

Cabinet

18 April 2012



Evaluation of the 2011 Lumiere Festival

Report of Corporate Management Team

Rachael Shimmin, Corporate Director Adults Well Being and Health
Ian Thompson Corporate Director Regeneration and Economic Development

Councillor Neil Foster , Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Economic Development, Heritage and Culture

Purpose of the Report

- 1 This report is to inform Cabinet of the evaluation work which has been undertaken on the 2011 Lumiere programme and to suggest the next steps to be taken to ensure that a complete picture is available to members when they consider whether to commission a Lumiere programme for 2013

Background

- 2 Following a successful event in 2009, Artichoke (the producers of Lumiere) were invited to plan and programme a new Lumiere festival to be staged in November 2011.
- 3 The County Durham Economic Partnership Board, at its meeting of 23rd September 2010, allocated funds from the performance reward grant (a source of grant funding which is no longer available) to cover the fee to be paid to Artichoke by the County Council. The contractual sum was a contribution to the cost of the festival and Artichoke accepted a contractual obligation to raise additional funds. The contract was signed in October 2010 to reflect the long lead in time necessary to plan and implement a festival of this scale.
- 4 As part of the contract Artichoke agreed to commission an independent evaluation of the programme and to provide that evaluation to the Council. The report was commissioned from Miller Research Evaluation Consulting, an organisation with a proven track record in this field who have evaluated other Durham festivals. It is shown in full here at Appendix 2
- 5 The report makes it clear that the festival was a considerable success. It was a much more ambitious programme than the one delivered in 2009 and more than twice as many people visited in 2011 as had done on the previous occasion. The evaluation report was based on responses from a total of approximately 1,500 visitors and businesses. The views were collected using a variety of approaches (predominantly surveys) in the weeks before during and after the festival. Officers from Visit County Durham and the Council have reviewed the business elements of the survey work and believe that it

presents a compelling, accurate and comprehensive picture which can be relied upon without the need for supplementary research.

- 6 The calculations in the report are based on a standard prescribed methodology to allow for comparison between different events. Some of the main findings include:
 - 82% of respondents were extremely positive about the festival (8 out of 10 in 2009)
 - The value of media cover generated was worth £2,250,000 (£700,000 in 2009) and the festival received positive national and local coverage in all forms of media including television coverage as far away as Vietnam and Australia
 - The Total economic impact was £4,333,628 (£1,535,232 in 2009)
 - The County Council's return on investment was 983%
- 7 Artichoke were commissioned to work on this event because of their recognised expertise in this field and their substantial track record. While Artichoke accepted responsibility for the programming and delivery of the festival it was, of necessity, a joint enterprise involving substantial engagement within the Council but also with a variety of other stakeholders in Durham. All those involved took very seriously the health and safety requirements to ensure that everyone was safe throughout the experience. The very detailed event plan, crowd management plan and extensive risk assessments were all approved by the Durham Safety Advisory Group (SAG). The SAG is an independently chaired multi-agency group formed from the relevant statutory bodies and relevant stakeholders.
- 8 It was understood from the outset that a festival of this sort cannot take place without some disruption to everyday life and that a level of disruption is tolerable when the County and its residents receive such substantial returns from the event. In addition it is accepted by all involved that the 2011 festival was a victim of its own success and that on the first night, for a short period, the crowd management arrangements were not working in the way that had been planned. Following the festival a very detailed debriefing event was held by the Safety Advisory Group which made a number of recommendations in relation to the planning and management of any future events of this nature.
- 9 The evaluation report, the SAG debriefing, council officers and Artichoke all acknowledge that there are suggestions on how to improve a future festival which need active debate and drawing to a conclusion. Those matters cannot progress, however, until a decision has been made on whether to commission a festival for 2013

Next steps

- 10 The Durham Tourism Management Plan 2012 – 2016 proposes to continue holding 'signature events' on an annual basis. In 2009 and 2011 the 'signature events' have been two very successful light festivals and there is a growing groundswell of opinion that a further light festival should be commissioned for 2013. In order to achieve that outcome a number of steps need to be taken:

- The evaluation of the 2011 event will be reported to the County Durham Partnership and to the Durham Economic Partnership and consideration will be given to finding a source of future funding for a further event in 2013. A sum of money from within the DCC budget and within Arts Council funding has already been identified as potentially available but additional sums will need to be found from Durham County Council. Artichoke would again be contracted to raise a significant part of the funding. The contractual contribution in 2011 was £400,000. The total cost of the event was around £1,000,000 or £1.5m if in-kind costs are included. Artichoke raised the balance of these funds from a wide range of sources including the European Commission Culture fund, the Arts Council & a variety of trusts, sponsors and donors. They also cross subsidise the cost of the festival by not taking a management fee and using their existing infrastructure
- A summary of this year's success will be circulated to Durham businesses, County Durham Area Action partnerships and stakeholders including those who provided funding, in cash or in kind, together with a request to indicate whether they would support commissioning a festival for 2013.
- When the Council commissions services it ordinarily procures them through competitive processes. The County Council's contract procedure rules recognise, however, situations where this is not possible because of the uniqueness of a particular product or service provider. If the Council decides that it does wish to commission a Lumiere programme for 2013 then it will need to agree a contract with Artichoke who will need, in turn, to be willing to undertake the commission. As was true in 2010 the detail will need to be negotiated and a senior officer will be appointed to lead on those discussions with Artichoke.

Recommendations and reasons

- 11 Cabinet is asked to accept this report and to agree to the undertaking of the next steps set out above.
- 12 Cabinet is recommended to receive a final report on whether to commission a Lumiere event for 2013 at its meeting in July 2012

Background papers

The Durham Tourism Management Plan 2012-2016

Contact: Nick Whitton Head of Commissioning Tel: 0191 383 4188

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance - The DCC contribution for 2011 was a contribution of £400,000 and a source of funding will need to be identified for 2013 if the Lumiere festival is to be re-commissioned

Staffing – A Senior officer will need to be appointed to negotiate the contract with Artichoke. The festival relies on a significant commitment of officer time for its delivery

Risk - Risk will be managed as part of the detailed events management plan which will be subject to the oversight of the Durham SAG

Equality and Diversity/Public Sector Equality Duty – The festival will be the subject of an equality and diversity impact assessment

Accommodation – There are no direct implications for accommodation

Crime and Disorder – The risk of crime and disorder will be managed through the events management plan

Human Rights - Not applicable

Consultation – A summary of the successes in 2011 will be circulated to AAPs and other stakeholders

Procurement – If a decision is made to commission a 2013 Lumiere event a contract waiver will be recorded

Disability Discrimination Act - Not applicable

Legal Implications – Final contracting arrangements will be subject to oversight from the County Council's solicitors