

## 6. CHRISTCHURCH CITY COUNCIL EVENTS STRATEGY



<b>General Manager responsible:</b>	General Manager of Strategy and Planning, DDI 941-8177
<b>Officer responsible:</b>	Alan Bywater, Programme Manager Strong Communities
<b>Author:</b>	Alan Bywater, Programme Manager Strong Communities

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To recommend the final Events Strategy (Appendix 1) for approval.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. Work has been under way during 2006 to develop an Events Strategy for the Council. Staff gained Councillor input to the brief for this work in March 2006.
3. Staff have subsequently been through a process of analysing reports and research, engaging with stakeholder groups and developing a Draft Events Strategy. The general contents and direction of the Draft Events Strategy were discussed with councillors at a seminar on 22 August 2006 and a Draft Events Strategy was approved for consultation on 21 September 2006. Consultation on the Draft Events Strategy has taken place between 22 September and 27 October 2006.
4. This report presents a Final Events Strategy for approval by the Council.
5. Forty nine submissions were received on the Draft Events Strategy. These raised a variety of issues though there were no significant or consistent themes raised.
6. Any revisions to alter or amend the Draft Strategy on the basis of the consultation needs to bear in mind the small number of submissions and ensure that the views expressed are considered in the overall context of the strategy process.
7. A number of submissions dealt with the merits of individual events, which while of value are secondary to the key focus of the strategy which is to confirm a strategic framework within which individual event programmes can develop.
8. In response to the submissions raised the Draft Events Strategy has been fine tuned to take account for some of the issues raised. The changes of most interest are:
  - Addition of an underlying principle based on diversity.
  - References to an autumn/harvest/food event and the NZ Cup and Show Week as potential icon events have been retained whilst not ruling out others for evaluation and possible development into icons. A process will be undertaken subsequent to the strategy being completed in which a range of potential events will be considered and tested, with strong input from the visitor industry, for selection to be developed as icon events.
  - Some minor rewording of the sections about creating icon events to make it clearer that the intention is to try to build on and develop existing events rather than trying to create new events for this purpose.
  - The rewording of objective 3.1 to provide a finite list of outcomes to contribute to through either supporting events specifically focused on them or by including relevant content into events with other themes.
  - Changes to the events framework to incorporate support for smaller, metropolitan, community events and the establishment of a fund to ensure there is regular support for these.
9. To achieve Objective 1.6 in the Events Strategy relating to securing major commercial concerts and events of significant benefit to the City will require funding of about \$300,000 per annum. This funding is currently not budgeted in the LTCCP and will need to be considered by the Council as part of its Annual Plan process.

10. The need for the Council to be able to make fast and responsive decisions around events funding to capitalise on short-term events opportunities is identified in the Events Strategy. To achieve this a delegation to the Events Development Manager and relevant unit manager (based on the content of the event) should be created for funding decisions of \$20,000 or less from within existing events budgets. As part of operating this delegation the views of the Strong Communities Portfolio Group will be sought to identify any politically sensitive issues. There will be regular reporting to Councillors of decisions made under this delegation so that elected members are kept well informed.
11. Events funding decisions of more than \$20,000 will continue to be made through the full Council.
12. The Council has a Festivals and Events Policy established in 1998. The adoption of the strategy will make this policy redundant, and it needs to be revoked.

#### **FINANCIAL AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

13. The Draft Events Strategy has been developed in accordance with the decision making and other provisions of the Local Government Act 2002. There has been engagement with stakeholders at an early stage in the strategy development process and a period of consultation has taken place. A summary of the feedback received is attached as Appendix 1.
14. The Council currently spends about \$2.5-3.5m per annum on events activities. This figure includes the direct expenditure, staff costs and overheads, and is spread across a number of activity management plans in the LTCCP.
15. To achieve the attached Events Strategy (Appendix 2) there will be a need to redistribute funding that is currently used to fund events that primarily fit the Metropolitan Community Events Category (in the events framework in the strategy) to enable sufficient funding to achieve the two icon events proposed. This reallocation of funding will require decisions to be made about the future funding of some well established festivals and events that have been part of the Christchurch programme for a number of years.
16. Further funding will be required to achieve Objective 1.6 relating to securing major commercial concerts and events of significant benefit to the City. It is estimated that funding of about \$300,000 per annum will be required to develop and sustain a suitable fund to attract acts of this sort. This is not currently budgeted in the LTCCP and the Council will need to consider this funding as part of the forthcoming Annual Plan.
17. The 'whole of Council' type approach identified to support the development of the icon events in Goal 1 of the strategy implies indirect costs to the organisation as it effectively means staff and other resources within existing budgets be utilised on work related to these events rather than on other areas. In a number of cases this work can contribute to a range of Council objectives as well as supporting the events concerned.

#### **STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Council:

- (a) Approve the Events Strategy (Appendix 2).
- (b) Delegate to the Events Development Manager and other relevant unit manager (to be selected based on the content of the event concerned) the power to make decisions on events funding from within existing events budgets of amounts up to \$20,000, subject to:
  - (i) Seeking the views of the Strong Communities Portfolio Group on any politically sensitive issues prior to making any funding decisions; and
  - (ii) Reporting decisions made under this delegation to the Council on a regular basis.
- (c) Revoke the existing Festivals and Events Policy (Appendix 3).
- (d) Note the proposed \$300,000 per annum to be used as a fund to attract major commercial concerts/events of significant benefit to the city, acknowledging that this funding will need to be approved through the 2007/08 amended LTCCP/Annual Plan.

## BACKGROUND ON CHRISTCHURCH CITY COUNCIL EVENTS STRATEGY

### History and Strategy Development Process

18. Festivals and events are an integral part of life in Christchurch. The City boasts a full and diverse calendar of events and festivals, including international sport and arts events, mass outdoor concerts and intimate local community celebrations.
19. The Christchurch City Council has been an integral part of the events sector in Christchurch since the early 1980's. In many ways the Council's stimulation and involvement has contributed to the development of the vibrant events industry consisting of event organisers, artists and suppliers existing in Christchurch today.
20. In 1998 the Council adopted a Festivals and Events Policy that identified the desired outcomes from the Council's involvement and in 2000 the Council developed its first Events Strategy.
21. The Council currently has a wide range of roles in events ranging from direct production and funding, through assisting organisations to bid for events through the provision of venues and assistance with the regulatory requirements associated with events. Events are funded both at a metropolitan and community board level.
22. The Council supports a range of different events through a range of different parts of the Council organisation and through companies in the CCFL group (VBase in particular). The need for a renewed Events Strategy was identified in late 2005 and was prioritised as a priority area for strategy development.
23. A brief for the Events Strategy was discussed with Councillors at a seminar in March 2006. Following that a staff group working with Ross Corbett (Tourism Resource Consultants) and Arthur Klapp (Sports Impact Ltd) developed the Draft Events Strategy. In general terms the process used has been as follows:
  - Relevant research and information documents identified and analysed. The Council has been carrying out events related research and evaluations for a number of years. These provided useful information about current and past events in Christchurch. In addition a number of published articles, research and the strategies of other centres were analysed.
  - A series of workshops were held with key stakeholder groups:
    - Sports events organisers
    - Arts and festivals organisers
    - Venue managers
    - Visitor industry representatives
    - Community board representatives
    - Council staff
    - Pacific Island people involved in events
    - Maori runanga and people involved in events
  - A number of one on one meetings have been held with stakeholder groups, as follows:
    - Christchurch & Canterbury Marketing
    - Canterbury Community Trust
    - Theatre Royal
    - Canterbury Development Corporation
    - Event promoters
    - Sponsors /potential sponsors
  - The issues identified through research and engagement with stakeholders were identified and analysed.
  - The general direction for the Events Strategy was developed by staff and shared with the Strong Communities Portfolio Group in June 2006.

- The Draft Events Strategy was further developed and responding to the views of councillors at a seminar on 22 August 2006.
- The Draft Events Strategy was approved for consultation by the Council on 21 September 2006.
- Consultation on the Draft Events Strategy took place between 22 September and 27 October 2006. The Draft strategy was circulated to interested groups and stakeholders. In addition the draft strategy was publicised through the media and Council's website. On 16 October 2006 a wide range of stakeholders were invited to events at the Arts Centre designed to raise their awareness of the Draft Strategy, as well as launching the re-branding of the Be There website.

### **Submissions and Amendments to the Events Strategy**

24. A total of 49 submissions were received on the Draft Events Strategy. These have been analysed by staff (see Appendix 3 for summary of submissions) and refinements to the strategy were discussed with councillors at a seminar on 28 November 2006.
25. The number of submissions as noted was quite low. The number of different issues raised by individual submitters was high with few consistent themes being identifiable. Consequently the changes from the Draft Events Strategy are relatively modest. The main items are as follows:
  - Addition of an underlying principle based on diversity.
  - References to an autumn/harvest/food event and the NZ Cup and Show Week as potential icon events have been retained whilst not ruling out others for evaluation and possible development in to icons. A process will be undertaken subsequent to the strategy being completed in which a range of potential events will be considered and tested, with strong input from the visitor industry, for selection to be developed as icon events.
  - Rewording of the sections about creating icon events to make it clearer that the intention is to try to build on and develop existing events rather than trying to create new events for this purpose.
  - The rewording of objective 3.1 to provide a finite list of outcomes to contribute to through either supporting events specifically focused on them or by including relevant content into events with other themes.
26. As noted at the seminar on 28 November 2006 a gap in the events framework to incorporate support for smaller, metropolitan, community events was identified through the consultation. This relates to events that have a community focus, are not located in one or other community board areas and are unlikely to meet the 8,000 people criteria for the Metropolitan Community Events category in the events support framework.
27. Events of this type often have strong community development characteristics. Consequently those seeking funding of \$5,000 or less can be considered in the Small Grants Scheme proposed in the current Community Group Grants Review, in which they will need to compete with other community events and non-events type activities for funding.
28. To accommodate slightly larger metropolitan community events alterations have been made to the events support framework (in the Events Strategy) to modify what was the 'Local Community Events' category in the Draft Events Strategy. This has been renamed the 'Community Events' category in the final version. To provide funding for this type of metropolitan community event it is suggested that a fund of \$50,000 per annum be established to complement the largely community board funding support of local events. This \$50,000 will be allocated from existing events budgets with advice from relevant staff in the Community Support Unit. This fund will operate on a rotational basis to prevent the same event being funded more than once every four years. This condition is suggested to enable the funding to be distributed across a wider range of events over successive years.
29. A final version of the Events Strategy is presented in Appendix 2 for approval by the Council.

## Connection to the Visitor Strategy

30. Work is being carried out on the Christchurch and Banks Peninsula Visitor Strategy in parallel to the work on the Events Strategy. The Visitor Strategy identifies a 'domestic repositioning campaign supporting visitor events' as a high-priority action. There is a natural synergy between the two strategies. A good calendar of events is important to support the goals of the Visitor Strategy and conversely domestic marketing campaigns identified in the Visitor Strategy are vital to support getting the city's events known both locally and nationally.

## Delegations

31. One of the consistent pieces of feedback during the engagement of stakeholders was the need for the Council to be able to make speedy and responsive decisions around events support when required. At times events opportunities emerge quickly and require a decisive response to enable the city to benefit from them. The intention to do this is included in the Draft Events Strategy.
32. To achieve this it is recommended that funding delegations decisions up to \$20,000 within the available events budgets be delegated to the Events Development Manager with the relevant unit manager (eg Sports and Recreation Unit Manager for sports events). As part of exercising this delegation the staff will seek input of the Strong Communities Portfolio Group as to any politically sensitive issues around any of these funding decisions. To ensure that Councillors are kept well informed of the decisions made under this delegation, these will be reported monthly for information.
33. Events funding decisions of more than \$20,000 will continue to be made through the full Council meeting. To enable the required level of speed and responsiveness to be achieved there are likely to be occasions in which these decisions will need to be considered by the Council as a matter of urgency.

## Major Commercial Concerts and Events

34. Objective 1.6 of the Events Strategy states; *Develop a coordinated Christchurch group with adequate funding to work with VBase to secure major commercial concerts and events of significant benefit to the city.*
35. The Council previously attempted to achieve similar aims through its contribution to the Christchurch Events Fund. The Council, CCT and a range of commercial organisations made a one-time contribution to this fund which was to be operated in a way that enabled the fund to be self-sustaining. The general approach was to invest in partnerships with concert/event promoters to enable commercial events that might not otherwise have taken place in Christchurch to happen. The expectation was that at times the fund would make profit from its investment in an event and at other times a loss, but that the profits and losses would largely cancel one another out.
36. The CEF however is considered to have been largely ineffective to date in helping to secure major commercial concerts and events. In most cases promoters have been willing to access the fund where the venture has been very risky and much less interested when the opportunity for profits is higher. The fund has suffered a number of loss making investments.
37. Staff have undertaken discussions with VBase and others about the level of incentives being offered by other centres and what might be required to attract top line international artists to perform in Christchurch as part of tours to this part of the world. Trying to pin down specific figures has been difficult. It is estimated that funding of about \$300,000 per annum will be required to develop and sustain a suitable fund to attract acts of this sort. Bearing in mind that suitable opportunities are unlikely to present themselves on a regular basis it will be important that any unspent funding at the end of the financial year is able to be accumulated in to the following year. If funding is approved staff will finalise the process and criteria for the funds operation and report these for Council adoption.
38. The \$300,000 per annum identified above is not currently budgeted in the LTCCP and should be considered by the Council as part of the Draft Annual Plan process.

## Revocation of Existing Festivals and Events Policy

39. The Council has a Festivals and Events Policy originally developed in 1998 and attached as Appendix 3. This policy consists largely of a series of outcomes or goals for the Council to achieve through festivals and events. The Events Strategy also contains a series of goals for the Council for events.
40. There is also a good deal of confusion between the Council's policies and strategies in general, with at times both covering similar ground. Staff are currently trying to develop a situation in which policies and strategies have different roles. It is suggested that policy statements of this type should be *statements of principles or the Council's position on an ongoing or recurring issue which, in order to be given effect, need to be integrated into strategies, operational planning, bylaws or other instruments as appropriate.* *Strategies in contrast are being considered high level document with a life of 10 years plus setting out vision, goals and objectives and discussing key resourcing and capability.*
41. In this instance there is a danger that the Council ends up with a policy and a strategy in the events area that provide different pictures of the Council's aims in this area. Having high level sets of goals in both the Festivals and Events Policy and the Events Strategy appears unnecessary and potentially confusing. As a result it is recommended that the existing Festivals and Events policy be revoked so that the Events Strategy can be clearly understood as the instrument guiding the Council's activity in events.