



Report To: Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder
Lead Officer: Director, Health and Environmental Services

12 October 2017

PARKLIFE: REVIEW OF 2017

Purpose

1. To review the Parklife 2017 event.
2. This is not a key decision.

Recommendations

3. It is recommended that the Portfolio Holder:
 - (a) notes the evaluation of and feedback from Parklife 2017, and/or
 - (b) support officers to obtain corporate sponsorship for future events, and/or
 - (c) makes suggestions regarding Parklife 2018.

Reasons for Recommendation

4. Parklife has been running since 2009 and is the main corporate event put on by the Council. The aim of Parklife is to offer local people the opportunity to try out a range of sports, for example, paddle boarding and canoeing, with a view to them taking up the activity and remain in good health.

Background

5. The Council has been hosting a Parklife event (or similar) since 2009. Originally held as a countdown to London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, the event has grown from a modest open day, attracting 2,000 people, to become the biggest family fun day held in the district and a distinctive flagship event for the Council, with over 5,000 visitors regularly attracted.
6. Historically, and including the last four year period, the event has been organised in partnership with the Cambridge Sports Lake Trust, with other partners also involved year to year.
7. The event has historically aimed to offer local people the opportunity to try out a range of sports, for example, paddle boarding and canoeing, with a view to them becoming more active and healthy.
9. The event is widely advertised via South Cambs Magazine, sports centres, schools, local press and through social media channels.
10. As part of the Olympic Legacy it was proposed that the Parklife event should continue on an annual basis. In September 2013 the Portfolio Holder for Planning Policy and Localism considered the future of Parklife for the following three year period. The commitment to continue the event for a further three years (subject to review) was made by the Health and Environmental Services Portfolio Holder in September 2016.

12. Parklife delivery has been supported by SCDC staff providing stewarding services, with staff able to reclaim hours through flexi-time with the agreement of line management, Cambridge Sport Lakes Trust staff and volunteers, young volunteers, elected members and a small number of local people.

Considerations

13. In terms of cash contributions, the level of sponsorship achieved for the 2017 event represented a decrease from the previous year. The reasons for declining sponsorship cited by businesses and funds approached were
 A) Ineligible as a Local Authority
 B) Parklife ineligible as not a “one-off” event
 C) Economic uncertainty
14. It should however be noted that obtaining sponsorship is demanding in terms of officer time and requires adequate investment in branding to reflect sponsor input, so is not cost free.
15. The total cash sum received in sponsorship amounted to £200 received from Springboard Pro Ltd.
16. While cash sponsorship levels for 2017 were low, officers built upon existing relationships and created new partnerships with local businesses and organisations to deliver high quality activities that meet Parklife objectives, introduce residents to new local facilities to continue leading healthy lifestyles, and promote local businesses.
17. “In kind” arrangements with Milton Tesco, Wildly Curious, Cambridge United, Right Side Up Circus Cambridge SUP Club, and local Girl Guiding leaders delivered thousands of pounds of activities at no cost to SCDC.
18. As per 2016, half of all water sports were made available for pre-booking in order to minimise queueing time for visitors, and increase choice. Pre-booking is subject to an administration fee of £5 per paddleboard and/or kayak (individual), and £8 per canoe (group).
19. Of 129 water sports sessions available for pre-booking, 85 were successfully booked. Total income generated by pre-booking was £477. Had all available sessions been pre-booked, this could have generated a further £255. Streamlining the booking process should increase the uptake of this offer.
20. See Table for SCDC income and expenditure for Parklife 2014-2017.

	2014	2015	2016	2017
Income				
Sponsorship	£500	£2150	£5350	£200
Grants	£250	-	£1850	-
Trader receipts	£495*	£305*	£180	-
Pre-booking	-	-	£431	£477
Expenditure	£10,686	£10,828	£11,685	£8,538
Balance	£9,441	£8,127	£3,369	£7,861
	* marquee was provided at a cost of £600			

21. The income/expenditure summarised in Table 1 relates only to the Council's own costs and does not take into account those incurred by our partners in supporting Parklife. Cambridge Sport Lakes Trust also invests a large amount of time and resources in the run up to the event and on the day.
22. A number of elected members have been generous in their time, providing stewarding support to the event. Parklife has also enjoyed strong support from the Chairman (who, for the past three years, has officially opened the event), thereby contributing to raising the Council's profile through the event.
23. A significant contribution was made in 2017 by young volunteers, with the South Cambs Schools Sports Partnership Young Sport Leaders programme providing an important source of young volunteers over this period.
24. The activities provided at Parklife which have proved consistently popular are the water sports of paddle boarding, kayaking and canoeing, with climbing walls, cycling, bouncy castles and archery also featuring highly as top rated activities.
25. In response to the 2016 visitor survey, the water sports offer was expanded for Parklife 2017, providing 100 sessions for paddleboarding, 56 sessions for kayaking and 92 sessions for canoeing, a doubling of the provision for this activity on the previous year, meaning over 350 individuals were able to try a water sport in 2017. There remains further capacity on Todd's Pit to expand the water sport offer - the 2016 visitor survey again returned an interest in greater availability, with all the available sessions offered in 2016 taken up.
26. The popularity of Parklife with visitors remains high; visitor survey returns show that of 233 respondents 49% rated the event as 'Excellent' and 45% rated it as 'Very Good'.
27. The need to capitalise on the opportunity to promote the South Cambridgeshire District Council brand was identified in the 2013 Parklife Report. Improvements have been made to ensure greater brand prominence both in pre-event publicity and on the day, through signage and event publications. The promotional materials need to also recognise the contribution of Cambridge Sport Lakes Trust in delivering the event.
28. The visitor survey of Parklife 2017 indicates that Milton Country Park is rated highly as a venue, with 99% of visitors stating that they will continue to visit the park in future.
29. In 2017 greater emphasis was placed on promoting opportunities for the activities on offer to be taken up following the event, with a visitor guide published to advertise these opportunities. This guide included information relating the local businesses and activity providers who supported the event with sponsorship in kind.
30. In response to more specific questioning, the 2017 visitor survey found that 85% of respondents hoped to continue to pursue activities experienced at Parklife. Cycling, climbing and watersports were the activities most people said they hoped to continue.
31. The visitor survey revealed the origin of visitors to be 64% South Cambridgeshire District, 22 % Cambridge City, 14% elsewhere.
32. Given the known costs of safely mounting an event of this scale, with a strong core offer of key visitor attractions (climbing walls, archery, water sports, cycling and inflatables) and necessary logistical support (First Aid, additional toileting facilities)

the baseline budget of £10,000 is a realistic figure – less than this figure the quality of the event in its current form could not be guaranteed.

Options

33. The Portfolio Holder could:
- (a) note the evaluation of and feedback from Parklife 2017, and/or
 - (b) support, or decline to support, officers to obtain corporate sponsorship for future events, and/or
 - (c) make suggestions regarding Parklife 2018.

Implications

34. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered: -

Financial

35. Officers will continue to strive to gain sponsorship/income to the value of £7,500 per annum, however, this is underwritten within existing budgets to the value of £10,000 to reduce risk.

Legal

36. There is no ownership by the Council of the Parklife brand, with many festivals throughout the country promoted under this moniker. The Council has no control over alternative “Parklives” emerging in this district, which has attendant risks of reputational damage.

Staffing

37. Parklife is our main corporate event. The management of the event is led by the Sustainable Communities and Partnerships Team, with significant support from the Communications Team in executing the Communications Plan and the in house production of promotional materials. However, the delivery of the event, if it is to continue in its current format, requires input across all directorates, with staff being asked to support the event as stewards.

Risk Management

38. The Parklife event is risk managed via a robust Management Control Document, co-developed with the Cambridge Sports Lake Trust and brought before the Safety Advisory Group. In 2015, 2016, and 2017 health and safety was coordinated by the Council’s Joint Health, Safety and Emergency Planning Manager. If agreed, future Parklife events would be similarly managed.

Equality and Diversity

39. In developing Parklife events, care is taken to ensure that all facilities and as many elements of the offer as can be practicably achieved are open to visitors of all abilities. Should a further three year program be agreed, this would continue to be embedded in Parklife event development.

Consultation responses

40. Participant views are included in the main body of the report.

Effect on Strategic Aims

Aim 1 – LIVING WELL

41. Parklife has potential to support our communities to remain in good health, and for the district to become a healthy place to live for all.

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