

6. EVENTS STRATEGY

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The purpose of this report is to present the final Event Strategy and information on the formation of the proposed Interim Advisory Board for approval.

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

The development of an Events Strategy was initiated through this Committee in September 1999 as one element in the Leisure Strategy. The Council had previously developed a Festivals and Events Policy that established what the Council aimed to achieve through events but no overall plan had been put in place to identify the steps to be taken in achieving those goals. The intention of the Events Strategy is to bring a strategic approach to the area and to develop planning for the area that has a longer horizon than a year.

Many of the major cities in New Zealand are now involved in the festivals and events area and there is increasing competition between them. In order for Christchurch to retain its position as one of the leading cities in the area a more strategic approach is required.

A small Events Strategy Steering Group was formed and the views of many in the festivals and events sector were sought through focus groups. A Draft Strategy was developed and presented to the Parks and Recreation Committee at a seminar before further feedback was sought. The feedback on the Draft Events Strategy has been considered by the Steering Group and amendments made to the Events Strategy where considered appropriate by the Steering Group.

A final Events Strategy is now being presented for Council approval.

EVENTS STRATEGY

Copies of the Events Strategy have been separately circulated to Councillors. The Events Strategy identifies a vision – ‘Christchurch, the City of festivals, events and fun’. It has three major goal areas:

- Develop an infrastructure that supports a vibrant events sector in Christchurch.
- Maximise the contribution events make to the economic development of the City.
- Maximise the contribution events make to residents and visitors enjoyment of life in Christchurch.

These three goal areas are closely aligned to the outcomes identified in the Festival and Events Policy.

For each goal area a series of objectives and strategies are identified. Inevitably some of these objectives and strategies are quite specific whilst others are more general in nature. The Events Strategy is primarily focused on getting the frameworks and processes in place to enable the area to develop.

Significant themes in the Events Strategy include:

- Ensuring Council funding, bidding and tendering processes are clear, transparent and as objective as possible.
- Making the City as ‘friendly’ to events organisers as possible by making the relevant Council processes and procedures required as straightforward as possible.
- Taking funding decisions from a strategic perspective.
- Enhancing the role of festivals and events to provide employment opportunities for local people.
- Ensuring that festivals and events contribute as much as possible to the visitor industry in Christchurch.
- Ensuring that festivals and events meet the needs and expectations of as wide a range of local residents as possible.

INTERIM ADVISORY BOARD COMPOSITION AND STRUCTURE

One of the major elements of the Events Strategy is the development of an Interim, and subsequently an ongoing, Advisory Board. To facilitate the process of putting the Interim Advisory Board in place, further details of the proposed structure and composition are presented.

Structure

The Interim Advisory Board structure is based on bringing together the required skills to achieve its aims and objectives rather than bringing together representatives from a number of organisations or interest groups related to the events sector. However, it is considered important that the Interim Advisory Board has representation from the Parks and Recreation Committee. This representation should assist the Interim Advisory Board in understanding the political dynamics into which its recommendations will be forwarded and it will enable the representatives of the Parks and Recreation Committee to better understand the thinking behind the recommendations and explain it to other members of the Committee.

The Interim Advisory Board will be made up of a maximum of eight members, of whom two will be representatives of the Parks and Recreation Committee.

The remaining up to six members will be selected on the basis of their ability to contribute to the following set of skills in the Board as a whole:

- Understanding of the events sector – from a local and global perspective.
- Knowledge and experience in organising events and festivals.
- Experience in business planning and strategy.
- Experience in marketing strategies, planning and implementation.
- Experience in sponsorship seeking and/or management.
- Knowledge and experience of bi-cultural needs and processes.
- Knowledge of multi-cultural needs and processes.
- Knowledge and understanding of evaluation processes.

In terms of a process to recruit and select the members of the Interim Advisory Board it is recommended that:

- A list of potential members is developed based on the skills/capabilities outlined above. This list would be built up from recommendations by Councillors, existing databases and knowledge of people with the relevant skills and by public advertising.
- A shortlist of candidates will be developed.
- The shortlisted candidates will be approached to establish their interest in being part of the Interim Advisory Board and resumes obtained.
- The shortlist of candidates will then be interviewed by a small panel.
- Successful candidates will then be appointed to the Interim Advisory Board for its duration (i.e. 18 months).

N.B. The intention is that the outside members of the Interim Advisory Board will continue to serve on the Board for the full 18 month period. However, a decision on this and continuation of the Interim Advisory Board will need to be taken by the new Council at the beginning of its term.

It is recommended that the panel to shortlist and then interview the potential board members be made up of the two Parks and Recreation Committee representatives, the Leisure Manager and a member of the Events Strategy Steering Group.

It should be noted that towards the end of its tenure the Interim Advisory Board is required to recommend on the structure, composition, functions etc of an ongoing Advisory Board.

Status

It is recommended that the Interim Advisory Board become a subcommittee of the Parks and Recreation Committee.

The Interim Advisory Board will forward its recommendations for funding of core-funded and in-house events to the Parks and Recreation Committee for approval before moving forward to the Annual Plan Working Party in the normal way.

The Interim Advisory Board may also report to the Parks and Recreation Committee at other times for information or if it requires clarification of its role or direction.

It is anticipated that the Interim Advisory Board would be advised by the Leisure Manager and appropriate Council staff.

Anticipated Meetings

It is anticipated that the Interim Advisory Board would meet on approximately five occasions per annum to consider festivals and events funding and other events related issues within its aim and objectives.

Chairperson and Decision Making

Decisions of the Interim Advisory Board will be made by a simple majority where a consensus cannot be reached.

A Chairperson will be elected from within the Interim Advisory Board.

INTERIM ADVISORY BOARD ROLES AND PROCESSES

These roles and processes are presented to provide Councillors and the Interim Board members with a clearer picture of what they can expect the Interim Advisory Board to do. The roles and processes outlined are designed to flesh out the aim and objectives for the board in the Events Strategy. The list of roles and processes are not exhaustive and are intended as a guide.

Strategic Review of Festivals and Events in Christchurch

- The Interim Advisory Board will review the existing festivals and events to identify those with potential for growth, those that require an injection of innovation, those that have gone beyond their life cycle peak.
- The Interim Advisory Board will identify any existing or new festivals and events with the potential to be developed into an icon.
- The Interim Advisory Board will identify where new festivals and events are required.
- The Interim Advisory Board will identify any changes that need to take place in the events sector and how those should take place.

Core-Funded and In-House Festivals and Events

- The Interim Advisory Board will consider the funding of all existing and new core funded and in-house festivals and events.
- The Interim Advisory Board will recommend to the Parks and Recreation Committee a programme of core funded and in-house events and festivals to fund each year as part of the Council's Annual Plan process. The Interim Advisory Board will recommend an overall amount of money for the Parks and Recreation Committee to devote to core-funded and in-house festivals and events and the specific amounts to be allocated to each festival and event. Where possible the Interim Advisory Board will also indicate the expected future trend in Council funding for each festival or event (i.e. increasing, decreasing or staying constant) and the rationale for that funding trend.
- The Interim Advisory Board will identify, (as part of the process to make funding recommendations), the aims and objectives of each festival or event on which evaluation can subsequently be based.
- The Interim Advisory Board will make its processes and decision-making in arriving at funding recommendations as transparent as possible.
- The Interim Advisory Board will make recommendations about any conditions that should be attached to the funding of specific festivals and events.
- The Interim Advisory Board will receive the results of evaluations and post-show reports from core funded and in-house festivals and events to help in making future funding recommendations.

Festivals and Events Budgeted in Council units other than Leisure

- Where the budget for any single festival or event exceeds \$10,000 the Annual Plan Working Party can decide whether or not it should be considered 'core-funded' and treated as outlined above. (The budget would remain in existing unit concerned.)

Event Seeding Grants

- A group of two members of the Events Advisory Group will form part of the Major Grants Committee when making decisions on Events Seeding applications (where those applications exceed the level delegated to officers). The intention of including the Interim Advisory Board members is to bring a strategic overview of festivals and events and identify linkages to other funding types.

Events Bidding

- Those events that bids have been made for by Christchurch City Council Leisure will be communicated to the Interim Advisory Board.
- To communicate to Christchurch City Council Leisure any events it believes the Council should bid for.

Community Events (i.e. those funded by community boards)

- Community Boards remain responsible for deciding on whether and which festivals and events to fund using their discretionary funds.
- The Interim Advisory Board is available to provide advice to Community Boards about how they can achieve maximum outcomes for their investment in events and festivals.
- The Interim Advisory Board, as part of its strategic overview can receive information on the events and festivals funded by the different community boards, compare what is happening in different parts of the City and communicate this to the community boards.

Events Evaluations

- The Interim Advisory Board will identify with each festival and event its broad objectives as part of the process to consider its funding needs. For festivals and events that receive funding these objectives will form the basis of the subsequent evaluation.
- The Interim Advisory Board will receive the results of evaluations carried out on in-house, core funded and events seeded festivals and events and use these as part of the process to consider future funding recommendations.
- The Interim Advisory Board may advise on and suggest improvements to the evaluation process for future festivals and events.

Co-ordination of Festivals and Events

- The Interim Advisory Board may identify opportunities to create 'added value' by coordinating separate festivals and events taking place in the City or by coordinating festivals and events with other things taking place in the City. In these instances the Interim Advisory Board may suggest co-ordination to the festival or events organisers and in cases where funding is being sought recommend co-ordination as a condition of funding.

Guide and Assist the Development of Promising Festival or Event Concepts

- The Interim Advisory Board will provide advice to individuals or organisations that present promising festival or event concepts about how best to develop and progress their ideas.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE EVENTS STRATEGY

Estimating the future budgetary requirements of a strategy of this type is always difficult. The focus in preparing the Events Strategy has been very much on achieving the maximum returns in terms of the outcomes identified in the Festivals and Events Policy for the Council's investment in the area.

Officers estimate the additional costs (i.e. over and above the 2000/1 budget level) to implement the Events Strategy to be in the region of \$35000 to \$43000 per annum for the next five financial years. No estimate has been made beyond the next five years. The major items that make up this budgetary increase are the operational costs of the Interim Advisory Board and the costs of offering an effective one-stop shop for event organisers to assist them to meet the Council's requirements and procedures.

These levels of additional funding are approximately 2-3% of the direct net budgets for funding and producing core funded, in-house and seeded festivals and events.

It is considered important that work to develop the one-stop shop and handbook of relevant Council requirements and procedures commences as soon as possible. This is an area that was of particular concern for events organisers during the initial focus groups. To make an early start on these areas additional staffing resources will be required and it is recommended that an application for \$10,000 be made to the six-month review to accommodate this need.

There are some elements of the Events Strategy for which estimating future budgetary requirements are difficult at this stage. In particular these are:

- The development of the economic and social impact tools. The costs of developing these tools will become more apparent after some initial investigation of currently available tools.
- The development with other stakeholders of an event industry employment and training strategy. The Council's role in this strategy other than facilitating between the various stakeholders is currently unclear.

No additional budgetary provisions beyond the 2000/1 levels have been made for the direct costs of festivals and events. These matters will be for the Interim Advisory Board to recommend on an annual basis and for the Parks and Recreation Committee to decide. However, if the City is to develop a true icon festival or event there will be a need for significant funding for its initial years of development. This could either be achieved by focusing existing budgets on it (and consequently reducing the funding for other festivals and events) or increasing the overall funding for the area.

The Committee decided to make an application at the time of the six-monthly review for \$10,000 to make an early start on the development of the one-stop shop and handbook of Council requirements and procedures. The Committee also supported the proposed increase in budgets to implement the Events Strategy over the next five years. This issue will be addressed by the Committee in the 2000/01 budget round.

- Recommendation:**
1. That the Events Strategy be approved.
 2. That the Chairman, Councillor Austin and members of the Events Strategy Steering Committee be thanked for their work in developing the Events Strategy.
 3. That a subcommittee of the Parks and Recreation Committee, to be known as the Interim Advisory Board, be appointed for the purposes outlined in the above report.
 4. That the subcommittee be made up of a maximum of eight members, including two members of the Parks and Recreation Committee.
 5. That Councillor Austin and Councillor Baker be appointed to the subcommittee.
 6. That Councillors be invited to submit the names of suitable people to be considered for selection to the Interim Advisory Board.