

Committee(s)	Dated:
Culture, Heritage & Libraries Committee Streets & Walkways Sub Committee	31 January 2022 15 February 2022
Subject: Special Events on the Highway	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	3, 10
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Director of the Environment	For Decision
Report author: Ian Hughes, Deputy Director, Transportation & Public Realm	

Summary

This report outlines the major special events planned for 2022 and provides Members with an opportunity to consider & comment on the appropriateness of those events, taking into account their nature, scale, impact and benefits.

There continues to be a relative stable core of 12 regular sporting, ceremonial or celebratory events likely to take place on the City's streets in 2022. These core events are highly professional and extremely well-run, generating a range of charitable, reputational & promotional benefits to the City and delivered with the minimum of fuss or complaint.

Around that core programme is a variety of one-off events that aim to support the City's cultural, visitor and transport agendas as well as the aims & objectives of key City partner organisations and community groups.

Looking back at last year, the continuing impact of the COVID 19 pandemic meant that a number of events were either cancelled or deferred until later in the year, but the improving situation as 2021 progressed meant that from July onwards, events safely & successfully returned to the City's streets. The impact on this year's events of the Omicron variant is currently uncertain but officers will continue to work with event organisers to address these risks as the year progresses

Finally, this report also notes for Streets & Walkways Sub Committee the event-related 'benefits in kind' granted to charitable & other organisations in 2021.

Recommendation(s)

Members are recommended to:

- Agree to support the regular core events programme listed in paragraph 7 and detailed in Appendix 1.
- Agree to support the additional one-off events outlined in paragraphs 16-26, subject to final assessment regarding safety, licencing, traffic orders (where required) and impact on local stakeholders.

Members of Streets & Walkways Sub Committee are also recommended to note the Benefits in Kind listed in Appendix 4.

Main Report

Background

1. This report provides an update to Members on the programme of on-street special events currently planned to take place in 2022. Although some events are more commercial than others, most are organised with the intention of raising money for charitable causes or promoting specific City strategies and Mayoral initiatives. Each event aims to deliver some form of social, financial or community benefit, but the City's long-term approach has been to ensure that the impact on residents, businesses and traffic must not be disproportionate.
2. Planning for each major event takes place well in advance in order to minimise their impact on others and to co-ordinate them into the wider programme of works taking place on the City's streets. Officers from the Environment Department lead this process with the assistance of a variety of departments including Town Clerks, Remembrancers and the City Police.
3. The Executive Director, Environment Department has delegated authority to write traffic orders for roads to be closed for special events, so Member approval for each major event is not required. However, there are established guidelines for officers to follow in determining the suitability of events (including the process for appropriate political oversight), enabling the provision of advice for organisers and setting out the procedure for consents & approvals.
4. Key to the process for supporting large scale events remains the Safety Advisory Group (SAG), which examines event proposals from the organiser to seek assurance that the event will be safely managed. The City's SAG is chaired by the City's Strategic Security Director, and comprises various City divisions including Highways, Environmental Health and Contingency Planning, as well as the emergency services, Transport for London and other interested parties.

COVID 19

5. The impact of the COVID 19 pandemic meant that a number of events in last year's calendar were either moved to later in the year or were cancelled altogether. However, the improving situation as the year progressed meant that from July onwards, events such as the Great City Race, London Landmarks Half Marathon and the London Marathon were able to take place, albeit with reduced numbers, staggered start times and other safety precautions deployed.

6. Recent developments around the Omicron variant have again thrown doubt on the ability of mass participation events to be held safely, particularly during the winter and early spring, but event organisers continue to take their responsibilities seriously to ensure that participants and spectators can be kept safe and the most recent government guidance is followed.

Events Calendar 2022

7. The City's on-street event programme has developed a consistent rhythm (Covid notwithstanding), with a core programme of 12 substantial, well-run and popular events becoming established over time. Full details behind each of these events can be found in Appendix 1, but they can be separated into three distinct categories:

Sporting

- Winter Run – Sunday 13 February
- London Landmarks Half Marathon (Tommy's) – Sunday 3 April
- Vitality 10k Race – Bank Holiday Monday 2 May
- Ride London Cycling – Sunday 29 May
- Great City Race – Tuesday 19 July
- London Triathlon – Sunday 7 August
- Bloomberg Square Mile Run – Thursday 22 September
- London Marathon – Sunday 2 October
- Royal Parks Half Marathon – Sunday 9 October

Ceremonial

- Cart Marking – Saturday 16 July
- Lord Mayor's Show – Saturday 12 November

Celebratory

- New Year's Eve – 31 December

8. This core group of events is organised by experienced and professional event management companies with well-established routes, detailed communication plans and effective working relationships built up over time with the three key highway authorities for Central London, namely the City of London, Transport for London and Westminster City Council.
9. The success of events such as the London Marathon, the Great City Race and the London Landmarks Half-Marathon mean that the City remains an attractive location for mass participation charitable 'fun run' type events. These events generally remain popular with the public & participants, they are safely managed, and they provide the City with a range of secondary benefits, including publicity & footfall, visibility on the international stage, connections to the charitable sector and (in some cases) help promote the City's own events and programmes.

10. Event organisers are aware that they do not have a permanent agreement to hold their events on City streets, but as can be seen in Appendix 3 (which sets out the established events assessment matrix), these events are typically considered 'Green' in terms of delivering a positive balance between the benefits they bring against the impact they cause.

11. In terms of the core 12 events, the key points to note for 2022 are:

- Last year saw some events move to later in the year due to the pandemic. This year the Winter Run and London Landmarks Half Marathon revert back to their usual dates in February and April respectively, but the London Marathon has stayed with an autumn slot for one more year.
- The London Landmarks Half Marathon are considering an additional 10k event using the same route and road closures but starting at roughly half distance. This is expected to enable them to increase the number of participants by including places for those who do not want to attempt the longer distance but without increasing the impact on the local community. However, for 2022 this addition may be a virtual event.
- RideLondon has moved to a new date of Sunday 29 May and will accommodate the general public free cycle day, the UCI Women's World Tour race and the 100-mile challenge through London and Essex on the same day. The finish point for the latter event is expected to be at Tower Bridge, subject to agreement with the City (as owner & operator of the bridge) and Transport for London as Highway Authority.
- Due to concerns raised previously about the road closures required to facilitate Cart Marking during the week, the event took place last year at a weekend. The event is similarly being planned for a weekend this year with the Carmen monitoring what impact this has on its popularity.

12. As Members & officers have noted before, with 12 such events now on the City's calendar, there is always the potential for diminishing returns from adding similar events and there can be 'event fatigue' from residential groups given the same streets are often used for more than one event. In addition, there are limited officer resources to help deliver these events and sufficient room must be maintained in the calendar to ensure business as usual activities such as utility street works, resurfacing and crane operations can still be accommodated that can't otherwise take place during the week.

13. Assuming mass participation events can safely continue going forward, officers have received two new proposals for additional mass participation events, suggesting the City remains an attractive location for organisers to seek to hold such activities. Discussions on both events are at a very early stage and key Members will be consulted should these proposals become feasible. However, the need to ensure a more tangible benefit to the City from hosting such events, whether in a policy, cultural or financial context, may become a greater consideration should further mass participation events be thought appropriate.

One-Off Events in 2022

14. Away from the core event programme outlined above, there is usually a degree of year-on-year fluctuation in terms of the number and extent of additional one-off special events. Due to their one-off nature, these events typically require a much greater degree of effort to facilitate & enable without the benefit of previous experience or necessarily a well-structured learning curve.
15. In previous years, these sorts of events have included:
- International sporting events such as the Tour de France (2014) and the International Association of Athletics Federations marathon (2017)
 - City-led events such as the Smithfield 150 celebrations (2018), Lunchtime streets initiatives and various cultural activities & promotions
 - Events coordinated with key partners such as the Afghanistan Commemoration at St Paul's Cathedral (2015), the Commonwealth Heads of Government Visit (2018) and Car Free Day (2019)

Platinum Jubilee 2 June 2022

16. In 2022 Her Majesty The Queen will become the first British Monarch to celebrate a Platinum Jubilee. Throughout the year Her Majesty and members of the Royal Family will undertake a variety of engagements to mark this historic occasion culminating with the focal point of the Platinum Jubilee Weekend in June 2022.
17. There will be an extended Bank Holiday from Thursday 2 June 2022 to Sunday 5 June 2022 which will include public events and community activities as well as national moments of reflection on the Queen's 70 years of service. Beacons will be lit in each of the capital cities of the Commonwealth, there will be a Big Jubilee Lunch to encourage communities to come together and a Platinum Jubilee Pageant involving more than 5,000 people combining street arts, theatre, music, circus and carnival.
18. However, the key focus for the City will be a Service of Thanksgiving on Friday 3 June 2022 at St Paul's Cathedral, and whilst the details of the celebrations are not yet finalised, the City Corporation will be involved in the planning and preparations. Members will be updated separately on the Platinum Jubilee activities when more is known.

Car Free Day / Lunchtime Streets

19. In 2019, Car Free Day was a well-received event aimed at promoting improved air quality and celebrating walking & cycling, delivered in conjunction with the Greater London Authority and Transport for London. World Car Free Day this year is 22 September, but dates for a London specific event are not yet known. A final decision on the nature & scale of the event is likely to depend on funding being confirmed by the GLA.
20. The Lunchtime Streets initiative pre-pandemic proved highly popular, with St Mary Axe and Chancery Lane closed to provide a traffic free environment and

help promote air quality and road safety improvements. During Summer 2021, smaller scale rolling one day a week events during August and September on Carter Lane and Cheapside still allowed businesses the benefit of closed streets to help with their recovery.

21. It is intended to continue the Lunchtime Streets initiative in 2022, working more closely with Cultural Events Team and the City's various Business Improvement Districts. Carter Lane and Cheapside are again potential locations, along with a further street in the City Cluster / Fenchurch Street area. Funding for these initiatives is still dependent on the outcome of funding decisions with Transport for London.

Queen's Baton Relay

22. Next year the UK will host the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham and as part of the celebrations leading up to this competition a baton (the Queen's Baton) will travel around the world visiting commonwealth countries. On its return to the UK it will pass through London during the first weekend of June and the relay organisers have asked if the City can 'host' the baton in the Square Mile on Saturday 4 June.
23. As part of the Baton Relay celebrations, it is proposed to organise a community focused event in Paternoster Square, likely to include sport and cultural performances such as demonstrations of elite urban sports eg skateboarding, BMXing and break dancing. Members of your Committee will be updated once plans have been finalised, together with the Public Relations Sub Committee of the Policy and Resources Committee as the body responsible for all sport engagement matters within the City Corporation.

National Fitness Day

24. Early discussions are taking place on a possible cycling event taking place in the Square Mile linked to National Fitness Day on 21 September 2022. The event would be focused on encouraging people to take up physical activity and promoting these events but could also look at how active travel is important within this concept. Potential partners for the event could include the GLA, ukactive and the Worshipful Company of Wheelwrights. An event company has not yet been approached on the proposal as discussions around its feasibility are in their early stages.

GLA Lighting Event

25. The GLA are continuing to look for ways to animate the London economy in the hope that outdoor events will still be possible over the next few months. As a result, they have approached the City to host a coordinated night-time lighting event at a small number of locations across the Square Mile. At the time of writing, this event is not yet confirmed and is subject to both GLA funding being made available and it being safe to hold given Covid, but it has already attracted a degree of political support given the City's wider recovery agenda and could take place across a series of nights in February or March.

City Corporation's Outdoor Arts Programme

26. Cultural events will continue to be delivered by the Cultural and Visitor Development team through the Outdoor Arts Programme. The programme will align with the new Destination City Strategy, with events playing a significant role in the City's recovery. The programme will welcome back workers and attract new audiences to the City, increasing footfall and spend. The programme is yet to be confirmed but may include the need for occasional closures for activation activities to help promote recovery.

Financial Implications: Benefits in Kind

27. The City Corporation has typically sought to facilitate certain aspects of these charitable activities by waiving particular administrative fees & charges as a benefit in kind. The Director has delegated authority to do this on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the Member-approved guidance that sets out the likely circumstances where this can be done.
28. In particular, the need to ensure appropriate cost recovery to offset wider budget constraints has ensured a significant degree of challenge is applied to requests to waive fees, whilst officers are also aware they must seek to ensure parity and even-handedness in providing benefits in kind to similar types of events.
29. For some time, the Environment Department has summarised this information for the Finance Grants & Oversight Committee, but to improve transparency of the decision making behind this process, that Committee now recommends that all current benefits in kind with no identifiable end date should be reviewed by the relevant department or Committee, and a recommendation made as to the on-going provision of each benefit.
30. Therefore, for the purposes of transparency, Members of Streets & Walkways Sub Committee (as the spending Committee for special event management) are asked to note the Benefits in Kind provided under this protocol and set out in Appendix 4.

Security Implications

31. The use of the City's Anti-Terrorism Traffic Regulation Order (ATTRO) in relation to special events will be covered in more detail by a separate report to Streets & Walkways Committee. Nevertheless, it can be noted here that given the lack of major events due to the pandemic, the ATTRO has not been used in conjunction with an event since 2019's New Year's Eve celebrations.

Corporate & Strategic Risk Implications

32. The events outlined in this report aligns with a number of corporate strategies including:
- Provide inclusive access to facilities for physical activity and recreation
 - Cultivate excellence in sport and creative & performing arts

- Preserve and promote the City as the world-leading global centre for culture
- Protect, curate and promote world-class heritage assets, cultural experiences and events

33. In addition, enabling events to take place on the City's streets (when safe to do so) will drive visitors to, and animate, the City in a safe and managed way as part of long-term recovery plans.

Legal, Resource, Climate & Equalities Implications

34. None

Conclusion

35. This report summarises the major events planned for 2022, including a series of on-street cultural and transport-strategy related activities to supplement the core established major events. The vast majority of events continue to be delivered successfully and safely, whilst City officers work with organisers to ensure the disruption they cause is minimised wherever possible.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Core Event Programme for 2022
- Appendix 2 – Core Event Timeline for 2022
- Appendix 3 – Summary Event Assessment for 2022
- Appendix 4 – Benefits in Kind for 2021

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