

Executive

Preparation for the 2012 Olympics - Tourism and Other Potential

11 January 2010

Report of Strategic Director Environment and Community

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report considers the opportunities associated with the 2012 London Olympics that can be delivered for the benefit of residents in Cherwell.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:

- (1) Respond to the opportunities provided by the 2012 Olympics as outlined in the report.
- (2) Establish a Member and Officer working group, under the Chairmanship of the Portfolio Holder for Customer Service and ICT (with special responsibility for tourism) to oversee and co-ordinate the detailed actions of the Council to maximise the sports, economic and community opportunities in the district arising from the 2012 Olympics
- (3) Consider the options with regard to funding levels and sources.

Executive Summary

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The 2012 London Olympic Games and Paralympic Games are expected to create a huge wave of media and public interest nationally but particularly throughout the South East. The Games represent the single most significant opportunity in our lifetime to develop our tourism base, involve our communities, drive up sports participation and to inspire our young people to believe in the power of the Olympic ethos, to be the best that they can be. There is expected to be a massive increase in sporting participation in the

lead up to, during and after the event.

- 1.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee met on the 13 October and noted that the 2012 Olympics presented a unique opportunity for the District to increase participation in sport and the arts and to maximise the economic benefits locally. However, the Council would need to take positive action in 2010 or it would be too late.
- 1.3 The Committee agreed that this was a significant issue which needed to be properly and professionally managed. They felt that, notwithstanding the budgetary and resource constraints facing the authority, the Council should identify someone to take the lead on promoting and co-ordinating the Council's interests in the 2012 Olympics in order to maximise the potential benefits to the district. The Committee resolved that the Executive be recommended to appoint a project manager and/or project team, to oversee a project to deliver against the sports, economic and cultural opportunities in the district arising from the 2012 Olympics, taking account of budgetary and resource constraints.

Proposals

- 1.4 In order to maximise the economic and social benefits for the District, a number of initiatives could be undertaken. Firstly, to "badge" much of the Council's normal relevant activities and services under the 2012 Olympic banner to raise awareness and to encourage a sense of involvement locally.
- 1.5 Secondly, to support local business opportunities from tourism and visitors to the district by developing a comprehensive web based district guide giving details of local attractions, accommodation details and providers, "how to" guides for those staying locally and visiting Olympic events, and highlighting the benefits of staying in North Oxfordshire as part of the overall Olympic visit.
- 1.6 Thirdly, to support the voluntary sector organisations, especially sports clubs to increase their capacity, accessibility and remove barriers to participation and help deal with the expected massive increase in interest in sport and volunteering, particularly from young people, during the lead up to, during and after 2012.
- 1.7 A notable strength of the local tourism sector is the national and international brand of Oxford which will be a significant influence in the dispersal of visitors outside London. This is recognised throughout the county and should always form the basis of collaborative work where there is common benefit. Cross county joint working should therefore be encouraged and supported by the Council in relation to Olympic visitor promotion and management as a means of encouraging visitors to Cherwell.

- 1.8 Lastly, to promote a local events and activities within the District. This will help raise awareness, interest and involvement in the 2012 Olympics that lead to increasing participation in sport, help build civic pride and a sense of place using the arts that encourages a feel good factor and celebratory atmosphere.
- 1.9 In accordance with the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, a Member and Officer working group should be established to oversee the detailed proposals contained in this report. In order to support these proposals, it will be necessary to either fund as an additional activity or divert existing internal resources. Given the significant financial constraints facing the Council now and in the future, diverting existing internal resources is proposed.
- 1.10 Additional funding support will be required for the voluntary sector if local organisations are to increase their capacity to meet the increased demand for sports participation particularly from young people. It is proposed that approved grants budgets in 2010/11 and 2011/12 be reviewed with this in mind plus external funding from local and national sources be sought.

Conclusion

- 1.11 The Council should respond to the opportunities the 2012 Olympics provide in terms of increased sports and arts participation particularly by young people, a stronger voluntary sector, wider partnership working and benefits to the local economy from additional visitors to the District. The Council is well placed following its investment in its sports facilities to accommodate the expected increased demand for sporting activity. However, the voluntary sports sector has a significant part to play and needs support to respond to the expected increase in participation.

2 Background Information

- 2.1 The Olympics and the Paralympics is the world's biggest sporting event and the London 2012 games gives people across the country the opportunity to get involved and receive the benefits that this event will bring.
- 2.2 It is important to ensure that we as a local authority ensure that we tie in to the Olympic agenda as it is a once in a lifetime opportunity to make people enthusiastic about sport and to increase participation. This will be consistent with the Council's priority associated with healthy lifestyles. The Council must also ensure that this is we planed effectively to ensure a sustainable future and not a "cliff edge" at 2012.
- 2.3 The Council should be working with local partners to ensure that Cherwell doesn't miss out on the economic, cultural and sporting opportunities the Games will offer. The challenge is to identify the range of events and activities that will bring lasting benefits for the district from the world's largest sporting festival including; strengthening the support available to local athletes, increasing access to sporting facilities and developing local business opportunities. This will give us the opportunity to increase the number of people participating in sport, providing more opportunities for volunteers, encouraging young people to get involved in Olympic related activities and events and supporting the local economy.
- 2.4 In 2008, tourism directly supported 5,127 jobs in North Oxfordshire; there were 5,645,000 day trips and 403,000 overnight stays; and tourists spent £255m. This level of activity equates to a total economic impact of £294M. North Oxfordshire is ideally based to capture visitors wishing to see the Oxford, Stratford, Warwick Castle as well as shop at Bicester Village (which is currently the most popular destination outside London for Chinese tourists). The latest projections indicate that there would be 900,000 more visitors to Britain and in the period 2007 – 2017 some £2.1 billion additional income to tourism businesses.
- 2.5 In the South East region, only Oxfordshire and East Sussex had yet to embark on some activity to capture benefits from the 2012 Olympics and that marketing to promote the area needed to begin in 2010 if it was to be successful in capturing the potential opportunities. Officers are now working with the Oxfordshire Economic Partnership, Tourism South East and neighbouring local authorities on initiatives to promote North Oxfordshire as part of the internationally recognised 'Oxford' brand. It should be noted that these activities need to be considered in the context of the Council's service priorities where tourism did not score highly. As a result, in 2009 the tourism budget was cut by £100k and the marketing budget was halved to £6.5k (with a further reduction to £4k in 2010).
- 2.6 The 2012 Olympics also provides the opportunity to increase participation in physical activity and volunteering. Many of the current initiatives the Council promotes can be delivered under the 2012

banner to give them more profile and encourage more people to live healthier lifestyles. These include the Go Active initiative, sports development programmes, and the Youth Activator project.

- 2.7 There are many central Government and regional initiatives and strategies which can support local activity in relation to the 2012 Olympics. The main ones are located in Annex 1 and indicate that, as the Council has locally, there are many activities, some with funding sources, which we can be aligned to the Olympics 2012.

3 Overview & Scrutiny Committee's View

- 3.1 Presentation from the Portfolio Holder for Customer Service and ICT (with special responsibility for tourism). The Committee made the following observations and suggestions;

- The Olympics theme could be carried across into a number of other Council services and activities such as the annual Britain in Bloom competition;
- It was important to remember that there would be a large number of UK visitors and marketing should not concentrate on just the overseas element;
- The Council should focus its marketing at rail stations in London and Birmingham and other transport hubs;
- The Council should work with the Town and Parish Councils to promote community based activities with an Olympic theme (village fetes, school sports days etc);
- The Council should consider what support and advice should be given to private residents who might consider offering B&B during the Olympics;
- The Council should ask what the residents want, although tourism is a low service priority they may not feel the same way about the Olympics;
- The Council should work with the voluntary organisations to promote the opportunities for people to volunteer at the Olympics.

- 3.2 In conclusion, the Committee noted that the 2012 Olympics presented a unique opportunity for the District to increase participation in sport and the arts and to maximise the economic benefits from tourism. However, the Council would need to take positive action in 2010 or it would be too late.

- 3.3 The Committee agreed that this was a significant issue which needed to be properly and professionally managed. They felt that, notwithstanding the budgetary and resource constraints facing the authority the Council should identify someone to take the lead on promoting and co-ordinating the Council's interests in the 2012 Olympics in order to maximise the potential benefits to the district.

- 3.4 The Committee resolved that the Executive be recommended to appoint a project manager and/or project team, to oversee a project to deliver against the sports, economic and cultural opportunities in the District arising from the 2012 Olympics, taking account of budgetary and resource constraints.

4 Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

- 4.1 Building on the deliberations and suggestions of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to maximise the economic and social benefits for the district, a number of initiatives could be undertaken. Given that the Council is facing severe financial constraint, a means of supporting the Olympics opportunities is through using and diverting existing resources for this purpose. In this respect, the following can be considered.
- 4.2 Firstly, to “badge and label” much of the Council’s normal relevant activities and services under the 2012 Olympic banner to raise awareness and to encourage a sense of involvement locally eg sports activities, floral designs, arts activities, local events, visitor information services, economic development activities etc.
- 4.3 Support for local business opportunities from tourism and visitors to the district will be relevant by developing a comprehensive special web based district guide giving details of local attractions, accommodation details and providers, “how to” guides for those staying locally and visiting Olympic events, and highlighting the benefits of staying in North Oxfordshire as part of the overall Olympic visit. Further work in conjunction with the Council’s Economic Development and Regeneration team should also be undertaken to maximise the opportunities.
- 4.4 The work of the voluntary sector team will be particularly important, to support third sector organisations, especially sports clubs to increase their capacity, accessibility and remove barriers to participation and help deal with the expected massive increase in interest in sport and volunteering during the lead up to and during 2012. Some officer and Council service support can be provided for this but there is likely to be a need for some additional funding support to the voluntary sector to be really effective. Again, due to the severe financial constraint the Council is facing, this may most appropriately addressed through reviewing current approved funds to support the voluntary sector rather than increasing Council funding. The search for match funding externally both locally and nationally should also be pursued.
- 4.5 A series of special events and activities within the district can be promoted to help raise awareness, interest and involvement in the 2012 Olympics that lead to increasing participation in sport, help build civic pride and a sense of place using the arts that encourages a feel good factor and carnival and celebratory atmosphere.
- 4.6 Working in partnership with other local and neighbouring authorities and organisations can lead to opportunities with greater effect. This should be

pursued especially with county-wide partners in relation to the strength of the national and international brand of Oxford which is expected to be a significant factor influencing where visitors to the Olympics go outside London.

- 4.7 In order to support these proposals and to reflect the degree of elected Member interest, it is suggested that the Council sets up a Member and officer working group to oversee the detailed proposals contained in this report. This should be led by the Portfolio Holder for Customer Service and ICT (with special responsibility for tourism) and supported by the Head of Recreation and Health. Three further elected members are suggested along with selected relevant officers.

The following options have been identified. The approach in the recommendations is believed to be the best way forward

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| Option One | To support the recommendations as detailed in this report as a means of securing local benefit from the opportunities presented by the 2012 Olympics. |
| Option Two | To provide further Olympics support in the form of project management, marketing and voluntary sector grant aid resources. |
| Option Three | Not to support any of the recommendations in this report and to ignore the effect locally of the 2012 Olympics. |

Consultations

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| The Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee | The views of the Committee are reflected in the report |
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Implications

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| Financial: | The recommendations contained in this report are to use current approved resources for this purpose. This reflects the significant financial constraint the Council is facing in 2010/11 and beyond.
Comments checked by Joanne Kaye, Service Accountant, 01295 221545 |
| Legal: | There are no specific legal implications arising from this report
Comments checked by Liz Howlett, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, 01295 221686 |
| Risk Management: | There are no specific risk management implications |

arising from this report

Comments checked by Rosemary Watts, Risk
Management and Insurance Officer, 01295 221566

Wards Affected

All

Corporate Plan Themes

Priority 1 - Cherwell: A district of opportunity

Priority 2 – A safe and healthy Cherwell

Executive Portfolio

Councillor Nicholas Turner

Portfolio Holder for Customer Service and ICT (with Special responsibility for tourism).

Councillor George Reynolds

Portfolio Holder for Environment, Recreation and Health

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Annex 1	National Strategies Relevant to the Olympics 2012
Background Papers	
None	
Report Author	Paul Marston-Weston, Head of Recreation and Health
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National Strategies Relevant to the Olympics 2012

Strategy	Body	Outcomes
<i>Be Active Be Healthy, 2009</i>	Central Govt. Department of Health.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New framework for delivery of physical activity aligned to sport up to 2012 & beyond. A fitter & healthier nation. • Contribution to legacy action plan target of 2 million more adults active by 2012 • Funding allocated from the Department of Health of £3 million in 2009/10 to maintain the seamless co-ordination of physical activity alongside sport.
<i>Sport England Strategy 2008 – 2011</i>	Sport England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aspiration to develop a world leading community sport system as a key legacy from the 2012 Olympics in London. • Develop “Sport for Sports Sake”. • Commission National Governing Bodies (NGBs) to deliver the key outcomes of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increasing participation in Sport, 2. Sustaining participation in Sport and tackling drop off post 16, 3. Developing talent. • Engage County Sports Partnerships (CSP) to deliver these outcomes.
<i>Before, during & after: Making the most of the London 2012 Games, 2008</i>		<p>Key relevant promises:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make the UK a world leading sporting nation. (by offering all 5-16yr old 5 hrs of sport per week, helping 2 million people to be more active by 2012 = 1% increase year on year. 2. Inspire a generation of young people. 3. Demonstrate the UK is a creative, inclusive & welcoming place to live in, visit and for business.
<i>Playing to Win: A new era for Sport, 2008</i>	Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A million more people in regular sport & two million more physically active by 2012. • Challenges that Sports Development face up to 2012. • Local authorities are best placed to know the needs of local populations and are directly accountable for meeting them. • Each area has set local targets.

<i>Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives: 2008</i>	Cross Government Strategy for England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be the first major nation to reverse the rise in obesity & overweight people in the population. • There are five themes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children, healthy growth & healthy weight. 2. Promoting healthier food choices. 3. Building physical activity into lives 4. Creating incentives for better health 5. Personal advice and support.
<i>Aiming High for Young People: A ten Year Strategy for Positive Activities, 2007</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transform Leisure time opportunities, activities and support services for young people in England. • Benefits of positive activities for young people.
<i>Cultural Olympiad – encouraging participation & celebrating the cultures that make up the UK</i>	London 2012 & Arts Council England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • leave a lasting legacy that improves cultural life; • showcase excellence in the performing arts and creative industries as well as sport; • introduce young people to the UK's many artistic communities and those from around the world; • heighten economic regeneration and encourage tourism in the UK through the work of the creative industries; • incorporate the Olympic values of 'excellence, respect and friendship' and the Paralympic vision to 'empower, achieve, inspire'.

Regional Strategies Relevant to the Olympics 2012

Strategy	Body	Outcome
<i>A Destination Management Organisation for Oxford and Oxfordshire – proposal for discussion.</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision - The area will be renowned for its programme of events and festivals, and will be a key destination outside London for international visitors to the 2012 Olympics and beyond • Developing and delivering a holistic tourism strategy that enables Oxford and Oxfordshire to better position itself and attract targeted markets. Engaging with regional promotion / planning towards the 2012 Olympics.

<p><i>Compete, Create, Collaborate for a world class performance 2007</i></p>	<p>South Partnership 2012</p>	<p>Partnership working group produced a plan which had the following aims.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support a regional increase in participation in Sport and active recreation. 2. Promote Sporting Excellence
<p><i>Create, Compete Collaborate, 2009</i></p>	<p>Creative Junction & local authorities</p>	<p>Every young person in the South East to have the opportunity to participate in a project with another young person from a competitor country between now and 2012.CCC is inspired by the 2012 Games and aims to increase opportunities for every young person in the region to engage with peers, internationally, and leave a legacy of young people with broadened horizons, new skills, and enhanced global awareness and connectedness.</p>
<p><i>Get Active South East, 2008-2012.</i></p>	<p>South East Regional Public Health Group</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision is “People of the South East enjoying healthy, active lives from early years to later life”. • Four key areas. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Activity for All: improving access & service for disabled, disadvantaged & least active. 2. Active Start: setting children on an early active path, within an active family. 3. Active Communities: promoting the benefits of active living & improving the physical environment. 4. Active Workplaces: increasing active travel & healthy workplace activity.
<p><i>Cherwell Recreation Strategy 2007 - 2012</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop opportunities for local sports clubs and others to get involved in relevant 2012 Olympic opportunities. • Help provide creative opportunities that have definite health benefits.