

Manchester City Council Report for Resolution

Report to: Executive – 18 October 2023

Subject: Manchester – Major Event Commission

Report of: Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods)

Summary

The purpose of this report is to update the Executive on the formation of an Event Commission, which was set out as part of the Manchester Events Strategy that was adopted in 2019. The Strategy set out a vision 'To be an Eventful City' with a focus on developing a diverse, balanced and benefits-driven events portfolio driven by partnerships. The Events Strategy identified how we would re-purpose our funding to support Events and Festivals, differentiating our investment between events that are aimed principally at supporting community cohesion and animating the city and events aimed at generating significant economic value and profile for the City.

To align Manchester with global best practice in city events planning and strategy, the Manchester Events Strategy identified how the city could establish a collaborative partnership mechanism around events. This would provide a strengthened platform on which the City Council can develop its long term strategic planning and be competitive in identifying, bidding for and securing major events in the future.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:

- (1) Note and endorse the intent to form an Event Commission for the City in order to secure major events in Manchester and to bring in contributions from key partners.
- (2) Request that the Strategic Director of Neighbourhoods and the City Solicitor complete the Terms of Reference and governance arrangements for the proposed Event Commission in consultation with key funding partners.
- (3) Note the proposed budget requirement that will be considered as part of the overall 2024/25 budget options.
- (4) Delegate responsibility to the Chief Executive, the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer and the City Solicitor in consultation with the Leader of the Council to agree and secure major events through the Event Commission model.

- (5) Endorse the establishment of a project team with the Strategic Director of Neighbourhoods as SRO to develop the next phase of the creation of the Event Commission with the key strategic partners and manage the process through the Event Commission for ongoing review and approval.

Wards Affected: All

Environmental Impact Assessment - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city
Major event partners will need to demonstrate a commitment to implementing a range of sustainable event practices as part of the planning, management and monitoring of their event in order to support Manchester City Council's (MCC) Carbon reduction target. Exposure to best practice from across the world will help accelerate the City's efforts to encourage all residents, businesses and other stakeholders to take action on climate change

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments
Major Events contribute directly to Objective 3 of the City Council's approach to Equality - Celebrating Our Diversity - providing a key indicator that we will continue to support and deliver a broad range of events that promote the achievements and contributions of our diverse communities and overcome barriers to attendance and participation.

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS/Contribution to the Strategy
A Thriving and Sustainable City	Major Events play an important role within the city's economic growth strategy by attracting investment, raising the profile of the city, creating employment opportunities, and contributing to the city's resident and visitor offer.
A highly skilled city	Engagement in high-profile world-class events provides an opportunity for the local event sector to be exposed to industry best practice and new opportunities, enables local residents to learn new skills and to participate in associated creative programmes including volunteering, provides opportunities to improve talent retention in our creative sectors and creates sustainable employment opportunities across the wider event ecosystem and supply chain.
A progressive and equitable city	Engagement in sports, arts and culture through Major Events enables local residents to improve their health and wellbeing, to develop confidence

	and resilience and to learn new skills. Major events also provide the opportunity to build new diverse younger audiences from within and outside the City.
A liveable and low carbon city	Major events raise the profile of Manchester as a safe, welcoming and diverse city region with a strong cultural, sport and place offer making us one of the best places in the world to live, visit, study and invest. Working alongside international event companies provides the opportunity to develop best practice approaches to delivering sustainable events and to develop against the Council's commitment to deliver zero carbon growth.
A connected city	Major Event partners increasingly produce bespoke digital event content to support their activities which support connectivity with other places and extends the reach of their event beyond the local community.

Financial Consequences - Revenue

As part of the 2024/25 budget process approval will be sought for additional annual funding of £2m to support the events commission budget, it will be proposed that the funding will be included as a commitment against the Capital Fund and this will be funded through the growth in retained business rates income as an increased contribution towards the Event Commission. This will be included as a commitment, and the necessary approvals for this budget increase will be sought as part of the overall 2024/25 Council budget approvals. The City Council resources will be supplemented by other partnership funding to provide an annual budget that will be managed by the Events Commission and held by the City Council. Due to the nature of the budget, whilst there will be annual contributions from partners and spending will be aligned to an agreed events commissioning strategy, it will be a rolling budget that will entail any in year unused resources to be carried forward, and this may be part of the events strategy if bids are to be made for larger events that will require increased resources as part of the bidding process.

The proposed annual contribution will provide an ongoing budget for commissioning events and will reduce the need for any in year approvals for one off budget requests when opportunities have arisen. The Councils funding will be alongside funding contributions from other partners which are currently being negotiated. The setting up of the events commission budget will enable;

- Provision of event pump-prime funding which will attract wider public and private sector partnership funding – and facilitate access to wider funding sources - leveraging a minimum external investment of £4 for every £1 of funding

- Opportunities to generate net additional spend/Economic impact benefits through major events - £10 for every £1 invested as a minimum.
- Achieving National and International media reach and profile.
- Generating significant social impact for residents beyond the delivery of event itself.

Financial Consequences – Capital

N/A

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy, please contact one of the Contact Officers above.

Reports to Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee:
 Manchester Events Strategy 2019-2029 10.01.2019

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Manchester has seen a significant investment over the last two decades in delivering World-Class events starting with the 2002 Commonwealth Games. We regularly host major music and sporting events, managing the logistics of having over 200,000 visitors at our venues in a single day. This has helped develop a reputation for the city of being one of the very best visitor destinations in the World.
- 1.2 However, if we want to be a global top twenty city, we have to keep giving reasons for people to look at Manchester and major events can be both the hook for the conversation – creating a reason for visitors to come and experience us - and a positioning tool to showcase the sectors that will help differentiate Manchester’s offer in the global marketplace.
- 1.3 Manchester Events Strategy 2019 – 2029 set out a vision “To be an Eventful City” with a focus on developing a diverse, balanced and benefits-driven events portfolio driven by partnerships, which would:
 - build on Manchester’s strengths and distinctiveness,
 - improve how we effectively promote the city as a top tourism and events destination
 - position Manchester as an events leader in a global marketplace,
 - contribute to the aim of creating a livable city with improved green spaces and access to world-class sports, leisure and cultural facilities,
 - ensure benefits to the economy are achieved through jobs, visitor spend and long-term opportunities
 - ensure residents benefit from events and are engaged, feeling a strong sense of citizenship and pride in the city.
- 1.4 The Events Strategy identified how we would re-purpose our funding to support Events and Festivals, differentiating our investment between
 - a) events that are aimed principally at supporting community cohesion and animating the city – the baseline calendar of annual activity that creates animation and vibrancy.
 - b) events aimed at generating significant economic value and profile for the City – the high impact, high profile Statement Events that deliver significant visitor impact and international reach and reflect the vision and ambition of the city.
- 1.5 The City Council’s strategic approach to events to date has been successful in creating a broad annual calendar of events that continues to showcase the vibrancy of the city and some of the unique characteristics of the city region. However, Manchester’s approach has become reactive to major event

opportunities. To be competitive and delivery better value for money, Manchester needs to be more proactive in identifying and prioritising the major event targets. These should be more effectively aligned to our wider economic, social, sporting and cultural outcomes.

1.6 A best practice review of successful event cities on the global stage identified that they shared a number of key characteristics:

- Recognition that major events remain heavily reliant on public sector funding, and have a credible planned investment fund aligned to regional funding to secure and activate major events and governance arrangements with key regional partners to oversee this.
- Alignment is made with regional and national actors to build a collective funding pot and secure external funding.
- Resources are pooled to reduce costs, centrally coordinate a city region's event strategy, and maintain competitiveness.
- A wide range of alternative funding sources and capacity building strategies are utilised including the commercialization of event expertise and building match-funding and value-in-kind propositions.

1.7 Whilst major events continue to offer the strongest opportunity to showcase Manchester's events capability on a world stage, successful event cities increasingly recognise that hosting one significant major event every few years is not enough to make them truly great event hosts and the priority must be to create a calendar of annual events that keep funders, rights holders, organisers, participants and visitors coming back year after year.

1.8 To align Manchester with global best practice in city events planning and strategy, the Manchester Events Strategy identified how the city could establish a collaborative partnership mechanism – termed an Event Commission. The Commission is to provide a strengthened platform on which the City Council can develop its long term strategic planning and leverage increased resources for events that will enable accelerated investment to secure, acquire and develop signature sporting and cultural events of national and international significance.

1.9 With the ability to collectively capitalise on key industry and individual sector insight and ensure that there are strong relationships with external funding bodies and decision makers, the Event Commission will accelerate the delivery of the Event Strategy by:

- Moving away from investing as separate organisations and identifying co-investment opportunities between the partners for events.
- Securing representation and buy-in from key funding stakeholders to ensure there is a sector wide and long-term focus.
- Incrementally building and developing the approach, starting by bringing new event concepts and opportunities to Manchester from 2024 onwards.

- Developing a programme which resonates with all parts of the public, private and third sector, ensuring they have a genuine stake and role – large or small - to play in planning, securing, supporting and delivering events in the city region.
- 1.10 Acknowledging that figures are difficult to compare like for like, published reports indicate that Manchester needs to increase its investment capability in order to be competitive with comparator UK cities. Some competitor cities are less constrained by event resources and are maximizing the use of national support funding (eg Event Scotland), accommodation BID levy funding, Combined Authority Funds and other financial incentives to drive investment.

2.0 Manchester Event Commission

2.1 The City Council has been in discussions with Greater Manchester partners, the A-BID, CityCo and Marketing Manchester about the formation of an Events Commission for the City.

2.2 The approach being developed will strengthen collaboration between the public and private sector partners in Manchester and provide a viable mechanism for acquiring, investing, developing and leveraging major events to Manchester from 2024 onward. The focus will be to:

- Align Manchester's current structures and partnerships for the collective good and create an events body that is empowered and representative and can work to deliver a unified city event strategy and facilitate the long term strategic planning that is essential to attract and sustain investment
- Strengthen collaboration with the private sector which is currently underplayed to provide a more effective public-private integration model that can address weaknesses and provide a platform to effectively target new opportunities.
- Build a collective investment pot which leverages - directly or indirectly - a greater contribution from those sectors who benefit from events being delivered in Manchester
- Identify and target world circuit events that allow the city region to showcase its particular expertise and strengths as a destination
- Establish a stronger programme of a small number of high impact home-grown events - which builds over time and where the Intellectual property remains within Manchester - and support non-city-owned events to scale up and increase international and domestic visitor impact.

2.3 The Event Commission investment principles would be based on:

- Seeking to make significant (at scale) targeted investments in a small number of statement projects that will be a marker for the city region on the global

stage over the next decade - not an across-the-board uplift in funding for existing baseline events.

- Building a defined programme, built on existing strengths in Culture, Music, Sport, Innovation, Business and Conferencing.
- Providing pump-prime funding which will attract wider public and private sector partnership funding – and facilitate access to wider funding sources - leveraging a minimum external investment of £4 for every £1 of funding
- Generating net additional spend/Economic impact benefits - £10 for every £1 invested as a minimum.
- Achieving National and International media reach and profile.
- Promoting sustainable impact on the event sector ecosystem that will provide year-round benefit and facilitate measurable sector growth and utilise the event assets and facilities within the city.
- Generating significant social impact for residents beyond the delivery of event itself.

2.4 Whilst the City Council's approach to events is currently successful in creating a broad annual calendar of events that continues to showcase the vibrancy of the city, there is little doubt that the approach is reactive to opportunities rather than being proactive in identifying event targets that are aligned to wider economic and social outcomes and the funding is insufficient to meet the wider ambition. We need to be collectively smarter; have a more nuanced and differentiated offer; leverage our partnerships, grow our national and international networks and elevate our profile and influence to shape and maintain our competitive edge and support the future growth of the city-region built on people, place and prosperity.

2.5 The delivery of a selective number of statement events through an Event Commission model will lay the foundations for the initial five-year period that will take us from 2024 through to 2028 and the delivery of the recent successful UK and Ireland bid for the 2028 UEFA Euro's – for which Manchester is proposed as a key host city.

2.6 The Event Commission model will ultimately focus on event opportunities for 2 – 3 years ahead, however, the option to lay down a marker of our future intent and ambition can be achieved from the outset in 2024 – utilising national/ international profile events opportunities already in development to establish the city region firmly within the marketplace.

2.7 The City Council is already committed in 2024 to the Great Manchester Run (final year of current contract), the WOMEX music conference and showcase, Tour Of Britain 2024 (Women's Final Stage), World Para Powerlifting Championships 2024, the National Badminton Championships, Davis Cup Group Stage Tennis 2024, the British Athletics Championships and the UCI Track Champions League and the opportunity to enhance this programme and make a statement of intent against future ambition can be realised through other significant opportunities.

2.8 Additional event opportunities are already on the options plan for 2025 and beyond and The Event Commission would be the primary mechanism to identify the priority targets that should be advanced and funded, with opportunities currently in scope including NBA European Games (2025-27), UK Sport's Major Events Programme opportunities (to be aligned to 2028 LA Olympic pathway), Urban/Action Sports event properties, World Triathlon opportunities, the 2025 Women's Rugby World Cup and British Cycling event properties (Track and Road) as well as high profile national profile events such as the BRIT Awards and the MOBO Awards.

3.0 Major Event Fund - Investment Model

3.1 The City Council currently invests £2.55m per annum from the core mainstream budget to support the baseline annual programme of events, in addition a significant number of other events have been funded on either a rolling basis, as one off opportunities or on a more ad hoc basis. These have included world level events in sports such as swimming, cycling, football, etc.. as well as cultural events such as WOMEX, Manchester International Festival and cultural programmes and live site for global events such as the Olympics and the FIFA World Cup. The Events Commission will enable Manchester to regularise this approach and provide sufficient funds to reduce the requests for one-off investments that are not part of a wider strategic investment plan.

3.2 In line with the Event Strategy 2019-2019, it is advised that the Council should differentiate the c.£1.4m budget for small scale, community and civic events and the festive programme. It is proposed that work is undertaken to seek to increase the gross budget from community events through realising new income opportunities from commercial event activities.

3.3 Separately, it is proposed that existing MCC investments which are currently made into Sports Events bidding, Conferencing and Festivals – along with an initial support staff resource - are deployed as part of the Event Commission (circa £1.15m pa). It is proposed that additional annual funding of £2m is deployed from the growth in business rates income as an increased contribution towards the Event Commission. This will be included as a commitment against the Capital Fund, and the necessary approvals for this budget increase will be sought as part of the overall 2024/25 Council budget approvals. The City Council resources will be supplemented by other partnership funding to provide an annual budget that will be managed by the Event Commission and held by the City Council. Due to the nature of the budget whilst there will be annual contributions from partners and spending will be aligned to an agreed events commissioning strategy, it will be a rolling budget that will entail any in year unused resources to be carried forward, and this may be part of the events strategy if bids are to be made for larger events that will require increased resources as part of the bidding process.

- 3.4 The Event Commission would then seek to grow the core funding for major events by between £4.35m - £4.85m pa to provide a 'core' seed funding pot of £5.5m - £6.0m per annum – with the capability to roll-forward underspends in any year to meet event opportunities in future years.
- 3.5 Conversations have been held with other public funding bodies regarding them contributing to the Events Commission model for 2024 onward. These conversations have been positive, and officers will further these discussions once the Council has made a commitment to establish an Event Commission. It is anticipated that this will further increase the investment capability of the Events Commission by c.£1m-£2m per annum.
- 3.6 Support to provide additional financial contributions on an event-by-event basis has been confirmed by the A-Bid – dictated by the set-up of their event funding allocation. Engagement with other key beneficiary partners will further inform resource deployment.
- 3.7 The momentum in securing 'buy-in' from the key city, regional and national partners - including Arts Council England and UK Sport - to develop a new major event investment and delivery model in Manchester provides confidence that the overarching aim can be achieved, and the City Council should be exploring opportunities to capitalise on this from the outset in 2024.

4.0 Summary

- 4.1 The UK Event Industry is signalling a recovery to its pre-pandemic value of £70 billion pa of which £39 billion was contributed by the leisure events sector, including arts and cultural events, music events and festivals, and sporting and recreational events. At present, the City Council Events Team partners each year with around 40 event organisations in this sector to deliver or facilitate a programme of around 60 calendar events – 170 days of live events – which attracts more than 1.2 million people and generates an estimated £45m+ pa of economic impact through direct spend. The targeted investment into major events under an Event Commission model will significantly strengthen this return and drive a measurable uplift in the visitor economy.
- 4.2 A 2022 study of the eleven Edinburgh Festivals identified that these major events were underpinned by £11m public sector investment but contributed £420m to the Edinburgh economy - £620m when wider Scotland benefits were accrued - and drew in 31% of visitors from outside the country. For every £1 of public sector investment a return of c£33 was delivered, with non-ticket spending accounted for across Accommodation (51%), Food and Drink (25%), Shopping (19%), Transport and Entertainment (6%). The Manchester Event Commission model will position the city to be able to start to target a realisation of these scales of return in the visitor economy, but critically it will also deliver year-round benefits to the event ecosystem of the city region – helping to create and sustain job

opportunities, build and develop the city's specialist skills base and stimulate future investment.

5.0 Recommendations

5.1 See recommendations at front of the report.