

ITEM No ...9.....

REPORT TO: FAIR WORK, ECONOMIC GROWTH AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE – 9 JUNE 2025

REPORT ON: DUNDEE CITY EVENTS

REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CITY DEVELOPMENT

REPORT NO: 173-2025

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report seeks approval of the proposal for the Council to deliver two signature events in Dundee as part of the Christmas and St Andrew's Day celebrations. In addition, it seeks approval of a sourcing strategy for a concession contract that will allow additional activities aimed at families in the city centre over the four weeks leading up to Christmas.

2 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- a approves the proposal for Council delivered events in 2025 focusing on Christmas and St Andrew's Day;
- b approves the sourcing strategy offering a concession contract opportunity for festive City Square activities;
- c delegates authority to the Executive Director of City Development to award the concession contract to the successful bidder following a tender process carried out in compliance with the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015; and
- d notes that due to resources being focused on Christmas and St Andrew's Day, the Dundee Food Festival will not take place in 2025.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The delivery of the Christmas and St Andrew's Day events will be funded by a combination of £145,000 from the City Development Revenue budget for events, and £60,000 from the Budget Investment Proposals approved at the meeting of the City Governance Committee on 27 February 2025 aimed at events that will positively contribute to Dundee's economic growth through increasing footfall and visitors to the city.

4 BACKGROUND

4.1 Christmas, and the festive season more widely, are an important time for families and businesses in the city. For the community and families, it is a time to come together and celebrate. For many businesses, it provides much needed income which can financially help towards buffering quieter periods during the year.

4.2 To assist in city centre footfall over this period Dundee has in recent years offered activities over the four weeks leading up to Christmas. These activities have encouraged people to come into the city centre; helped to create a festive feel; and supported retail and tourism/ hospitality opportunities.

- 4.3 The Dundee Hooley is now a well-established event in the Winter calendar growing in popularity and size since 2022. The most recent evaluation of the event confirms this. It is therefore proposed to continue to celebrate St Andrew's day with the Dundee Hooley.
- 4.4 In recent years, rather than a one-off switch on event at the start of the festive Christmas season, a programme of activities has been developed to extend footfall over this period. Feedback from the public, however, suggests the Christmas switch-on event of lights on a large tree in the City Square is viewed as a valued event in the calendar. It is proposed to reintroduce this event as the city's signature Christmas event. This will be a full day festive event with activities and entertainment throughout the day, culminating with the lights switch on countdown in the early evening. These events will be funded by the City Development events budget along with the £60,000 from the Budget Investment Proposal.
- 4.5 Separate to these events, it is proposed to offer the opportunity to other parties to use City Square throughout December for activities. No financial support will be offered by the Council to support this element.
- 4.6 Subject to approval, the tender will be published on 12 June with a return date of 15 July. Interested parties will be notified of outcome by the end of July 2025.
- 4.7 The opportunity will be made available through a concession contract to be published on Public Contracts Scotland (PCS) for the provision of activities in the weeks leading up to Christmas.
- 4.8 The activities should be affordable to Dundee families and include a community focus to encourage the wider Dundee public to visit the city centre, alongside visitors.
- 4.9 A brief for this time specific specialist outdoor event will outline the types of activities bidders might consider providing, which will be developed as part of the sourcing strategy.
- 4.10 The activities shall include (but are not limited to) festive children's events, interactive activities, entertainment, rides and market stalls.
- 4.11 The first Dundee Food Festival took place in 2024 with a total budget of £57,000. Around 17,000 people attended, and 60 businesses participated over the course of the weekend. The evaluation was generally positive. However, due to the proposal to focus the available events budget on the Christmas period, the Food Festival will not be delivered in 2025. Officers will explore whether a sustainable model of delivery of the event in future can be found and if so, report this to Committee.

5 SOURCING STRATEGY SUMMARY

- 5.1 The procurement process will be carried out in compliance with the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015. The Procurement Team can signpost organisations to the Supplier Development Programme who can provide training, information and support if needed.

6 RISK ANALYSIS

- 6.1 There are four standard risks in any procurement and for public sector regulated procurements, a fifth is added, that of the procurement exercise itself breaching the public contract regulations and leaving the Council open to a legal challenge.

Description of Risk	Actions to be taken to manage Risk
Commercial Risk	The concession opportunity will be published on Public Contracts Scotland (PCS) which will provide full details of the opportunity and expectations for events

Description of Risk	Actions to be taken to manage Risk
	management to ensure the safe delivery of the community events.
Technical Risk	Bidder experience, capability and capacity is assessed as part of the Tender Evaluation. Bidders will require to hold minimum levels of employer's and public liability insurance cover.
Performance Risk	Bidders will be expected to fulfil the full range of health and safety actions to ensure safe delivery of the events as well as a providing an enjoyable consumer experience.
Contractual Risk	Conditions of occupation and use will form part of the Contract Conditions. DCC will promote effective supplier performance.
Legal Risk – where a procurement is found unsound in law, through the public procurement rules	The concession contract opportunity will be advertised on Public Contracts Scotland (PCS). The Procurement Process will be carried out in compliance with the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015.

7 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 This report has been subject to the Pre-IIA Screening Tool and does not make any recommendations for change to strategy, policy, procedures, services or funding and so has not been subject to an Integrated Impact Assessment. An appropriate Senior Manager has reviewed and agreed with this assessment.

8 CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 The Council Leadership Team were consulted in the preparation of this report.

9 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1 Dundee Hooley Evaluation Report 2024
9.2 Dundee Food Festival Evaluation Report 2024

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