

CABINET

International Youth Games 2009 9th December 2008

Report of the Chief Executive

PURPOSE OF REPORT				
This report sets out the options in respect of proposals for Lancaster to host the International Youth Games in the summer of 2009.				
Key Decision	X	Non-Key Decision		Referral from Cabinet Member
Date Included in Forward Plan	1 st December 2008			
This report is public				

RECOMMENDATION

That consideration be given to the options set out in the report.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The International Youth Games originated in the 1970s when the Danish town of Aalborg held a sporting event to which Lancaster City Council was invited to send a small team. This has developed over the years and Lancaster now participates in a four yearly games cycle involving Almere (Holland), Aalborg (Denmark) and Rendsberg (Germany). Lancaster District last hosted the Games in 2005 and has participated in the Games in Almere in 2006, Aalborg in 2007 and in Rendsberg this year.

2.0 Background

2.1 A decision was taken in June 2008 (Minutes No. 7) to host the Games in Lancaster in 2009 as follows:

- (1) *That the International Youth Games be held in the Lancaster District in the Summer of 2009 and that the arrangements for the Games be delegated to the Head of Democratic Services and the Head of Cultural Services within the budget allocated.*
- (2) *That an invitation for four civic delegates to attend from Twin Towns and two Civic Delegates from Associate Towns be extended on behalf of the City Council.*

2.2 Since the decision was taken progress has been made with the early planning stages and invitations have been issued.

2.3 When the Games were last held in Lancaster discussions were held with the other host nations which resulted in a general agreement that the 'civic' element of the event should be more closely integrated with the sporting elements and attempts

were made to ensure that there was time available for visiting Mayors to view the Games rather than organising separate events. This has resulted in a scaling down of the civic component of the visits by Aalborg and Rendsburg and is the intention for Lancaster City Council in 2009.

- 2.4 The towns of Almere, Aalborg and Rendsburg have also attempted to widen participation to other cultural events and there have been some dancing and artistic aspects included over the past 3 years. This too has been considered during the planning of the Games and suitable volunteers identified to organise a cultural element to the event.

3.0 Proposals

- 3.1 In view of the impact of the current economic situation on the Council's finances for 2009/10, Members of Cabinet have requested a report on the potential savings, consequences and implications of cancelling the Games proposed for 2009. Since there is the potential for a motion to be moved to rescind a decision of Cabinet made within the past six months, a formal notice of motion signed by a quorum of Cabinet will be required to this effect in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 18.1 in order for any motion other than endorsing the previous decision to be moved.

- 3.2 The current position is:

- 3.2.1 The dates have been set for the Games – the Sporting and Cultural delegations are due to arrive on Sunday, 26th July, ready for competition to begin during the morning of Monday, 27th July. The opening Ceremony for the Games will be held in the evening of Monday 27 July 2009. The Games will close during the afternoon of Friday 31st July and it is expected that participants will leave either that evening, or during the day on Saturday, 1st August 2009. This is a slightly more concentrated programme of sporting events removing the 'free' day when entertainment for the young people had previously been provided. The Civic guests have been invited from Tuesday 28th July to Friday 31st July 2008, reducing the civic presence from five days to three.

- 3.2.2 Participants have been invited from all the Council's Twin Towns (Aalborg, Lublin, Perpignan, Vaxjo and Rendsburg) and a smaller number from our Associate Towns of Viana do Castelo and Almere. Total numbers invited are 325 (compared to 350 in 2005).

- 3.2.3 A Civic Delegation of four has also been invited from each Twin Town, and two from our Associate Towns.

- 3.2.4 Volunteer leaders have been identified to enable the following sports competitions to be offered as well as a dance element – the final list would be dependent upon sufficient competitors from other countries taking part: Athletics, Badminton, Golf, Judo, Karate, Rowing, Swimming and Table tennis.

- 3.3 Replies have been requested by 14th December – to date acceptance of the invitation has been received from Aalborg, Perpignan, Rendsburg and Vaxjo.

- 3.4 Although initial enquiries have commenced in relation to accommodation for example, no financial commitments have as yet been entered into.

4.0 Details of Consultation

4.1 Local sports and dance clubs have been consulted over their possible participation in 2009 and volunteer leaders identified. Should Members wish to pursue option 3, the sports clubs would need to be consulted to ensure that they were willing to continue their participation in a revised Games.

5.0 Options and Options Analysis (including risk assessment)

5.1 Option 1 is to continue with the arrangements currently underway to hold the Games in the Lancaster District in the summer of 2009, utilising the identified budget of £55,000.

5.2 Option 2 is to cancel the proposed Games in the Lancaster District in 2009, saving the budget of £55,000.

5.3 Option 3 is to continue with arrangements to hold the Games in the Lancaster District in the summer of 2009, but reduce expenditure by cancelling the civic invitations and making cuts in other areas of expenditure.

5.4

	Option	Advantages	Disadvantages/Risks
1	Continue with the arrangements currently underway to hold the Games in the Lancaster District in the summer of 2009, utilising the identified budget of £55,000.	Honours the invitations already extended to the Council's Twin Towns and meets the expectations of local sports clubs.	Does not assist in the pursuit of the £1.8m savings required to balance the budget for 2009/10.
2	Cancel the proposed Games in the Lancaster District in 2009, saving the budget of £55,000.	Saves £55,000 in the 2009/10 budget	Having already issued invitations to the Games, the Council's reputation with our Twin Towns may suffer both from a civic perspective but also in the disappointment for young people who will already be preparing themselves to compete. Similarly, there are expectations from young people in this district who will be taking part in trials and working towards competing in the Games in their home country.

3	Continue with arrangements to hold the Games in the Lancaster District in the summer of 2009, but reduce expenditure by cancelling the civic invitations and making cuts to other areas of expenditure.	Provides some savings in the 2009/10 budget. Honours the invitations already extended to the Council's Twin Towns and meets the expectations of local sports clubs.	Having already issued invitations to the Games, the Council's reputation with our Twin Towns may suffer from a civic perspective but this will be mitigated by continuing with the Games in a reduced format to enable the young people to participate. Does not provide the full £55,000 saving which would be achieved by cancelling the Games.
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6.0 Officer Preferred Option (and comments)

6.1 There is no officer preferred option. Work to prepare for and organise a Games in Lancaster has been included in the Business Plans for both Cultural Services and Democratic Services.

7.0 Conclusion

7.1 The International Youth Games are an important part of the City Council's continued commitment to twinning. Holding the Games in the Lancaster District provides an opportunity for the area to be showcased to our Twin and Associate Towns, and also allows the opportunity for us to meet with our Civic counterparts and maintain these important relationships. It also provides children of twinned towns the opportunity of visiting the Lancaster District and the experience of living with a local family as well as enabling the participation of young people from this District.

7.2 Nevertheless this is a discretionary activity which the Council is not required to fund and is a potential source of savings in order to preserve essential services.

RELATIONSHIP TO POLICY FRAMEWORK

Priority Outcome 16 in the 2008/09 Corporate Plan includes to deliver a Civic Programme which celebrates local heritage and benefits our communities.

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT

(including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)

Should it be agreed to host the Games in 2009, all plans will take account of issues surrounding diversity, community safety and the welfare of children, and risk assessments will be carried out where necessary.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Option 1

£55,000 is included in the 2009/2010 budget at this stage and it is intended to tailor the event to ensure that it is delivered within that budget. Sponsorship will be sought to offset some costs, and a contribution from participants will be set at an appropriate level once more detailed plans are underway.

Option 2

Provides a saving of £55,000 in the 2009/10 budget. The effect of this decision may be that Lancaster is not invited to future Youth Games abroad, or Council may also take the decision not to participate in future. This would provide ongoing savings in future years although these vary dependent on the varying cost of travel to different venues – current projections are for £8,000 in 2010/11 and £12,000 in 2011/12.

Option 3

Detailed planning of the Games for 2009 has not yet been undertaken and the estimated budget at this stage has therefore been based on the £45,000 actual spend in 2005 with an amount added for inflation over 4 years. Members will recall the circumstances in 2005 when the Council took over the organisation of the Games at very short notice and was therefore required to honour previous commitments made and had little time to source the most cost effective delivery. Having examined the accounts from 2005, it is anticipated that the following savings could be made without unduly affecting the delivery of the Games for the young people:

- Cancel the civic element – saving £7,800
- Accommodate all young people with families (cannot be guaranteed, but efforts have already commenced to ensure that this is the case) – saving £7,500
- Fly only those flags available – Council purchased all new flags and flagpoles in 2005, these should be re-usable reducing costs to set up costs only (estimated at £500) – saving £2,000
- Re-use logo from 2005 – saving costs on commissioning, purchasing and framing prints for sale – net saving £2,400
- Use the Council's website for publicity and results rather than an independent website – saving £600

Total saving identified above = £20,300

In addition by reducing the length of the Games by a day and the numbers of participants (already implemented) it is possible that other costs will be proportionately reduced resulting in the anticipated increase in costs of £10,000 since 2005 being reduced.

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The S151 Officer has been consulted and would advise that any options for savings should be considered in context of the Council's financial prospects and its corporate objectives and priorities for the future.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct legal implications in relation to this report.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

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