

7. DRAFT EVENTS STRATEGY

General Manager responsible:	General Manager of Public Affairs, DDI 941- 8637
Officer responsible:	Programme Manager Strong Communities
Author:	Alan Bywater, Programme Manager Strong Communities

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To recommend a Draft Events Strategy (Appendix 1) in preparation for consultation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. Work has been underway 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.
4. The general contents and direction of the Draft Events Strategy were discussed with councillors at a seminar on 22 August 2006.
5. This reports presents a Draft Events Strategy for approval by the Council.
6. To complete the Events Strategy now requires a period of consultation, a consideration of the feedback received through this process and subsequently appropriate redrafting before Council adopts the final strategy. The final strategy is due to be completed by the end of December 2006.

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

7. The Draft Events Strategy has been developed in accordance with the decision making and other provisions of the Local Government Act 2002. A period of broad consultation should now be undertaken. The decision making and other provisions of the Local Government Act 2002 which, according to the Auditor General's Office, impose significant obligations for public participation, openness and accountability in local authority decision-making. The obligation to consult may be implied in legislation or an obligation may arise out of a "legitimate expectation" on the part of the public, which is the case in this Draft Events Strategy. For years, the events industry, and many sponsors, and public groups have been a part of the Council events calendar. They will expect to have a say in the future of how their city attracts visitors and creates a vibrant city through events.
8. The Council currently spends approximately \$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.
9. To achieve the attached Draft Events Strategy 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 draft strategy) to enable sufficient funding to achieve the two icon events proposed. Significant funding will be required to develop the two events/festivals to a level at which they meet the Icon Events criteria (in the events framework). This reallocation of funding will require some difficult decisions to be made about reduced funding or non-funding of some well established festivals and events that have been part of the Christchurch programme for a number of years.
10. In preparing the Draft Events Strategy and in comparing Christchurch's performance to that of other centres, a clear need has been identified for significant domestic marketing support for events that will attract visitors to the City. It is vital that the marketing of these visitor attracting events forms an integral part of wider domestic visitor marketing initiatives led by Christchurch and Canterbury Tourism. This is one specific example of a wider need for greater domestic marketing resources identified in the Christchurch and Banks Peninsula Visitor Strategy (currently under development). The Draft Visitor Strategy will be presented to the Council for consideration in early October and will address future funding for domestic visitor marketing.

11. There appear to be two main options for funding the required marketing of visitor oriented events (as part of wider domestic visitor marketing campaigns):
 - To redistribute (further) events funding from other types of events; or
 - To utilise funding provided for domestic visitor marketing campaigns in general.
12. Currently this second option is not available as there are minimal funds available for domestic visitor marketing made available to CCT. If funds were to be made available at a later date (as part of the resourcing for the Visitor Strategy), the need to redistribute funding from other events areas (and consequently the number of hard decisions about existing events) would be reduced.
13. Further funding may well be required to achieve Objective 1.6 relating to securing major commercial concerts and events of significant benefit to the City. The Christchurch Events Fund currently exists to broadly achieve this aim. The Council, CCT and a range of commercial organisations have contributed to this fund. However, it is considered to have been largely ineffective to date in helping to secure major commercial concerts and events. A number of reasons have been identified for this and Objective 1.6 identifies the Council to work with VBase and the other organisations involved to further consider how best to secure concerts and events of this sort. The result of these considerations may be a request for further funding from the Council. It is the officers' view at this stage that it is unlikely that Objective 1.6 can be achieved without significant additional funding. Staff will provide a more definitive picture of the resourcing required to achieve objective 1.6 when the Council considers the final Events Strategy.
14. 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 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Council approve the Draft Events Strategy (Appendix 1) for consultation.

BACKGROUND ON DRAFT EVENTS STRATEGY

15. 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.
16. The Christchurch City Council has been an integral part of the events sector in Christchurch since the early 1980s. 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.
17. 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.
18. 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.
19. 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. The need for a renewed Events Strategy was identified in late 2005 and was prioritised as a priority area for strategy development.
20. A brief for the Events Strategy was discussed with Councillors at a seminar in March 2006. Since that time a staff group working with Ross Corbett (Tourism Resource Consultants) and Arthur Klapp (Sports Impact Ltd) have been working to develop 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 the key elements of it discussed with Councillors at a seminar on 22 August 2006. Key comments from Councillors at this seminar included: avoiding any duplication with VBase in relation to major concerts, further consideration of decision making delegations to include higher levels of councillor involvement, building of existing events where many people have come together (eg event in Hagley Park following the Christmas Parade), plans for the future of Classical Sparks and Starry Nights, ideas for future events (including motor sport and New Zealand Day celebrations)
21. Work is being carried out on the Christchurch and Banks Peninsula Visitor Strategy in parallel to the work on the Events Strategy. Focus Groups early in the Visitor Strategy identified the importance of successful events that attract people to come and spend time in Christchurch and Banks Peninsula to the Visitor Strategy. The need to develop an events strategy was ranked 6th of all the actions identified in the Visitor Strategy work. In particular the following items were identified in the Visitor Strategy Focus Group looking at events:
 - Develop a cultural brand for Christchurch
 - Provide coordinated events information
 - Develop and market iconic events
 - Provide three year funding for event organisers
 - Identify Christchurch/Canterbury market advantage.
 22. Close liaison has been taking place between staff working on the Events Strategy and the Visitor Strategy to ensure they are closely aligned.
 23. 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. The intention to do this is included in the Draft Events Strategy. To achieve this streamlined decision-making, processes are required including suitable delegations. These processes and delegations do not form part of the Draft Strategy, and do not require a Council decision at this time. However, the issue is noted here, to signal that Council will have the opportunity to discuss this further when the final Events Strategy is considered.
 24. Following approval of the Draft Events Strategy by the Council a process of general consultation on it needs to be undertaken. The consultation and communication strategy for the Draft Events strategy aims to have a strong marketing side to help make it as vibrant and attractive to encourage participation in the process and to convey the energy of the subject - great events for a great city.
 25. The consultation process will encompass communities, organisations and individuals with an interest in festivals and events focused on residents, as well as those with an interest in events to attract visitors. Organisations already producing events supported by the Council will also be part of this consultation.
 26. The anticipated period of consultation on the Visitor Strategy will overlap the Events Strategy consultation period. It is envisaged that the consultation on these two strategies will be dovetailed for those organisations interested in visitors and tourism. The intention will be to present a seamless approach in the documentation and presentation for these stakeholders.
 27. Consultation on the Draft Events Strategy will be completed by the end of October 2006, during which the Mayor and General Manager Stephen Hill as the champions will front consultation meetings to the events industry stakeholders, elected members, and the public - with staff support. These meetings will seem like events in themselves as they will include an audio-technical presentation that will still be useable even after the consultation to promote Council events. The public will be invited to one or two meetings (depending on response) - otherwise, the feedback form (with invitation to consultation "event") will be made available at all Council service centres, libraries, and online. As in other consultations, the Council can consider receiving oral submissions, and all feedback is taken into consideration as the Council makes its final decision on whether to approve the Events Strategy. It is intended that the Events Strategy will be completed by the end of December 2006.