

Manchester City Council Report for Information

Committee:	Citizenship and Inclusion Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 8 February 2012
Report of:	Jacquie O'Neill, Head of Business Improvement and Partnerships
Subject:	Manchester Pride: Overview of the event's social and economic impacts and Manchester City Council's funding support

Purpose of Report

This report provides an overview of the financial contribution of the Council toward supporting Manchester Pride, and the economic, social and reputational benefits that the Pride event delivers to the city.

There will follow a presentation delivered by John Stewart, Chief Executive of Manchester Pride, to look at how Manchester Pride supports the reduction of discrimination based on sexuality and how its successes can be built upon.

Recommendation

Members of the committee are requested to note the contents of the report and the presentation by Manchester Pride, and provide comments.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Manchester Pride is Manchester's annual Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) festival, held over the August bank holiday weekend.
- 1.2 Manchester Pride comprises several elements; the Big Weekend, the parade, the Candlelit Vigil and since 2003, the festival has spanned across ten days with a series of art, culture, heritage, debate, sport, music and film events celebrating the LGBT community.
- 1.3 Pride events take place throughout the world, and Manchester has now hosted Pride events for over 20 years.

2. The Council's Financial Contribution to Manchester Pride

- 2.1 Prior to the implementation of the Council's 2011 – 12 budget savings proposals in response to the Comprehensive Spending Review, Council events funding of approximately £32,500 was directed toward supporting the Manchester Pride event.
- 2.2 This level of events funding was provided in the context of an overall strategy that would see the event becoming self-sustaining, which has now been achieved (see 3.1.8).
- 2.3 In order to support the Council's requirement to find savings of £170m over two years, a reduced level of Council events funding of £12,000 was directed towards supporting the 2011 Manchester Pride parade.
- 2.4 This funding was directed toward the activity that takes place on the highways of the city centre and which is free for all to access.
- 2.5 No funding was provided to support the Big Weekend event that takes place in the Village, which is primarily funded by Manchester Pride's ticket income and other funding sources.
- 2.6 The City Council applies charges to the event, both within the village and for the parade, that are either fixed (i.e. road closure orders, licence fees) or are for the provision of services that the event organiser chooses to use from the City Council. It should be noted that the event organiser is entitled to use other contractor service providers for these purposes (i.e. cleansing).
- 2.7 As with any other event organiser in the city, Manchester Pride has the responsibility for the development and the delivery of the event.

3. Manchester Pride – Benefits to the City

3.1 Economic Benefits

- 3.1.1 Research undertaken in 2006 into the economic benefits of Manchester Pride identified that the event generated an estimated £17.5m in revenue for the city. With the growth of the event and increased ticket sales since then, the event's current economic benefit is estimated to be in the region of £19m.
- 3.1.2 Manchester Pride is keen to work with the Council and Marketing Manchester to develop more meaningful annual assessments of economic impact to inform future decision making.
- 3.1.3 Manchester Pride is marketed internationally and subsequently attracts visitors from across the world year on year. More locally, the event has not only attracted members of the LGBT community across the UK, but has also proved very popular with families and Mancunians.
- 3.1.4 Visitor figures for the event (based on tickets sales for the Big Weekend) have been maintained since 2008. These figures indicate an average attendance of approximately 43,000 visitors per year.
- 3.1.5 These figures are further boosted by visitors to the free aspects of the event (i.e. the parade and vigil), although these additional numbers have not been monitored.
- 3.1.6 As a consequence of these figures, Manchester's hotels, bars and restaurants enjoy an influx in trade, with many establishments launching special promotions to capitalise on the event's popularity.
- 3.1.7 The revenue estimates at 3.1.1 also include the impact of increased visitor spend on Manchester's wider tourist offer.
- 3.1.8 Manchester Pride's ticketing policy is set in order to cover the costs of the festival, to assist with raising funds for charities and offer value for money. The finances raised through ticket sales are bolstered by commercial sponsorship, making the event predominantly a self funding project.

3.2 Social Benefits

- 3.2.1 A core aim of Manchester Pride is to raise money for LGBT and HIV charities in Greater Manchester. In 2011, Manchester Pride distributed over £105,000 to both small and large projects in the region.
- 3.2.2 Many of the smaller groups which are supported by Manchester Pride are unlikely to remain viable without the organisation's funding.

3.3 Reputational Benefits

3.3.1 Manchester Pride is a pillar event in the city's event calendar and is well regarded nationally and internationally for its contribution toward celebrating LGBT communities and issues.

3.3.2 The event strengthens Manchester's proud reputation of celebrating diversity and equality.