

# BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

## REPORT TO CABINET

28 MARCH 2017

### REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES

#### THE PORTHCAWL ELVIS FESTIVAL 2017

#### 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet of progress made by the organisers of the Porthcawl Elvis Festival in association with members of the Bridgend Events Safety Advisory Group (ESAG) for the 2017 event and to identify any associated cost implications for the Council.

#### 2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 This report supports the following corporate priorities:

- Supporting a successful local economy
- Smarter use of resources

#### 3. Background

- 3.1 Many destinations are staging events and festivals as part of, or an enhancement to, what they offer residents and visitors. A strong events programme can increase footfall and overnight stays with associated local expenditure, give a destination a higher profile, and contribute to regeneration of local communities. Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) has developed a reputation for designing and delivering a programme of innovative and 'quirky' events – a key feature of the destination's brand.
- 3.2 The Bridgend County Events Strategy aims to assist event organisers and venues by providing a supportive environment, which facilitates the creation, production and development of events that build on the assets and brand values of BCBC.
- 3.3 The Porthcawl Elvis Festival was first established in 2004 and since then has reportedly grown into the largest Elvis festival in the World, overtaking the more established events in Collingwood, Canada and Parkes, Australia.
- 3.4 Every September approximately 30,000 visitors attend the Festival with feature events taking place in the Porthcawl Pavilion and the Hi-tide, and over twenty venues in and around the town forming a fringe. The event regularly achieves national and international media coverage and assists in raising the profile of Porthcawl as a tourism destination.
- 3.5 Research commissioned by Welsh Government in 2013 and carried out by Kinetic Cubed Ltd estimated the economic impact of the event to be £6.7 million.

#### **4. Current situation / proposal.**

- 4.1 In 2015 research was carried out in conjunction with researchers from Cardiff Metropolitan University in recognition of some of the challenges that an event of this size and nature places on the infrastructure and functioning of a town like Porthcawl, with a desire to identify potential improvements to maintain the positive economic impacts and reduce any negative social or environmental impacts. Also in 2015 South Wales Police carried out a review to consider the requirements for safety and policing at the event.
- 4.2 In response to the recommendations arising from these pieces of work, a pilot, multi-agency approach was established. This involved the development of a series of coherent and joined up actions, supported by BCBC and South Wales Police, including: a new approach to traffic management, including road closures and traffic orders; enhanced street and beach cleansing services; toilet facilities; on-site presence of emergency services; and street pastors.
- 4.3 This approach led to the 2016 event being considered by South Wales Police as the most successful in recent times with the fewest recorded incidents. In turn this not only improves the quality and safety of festival goers, making them more likely to return to Porthcawl again, but also assists in reducing any negative impacts on local residents and the local environment.
- 4.4 It is therefore proposed that this approach be taken again for 2017 with a value in respect of service provision of £20,000 being committed by BCBC to carry out work in relation to the following:
- Traffic management
  - Health and Safety
  - Street and beach cleansing
  - Public order
- 4.5 The funding will not be provided to the event organisers, rather it will be allocated to relevant BCBC departments and ESAG partners to increase the service provision during the event to ensure that the success witnessed during the pilot approach is continued. This will aim to maintain the reported positive economic impact and continue to assist with minimising any social and environmental concerns.
- 4.6 The exact allocation of the resource will be determined in agreement with ESAG partners, in particular South Wales Police, and any recommendations coming from the 2017 event review will be taken on board when considering support options for 2018.

#### **5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules.**

This report has no effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules

#### **6. Equality Impact Assessment**

There are no Equalities issues associated with this report.

#### **7. Financial Implications.**

- 7.1 The financial implication will be a £20,000 contribution from the Strategic Events 2017/18 budget. This will be allocated in relation to traffic management, health and safety, street and beach cleansing and public order in agreement with ESAG partners.
- 7.2 In addition to financial support already agreed by Cabinet for The Urdd Eisteddfod (May 2017) and Seniors Open Championship (July 2017) the support to the Porthcawl Elvis Festival will result in the Strategic Events budget being fully allocated for 2017/2018 financial year.
- 7.3 Through combined financial support for these three strategic events in 2017, BCBC will be assisting in attracting a combined total of approximately 175,000 visitors to the County Borough and generating approximately £14.8 million of economic impact.

## **8. Recommendation.**

8.1 Cabinet is recommended to:

8.1.1 Note the positive economic impact of the Porthcawl Elvis Festival on the local economy;

8.1.2 Delegate authority to the Corporate Director Communities as nominated lead Director to enter into further discussions with the Porthcawl Elvis Festival organisers and ESAG partners; and

8.1.3 Approve the allocation of £20,000 from the Strategic Tourism Events Fund, to put in place measures to ensure safe and effective management of the event.

**Mark Shephard**  
**Corporate Director Communities**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> March 2017**

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## **Background documents**

None