parker was extremely well received. Other activities included Drop in Dance workshops, windchime making and creative art sessions with local artists. The Family Activities Map was funded by Washington SIB.
- 3.4.6 The National Year of Reading was celebrated with a storytelling tepee on site where professional storytellers entertained the children with a variety of stories to suit all age ranges. This was very popular and attracted many listeners throughout the weekend.
- 3.4.7 Unfortunately the weather was very wet on both days and attendance was down on previous years.

3.5 SUNDERLAND LIVE

- 3.5.1 Sunderland Live was a new addition to the events calendar and featured three outdoor music events at Cliffe Park, Seaburn on 20 July, 10 August and 25 August.
- 3.5.2 The event was delivered in partnership with the Sunderland Music Forum to promote live music in the city and to give a platform to local bands and emerging talent.
- 3.5.3 The first two events were on a small scale and programme included 12 DJ's and 11 bands including The Squares, Rayne, Cornished Sisters and Seven Heroes. Audiences for the first two events were in the region of 500 people per event.
- 3.5.4 The final event on Bank Holiday Monday included a supporting programme of activities linked to the theme of 'Climate Change'. The main music programme involved 6 bands on the main stage including Troubleshooter; featuring the local Climate Change Champion, Jack White and Sunderland's critically acclaimed band The Week That Was headlining the event.

- 3.5.5 Sunderland Music Forum programmed an acoustic stage in a second marquee alongside traders selling environmentally themed products. A third marquee showed a film reel produced by KINO Films.
- 3.5.6 Children's activities on site included circus skills, sculpture workshops, junk music workshops and library activities.
- 3.5.7 Attendance on the day is estimated at 1,000 and feedback to date has been very positive. These events will inform the live music programme to be developed for 2009 as part of the Sunderland Music in the City framework.

3.6 SUNDERLAND INTERNATIONAL AIRSHOW

- 3.6.1 The 20th Sunderland International Airshow was held on Saturday 26 and Sunday 27 July at Seaburn and Roker.
- 3.6.2 The event was designated a Priority 1 show by the RAF, one of only eight in the country, which resulted in the allocation of the RAF Role Demonstration.
- 3.6.3 For the first time at an air show the RAF, Royal Navy and Royal Marines worked together to provide a combined services Role Demonstration. This promised to be really spectacular however, due to a sea fret which covered the seafront, both the flying display and the Role Demonstration were unable to go ahead on either day.
- 3.6.4 This was the first time in the event's 20 year history that all flying had been lost on both days.
- 3.6.5 The Royal Marine Commandos and Royal Marine Reserves (Tyne) were able to carry out a limited rescue scenario on the beach and this was very well received by the audience.
- 3.6.6 The Royal Navy also allocated two ships to the event, HMS Southampton and RFA Lyme Bay. However, due to the poor visibility they were unable to be seen from the shore.
- 3.6.7 A full arena programme including the Royal Marine Commando Display Team, Royal Navy Field Gun Team and Band of HM Royal Marines (Scotland) entertained the crowds throughout the weekend.
- 3.6.8 Military displays, ground attractions and exhibitors provided entertainment for the hundreds of thousands of visitors who attended the event. This ground entertainment proved to be an important element of the event for the visitors due to the flying display being unable to operate.

3.6.9 Media coverage was still high and ITV Tyne Tees and BBC Look North news programmes attended the event. All local radio stations and press also covered the event.

3.6.10 Using the PR standard of advertising cost equivalent the value of the coverage achieved was calculated at £1,201,332.

3.6.11 Although it was disappointing that the flying display was unable to take place, overall the event was very successful and achieved its objectives of attracting huge visitor numbers and economic spend into the city.

4.0 MARKETING AND PUBLICITY

4.1 All of the above events attracted considerable positive media coverage from television, press and radio, both national and regional, thereby raising the profile of the city and creating awareness of Sunderland as a visitor destination.

5.0 THE WAY FORWARD

5.1 Continued efforts are being made to develop the city's event's calendar across the city in line with key priority areas.

5.2 Established events such as Sunderland International Airshow, International Friendship Festival and Houghton Feast need to be enhanced to ensure their continued success.

5.3 Work is needed to encourage and support community driven events such as Houghton Feast and Hetton Carnival as very important elements of the event's calendar as they promote inclusiveness and diversity within communities.

5.4 The Sunderland Music in the City framework is a priority and work continues to develop and promote this activity establishing platforms for local musicians of all genres.

5.5 Work will be carried out to look at budgetary implications and internal processes for events delivery.

6.0 FINANCIAL RESOURCES

6.1 Further funding opportunities continue to be sought to support events activity across the city including sponsorship, grant aid and relevant bids through Strategic Initiative Budget.

7.0 RECOMMENDATION

7.1 Members are asked to note the contents of the report.

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Cabinet Report – Capital programme 2005/2006 including Prudential Indications and Treasury management Strategy – 16 February 2005
- Policy and Co-ordination Review Committee Agenda – 24 March
Item 10 – Event Funding – Oral Report of the Chairman
- Policy and Co-ordination Review Committee Capital Programme
2005/2006 – Inward Investment – Events
Link to Work Programme; Member Items
- Portfolio Holders – 20 September 2005, 17 October 2006, 12 February
2007, 10 September 2007
- Report of the Director of Community & Cultural Services
Events in the City of Sunderland
- Draft Events Strategy – KKP, September 2006
- Cultural & Community Services Medium Term Financial Strategy
2009/10 – 2012/13