

Report of	Meeting	Date
Deputy Chief Executive (Introduced by Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member (Strategy and Reform))	Council	Wednesday, 20 July 2022

Music in the Park 2023

Is this report confidential?	No
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Is this decision key?	Not applicable
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Purpose of the Report

1. To outline plans for next year's Music in the Park event and request a budget to allow us to book the acts in advance.

Recommendations to Council

2. To agree to create a new budget provision of £60,000 from directorate underspends and reserves to allow us to secure the acts for next year's event.
3. To note the intention to seek a waiver of contract procedure rules for the event partner UK Media & Events Ltd.
4. To note a further paper will come to council with more detailed plans and a request for further budget to allow us to make the necessary expenditure prior to receiving income from ticket sales.

Reasons for recommendations

5. To inform council of the plans to allow the necessary expenditure to be made in preparation for the event that will be held in Worden Park.

Other options considered and rejected

6. The alternative would be to not host the event, which we have rejected based on the feedback we received from the inaugural event this year and the desire to look to establish an event that attracts people to South Ribble from across the North West to support the local economy.
7. The urgency to create a budget to allow us to secure the acts means we couldn't, for example, wait until the next budget setting cycle to arrange the necessary funding.

Corporate priorities

8. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

An exemplary council	Thriving communities
A fair local economy that works for everyone	Good homes, green spaces, healthy places

Background to the report

9. We held the inaugural Music in the Park event over the Jubilee Bank Holiday weekend this year.
10. The event was one of the key projects in the corporate strategy with a view to establishing this as a signature event for South Ribble.
11. We hadn't put any plans in place for a second event until we had hosted the first event and so this report is to outline the plans going forward and decisions we need to take to make it happen in 2023.

Feedback on this year's event

12. The feedback we received from attendees was overwhelmingly positive and it provided a feelgood factor for South Ribble over the Jubilee weekend.
13. Just short of 3,000 people attended the event on Friday 3 June with visitors largely from the South Ribble, Chorley and Preston areas but this did fan out across Lancashire and the North West with attendees from across the country.
14. We carried out a survey of people who attended (we had 413 completed responses) and some of the notable feedback was:
- 61.5% rated it 10/10 for experience (88.62% rated it 8/10 or higher)
 - 97.1% said they would recommend it to a friend if we were to host the event again
 - The overwhelming sense of opinion was that people wanted the event to return in 2023.
15. While the feedback was really positive there were improvements we know we can make going forward and the main areas highlighted by visitors were:
- The cost of items from the bar and variety on offer
 - The differential between the VIP offer and general admission offer
16. The event came within the budget outlined at the July 2021 full council meeting where we projected the additional cost to the council would be £45,233 and would be funded by general reserves. The breakdown of the budget is:
- Total expenditure - £162,006
 - Income - £81,129
 - Carry over from the original event planned for 2020 - £47,600
 - Overall additional cost - £33,277

17. It is worth noting that there are still some elements of outstanding income and expenditure but we don't expect this to change things significantly and the cost should come in the budget set.
18. The other benefit to hosting the event, aside from the visitors enjoying the event is the economic impact upon the borough.
19. Using the data we have from the event and the feedback survey it is estimated the event boosted the local economy by £106,700. This data was created by using a government-backed economic impact calculator and feedback from the survey that asked how much visitors spent in the borough outside of the event.
20. A further £125,280 was estimated to have been spent at the event, part of which will have gone to local vendors, supporting the local economy and jobs.
21. In addition to this, anecdotal feedback from the Leyland Town Team was very positive with many hospitality businesses benefitting from much-increased trade associated with this event and the wider events hosted over that weekend.
22. The impact on the local economy is a key driver for the event and we will look to maximise opportunities for supporting local businesses as we develop the event in future years.

Plans for Music in the Park 2023

23. We are at the very early stages of planning for next year's event but we have already started to make contact with potential acts to determine availability as early decisions on this will be key to ensuring a quality event.
24. The types of acts we are looking at will include a mix from the 80s and 90s in line with feedback we received after the event.
25. We are looking at keeping the event at a similar time of year (May/June) but we will be led to some extent by the availability of the acts.
26. We are also looking at the possibility of extending the event to a two-day event to take more advantage of the infrastructure while it is in place.

Budget requirement

27. Given we had not taken a decision to make this an annual event until we had seen how the inaugural event performed there is no current budget provision in place going forward.
28. In order to secure the type of acts we would like for the 2023 event we will need to pay deposits upon confirmation.
29. We estimate £60,000 would be sufficient for what is required. It is proposed that this is funded from directorate underspends and general reserves.
30. We will need to request further budget provision up front to secure other elements critical to the event such as the infrastructure, marketing etc. but these can only be determined once we have a clearer idea of what acts we will be hosting.

31. Given the success of the 2022 event we anticipate the majority of the costs will be recovered through ticket sales and other income.
32. This request will come to a future council meeting with more detailed proposals and a projection of income and what the actual cost to the council would be once that is accounted for.

Waiver request

33. To deliver the Music in the Park event we need to work with a trusted provider and following the success of the first event the desire is to work with the same provider (UK Media & Events Ltd).
34. It is important we get this in place now as our event partner will be part of the process to secure the acts and determine what production would be needed for the event.
35. Until the acts are secured and format of the event is determined we will not know exactly what the amount for the waiver would be but it will be similar to this year's event and over the threshold that would trigger a procurement exercise.
36. A request will be made to waive Contract Procedure Rule 11, which requires that tenders are openly advertised both on the council's e-procurement portal The Chest and Contracts Finder.
37. For us to build on the success of the inaugural Music in the Park event and to be safe, well managed and successful, it is believed that the nature of the market for event management services has been investigated and it is in our interest to work with a trusted partner.
38. Therefore it is demonstrated to be such that granting a waiver is justifiable.

Climate change and air quality

39. The work noted in this report does not impact the climate change and sustainability targets of the Council's Green Agenda and all environmental considerations are in place.

Equality and diversity

40. A full impact assessment will be done as we agree the format of the event and we will build on feedback from this year's event.
41. The range of marketing techniques will be used to attract a diverse audience with consideration for how accessibility can be maintained for all parts of our community.

Risk

42. The main risk in what we are requesting in this report is the loss of any deposits paid subject to the event not going ahead.

43. We will mitigate this by agreeing suitable contracts with any acts and ensuring adequate insurance provision is in place ahead of the event.

Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

44. The forecast for the cost of the recent Music in the Park event is noted in point 16 above at just over £33k. The final elements of income and costs are currently being finalised, but these are not expected to change the figures significantly and as such the cost is within the parameters agreed by Council in July 2021.

45. Given the success of the June 2022 event it is proposed to host an event in 2023; this is subject to future approval and creation of a budget to support this. However, in order to secure the acts for such an event, deposits must be paid now and therefore a budget of £60,000 is requested, to be paid for in the interim from underspends across the directorate and reserves.

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

46. The proposed use of a waiver to appoint the event partner is noted and would seem reasonable on this occasion. However, if the event is to annual it would be more appropriate to undertake a procurement exercise for the years 2024 onwards with the potential to do an appointment for a number of years from that event.

47. The remainder of the report is agreed and has no legal implications that would prevent the adoption of the recommendations.

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