

**MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**RECORD OF DECISION OF THE CABINET**

Decision Made: 08 February 2012

**OLYMPICS 2012 - TORCH RELAY EVENT**

**Issue for Decision**

To consider the content of the Torch Relay celebrations and make budgetary provision.

**Decision Made**

1. That the content of the Torch Relay celebrations be noted and endorsed.
2. That a budget provision of up to £170,000, to be allocated from balances, be agreed.

**Reasons for Decision**

The Olympic Flame will arrive in the UK on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2012. The Relay starts the following day and will travel around the UK for 70 days and will arrive in London on the 21<sup>st</sup> July 2012. The opening ceremony will be on the 27<sup>th</sup> of July 2012. To mark its journey around Britain a Torch Arrival/Start event will be held in 66 towns and cities in Britain.

In late 2010 a confidential offer was made to the Council by the London Organising Committee Olympic Games (LOCOG) to hold an evening celebration for the arrival of the Torch on the 19<sup>th</sup> of July 2012, and to mark the start of the relay on the 20<sup>th</sup> of July 2012. Maidstone would be one of two locations in Kent to hold the Torch celebration, the other is Dover on the evening of the 18<sup>th</sup> of July 2012.

Following discussion with the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Liberal Democrats it was decided to accept the confidential offer.

**Background**

The Agreement with LOCOG was entered into on the 28<sup>th</sup> of January 2011. It is the requirement of the Agreement that the Council is responsible for the event management, planning of the content of the event in conjunction with the community, the provision of the necessary infrastructure and the stewarding.

LOCOG were originally seeking an 'iconic' location for the evening celebration for the arrival of the torch which is why Leeds castle was identified. However, as Leeds Castle only has a capacity for 8,000 people

for this event, to embrace the wider community it was considered that a wider community celebration should be held at Mote Park. As a result of the requirements of LOCOG and to take the event planning forward, three working groups were set up to cover the planning of the event:-

- The Community Group – to shape the event
- Agency Group – this includes Police, Fire & Rescue, Health, KCC , Highways – to inform, develop and verify the shape of the event as part of its development
- Officer Group – To coordinate and plan the event

The Torch Relay arrives in the Borough on the 19<sup>th</sup> of July. The Torch will be carried by the bearer in Harrietsham and then moved by convoy to Leeds Castle. The evening celebration will take place at Leeds Castle on the evening of the 19<sup>th</sup> July. The start of the Torch Relay on the 20<sup>th</sup> of July 2012 will be at Mote Park, and the Torch will travel through the town to the river, it will be rowed along the river and then transferred to the torch convoy, to travel to the Medway Towns.

From the work of LOCOG, the community groups, schools and partner agencies, the following activities are planned on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of July 2012:-

#### 19<sup>th</sup> July 2012

Torch Bearer - Harrietsham  
Schools sports event – Leeds Castle  
Torch arrival event – Leeds Castle  
Community Celebration – Mote Park

#### 20<sup>th</sup> July 2012

Relay start – Mote Park/Town Centre  
Community Events – Town Centre

Community events are planned for the Town Centre for the morning of the 20<sup>th</sup> July 2012. The detail of the individual activities is currently being developed.

The Council is directly responsible for the planning of the above events. In addition on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2012 Maidstone Leisure Trust and Team Outrageous have proposed and planned a Maidstone Mile Run through the town and a Maidstone Mile Swim in the River Medway. The Council is not directly involved in the planning of these events, but the organiser's plans will be the subject of scrutiny by the multi-agency Safety Advisory Group (SAG) as will all the event management plans for the other events. In addition, there are other events planned in the lead up to the Relay.

More detail about the events is set out at Appendix A to the report of the Assistant Director of Regeneration and Cultural Services. Each of these events will require event management plans.

The plans for the Torch Relay are still being developed by LOCOG and the Police. The position in relation to road closures will be dealt with on a Kent wide basis under the Highways/Olympic Act. However, there will still be the need to use the Town and Police Clauses legislation to enable crowd control. Road closures will be done on a 'rolling' basis by the Police motorcycle outriders. This will reduce the need for barriers apart from in key locations in the Town Centre.

Sponsorship will be sought in relation to the provision of the overall events and in particular for the community celebration at Mote Park, and the events in the town on the morning of the start of the relay. Additionally there is the potential to earn revenue through the leasing of food stalls at the Mote Park community event.

The overall shape of the events is now identified and it is possible to identify the majority of the costs apart from the cost in relation to event management which remains an estimate. The content of the event at Mote Park is pitched at a level that does not require a change to the licence. However, there is a potential concern from the Police in relation to the size of the crowd and it may therefore be necessary to provide an enclosure and ticket the event. This cost has been allowed for in the table below. A summary of the costs is set out below, with the detail provided at Appendix B to the report of the Assistant Director of Regeneration and Cultural Services.

#### Summary of Costs

	£
Event Management (Est)	30,000
Schools Event	5,000
Leeds Castle	16,000
20 min community slot – Leeds Castle	4,000
Mote Park event	67,225
Morning start	15,250
Security	26,404
Other Events	1,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>134,879</b>

There is the potential to earn revenue from this event through charging and letting food stall concessions. The feasibility of food stall concessions is currently being assessed.

The original intention was to seek an event organiser/project manager and this is still being pursued. However, the organisation of the individual events will still require the input of staff time in relation, and the traffic planning for the entrance to Leeds Castle and the start of the relay.

#### **Alternatives considered and why rejected**

The shape of the various events around the Torch Relay is set out including the content of the Mote Park event. It would be possible to alter the content of the 'headline act' at Mote Park to obtain a very prominent star. To do so would alter the shape of the event so that it is no longer community based, but the attraction is the 'star'. It would also increase

cost significantly in terms of the fee for the 'headline act', ticketing, security and infrastructure. It is therefore not recommended. It would also be possible to have no 'headline act', but to do so would significantly diminish the attractiveness of the community event.

The Council could at this point opt to cease planning but such a decision is likely to significantly damage its reputation both nationally and locally. Alternatively, the Council could cease planning the community celebration at Mote Park, however again such a decision is likely to significantly damage its reputation locally.

A charge could be made for the Mote Park event. A crowd of 5,000 at £10 a ticket would generate £50,000 income. However, if this were not to be a 'free' event there is the possibility that the 'acts' would seek higher fees, there may be lower attendance and a risk to reputation as the Leeds Castle event would be free. Charging for the Mote Park event is therefore not recommended.

### **Background Papers**

None

Should you be concerned about this decision and wish to call it in, please submit a call in form signed by any two Non-Executive Members to the Head of Change and Scrutiny by: <b>17 February 2012</b>
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