



Report of: Director of City Development

Report to: Executive Board

Date: 21 November 2018

Subject: Rugby League World Cup 2021

Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, name(s) of ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, access to information procedure rule number: 10.4(3) Appendix number: 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. The Rugby League World Cup 2021 (RLWC2021) provides another great opportunity to showcase Leeds on the major international stage. The successful bid by the Rugby Football League to host the RLWC 2021 event in England carries with it considerable Government financial support. All of the games will appear live on various BBC platforms with the event presenting opportunities to benefit from the economic and social development opportunities. According to the organisers it is the major world Sports event of 2021.
2. Given the scale and profile of the RLWC2021 and the cultural heritage Leeds has with Rugby League there was high expectation of stakeholders that Leeds should put forward an ambitious and robust bid. A city consortia, led by the city council made an ambitious initial bid, which was submitted on the 31st July 2018. The bid details are contained in the confidential appendix. Leeds was successful in reaching the final "candidate" stage.
3. In return for the wider economic and social benefits of hosting the event there is an expectation on the part of the organisers that the consortia provide significant levels of "in kind support" as well as cash as part of a "hosting fee". This fee will be proportionate to the scale and quantity of games hosted.

4. Building upon the paper taken to Executive Board in October “ Transforming Leeds Events”, this report outlines the potential benefits and costs of hosting the event and seeks to gain support as host entity to enter into a host city “hosting agreement” on the basis of a range of possible hosting outcomes.

Recommendations

Executive Board is asked to:

- (i) Note the original bid made to RLWC2021 on the 31st July 2018.
- (ii) Note the work of the Council and partners at the Candidate stage.
- (iii) Note the value in kind support offered by stakeholders and the Council.
- (iv) Note the contents of the confidential appendix.
- (v) Agree to the city council entering into a hosting agreement with RLWC2021 Ltd.
- (vi) Agree that the Council provides revenue support of a maximum of £150,000 towards the hosting fee.

- (vii) Agree that the Chief Officer Culture and Sport will enter into the hosting agreement using delegated powers.
- (viii) Agree that the Chief Officer Culture and Sport is responsible for implementation.

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To outline the benefits of Leeds hosting games, teams and training camps for the Rugby League World Cup 2021 and to confirm the basis of the Leeds bid. To also seek approval for Leeds City Council to enter into a host city agreement on behalf of the city and its partners.

2. Background information

- 2.1 The city has enjoyed considerable success in supporting and attracting major sports events. In recent years this has, for example, included our work as part of the London 2012 Olympics (e.g. hosting Chinese team), Rugby League World cup 2013, Rugby Union World cup 2015, the World Triathlon Series Leeds 2016 and 2017 and the Tour de Yorkshire. Providing the opportunity for local people to see world class events on their door step is a compelling one, but there is also a strong logic behind which events the city hosts.

- 2.2 Our rationale for bidding for major events include;
- Raising city profile nationally and internationally
 - Positive economic impact (Bringing people from outside the city into the city and media profile).
 - A good fit with key sports in the city (e.g. Triathlon/Football/Rugby league)
 - Events that are inclusive e.g. have a strong women's participation element
 - Opportunities to develop legacy programmes, engaging directly with the wider Leeds community.
 - Offers good value for money.

- 2.3 The city has an exciting events portfolio with some of the key upcoming events highlighted below;
- World Triathlon Series (WTS) 2019 and 2020.
 - Rugby League International England vs New Zealand 3rd Test Elland Road Nov 2018
 - The start of the men's elite race as part of the UCI World Road Race Championships 2019
 - Cricket World Cup, Headingley 2019 (4 games including England, Pakistan, West Indies, Sri Lanka, India and Afghanistan)
 - Cricket Test matches (Ashes 2019 and 2023) and one day internationals, Headingley
 - New city cricket tournament, 100 ball format from 2020. Headingley.

- 2.4 It is worth noting that 2019 is a particular highlight and work is ongoing to maximise the opportunities that this presents and which was referenced directly in the "Transforming Leeds Events" report brought to Executive Board in October.

3. Main issues

Rugby League World Cup 2021 Event

- 3.1 The Event
Supported heavily by Government with £15m of funding, England has already secured the 2021 Rugby World Cup. The Rugby Football League (RFL) established

a company to deliver the event called RLWC2021 Ltd. They set up and ran a competitive bidding exercise through the early part of 2018 with final bids having to be submitted by 31st July 2021. In accordance with the bidding requirements (and in recognition of Local Government key role), the City Council led on the bid process for Leeds and engaged directly with many key stakeholders e.g. Leeds Rhinos, Leeds United FC, Hoteliers, and Universities, effectively creating a Leeds consortia. Submitting a bid at this stage was not legally binding. Once Leeds was notified as being successful in reaching the candidate stage (on the 20th August 2018) then further discussions have taken place about hosting commitments.

3.2 The tournament has 5 strategic goals:

1. To be the most attended and viewed World Cup ever
2. To deliver a profitable tournament
3. To leave a lasting legacy
4. To increase the profile and visibility for Rugby league
5. To be the most digitally connected entertainment event of 2021.

In addition the strategic goals are supported by the values of :

- Bold and brave
- World class
- Authentic
- Inclusive

3.3 The bidding process was comprehensive and very competitive, with considerable technical input needed. The Tournament will run men’s, women’s and disability wheel chair events concurrently and will carry a significant expectation that each host city has a clear vision for how the tournament will be delivered successfully together with wider benefits to the game of rugby league and the social and economic value to the Leeds community. Some of the highlights of the RLWC event are outlined below:

- The men’s tournament will include 16 teams over 31 games (up to 14 venues)
- The women’s tournament will include 8 teams over 16 games and showcase final (up to 3 venues)
- The wheelchair tournament will include 8 teams, 18 games and a showcase final. (Up to 3 venues).
- All games will be live on the BBC (TV/Red Button/on line streaming)
- Depending on the package of games the economic impact could be up to £12m (RLWC2021 bid guide)
- There will be numerous opportunities for volunteering and business engagement
- There will be a legacy fund of £15m nationally for which host cities are encouraged to develop proposals.
- Host cities can bid for men’s, women’s and wheelchair games as well as opportunities to host teams through the provision of hotels and training venues.

3.4 The potential value of hosting (as set out by RLWC2021 Ltd) is set out in the table below:

Key hosting benefits: RLWC2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £6m+ Economic value • Media and Broadcast exposure (All games live on BBC TV/red button/On line)

- Opportunity to re-energise partners and develop the game locally and help develop the work of local Rugby League Foundations
- Possible capital investment into local infrastructure through the RLWC2021 legacy programme of £10m nationally (e.g. Artificial pitches/club house improvements).
- A chance to reach out to some of our most vulnerable communities and engage them in the event.
- A chance to further cement Leeds as a trusted and capable world class event partner
- A platform to secure greater sponsorship and inward investment into Leeds.

3.5 Initial Bid and Candidate city process

There are 2 key stages to bidding and each host city was required to submit an initial bid by the 31st July 2018. The bid was submitted against a series of detailed questions that covered areas such as the host city vision for the event and the games we want to bid for. There was also a considerable amount of technical work needed to support the bid, especially from the host venues. In total 24 cities submitted bids, including 80 possible venues for games. The bid preparations were undertaken working with RLWC2021 and one of their account managers, helping to provide a steer on key elements of the bid against the bidding/technical criteria. The outcome of the initial Leeds bid assessment was very positive with strengths expressed by RLWC2021 Ltd around the hosting concept, city commitment, experience of hosting world class events and excellent venues.

3.6 Having been successful at the bid stage the host city moved to the “candidate stage”. From here more details have been requested and site visits conducted. A number of discussions were held with the RLWC2021 account manager in framing the final submission. This process concluded on the 12th October 2018. A formal detailed hosting agreement will need to be signed at a point to be determined. Successful host cities will be notified in January 2019.

3.7 Leeds: host city approach and candidate stage final bid.

Leeds has a rich history in Rugby League and has fabulous infrastructure to support delivering the event. Emerald Headingley stadium will be have had it's stadium improvements completed and together with Elland Road provide excellent venues that can host games between 20,000 and 36,000 capacity. The city hotels and wider sports facility provision also gives us one of the best possible bases for teams taking part and staying in the City region.

3.8 The RLWC2021 organisers made it very clear that a significant contribution (A minimum of £250,000 for a good/high profile portfolio of games) would be required by way of a “rights fee” in order to secure games. Cash relieving Value in Kind (VIK) can be counted towards this figure and RLWC2021 set out guidelines against which this could be demonstrated.

3.9 The proposals submitted at bid stage, together with the subsequent work undertaken at Candidate stage, have attempted to strike an appropriate balance between our ambitions, the expectations of RLWC2021 Ltd, and value for money, given the potential wider hosting benefits. The ambition of the partners was to secure high profile men's games as well as to host both women's and wheelchair

events. Furthermore the consortia wanted to be able to offer an attractive base for teams to locate themselves. There was also an aspiration of partners to try and build some sustainable legacy developments through the work of the local rugby league Foundations.

3.10 Next Steps

If successful a hosting agreement will be entered into between RLWC2021Ltd and Leeds city Council in due course. At this stage the precise details are to be determined and therefore it is proposed that the Chief Officer Culture and Sport is given delegated authority to enter into subsequent legal agreements.

3.11 RLWC2021Ltd will conduct further evaluation of bids (assisted by independent assessments) and plan to announce successful host cities in January 2019. This assessment is made against the following criteria:

- Hosting Concept and Vision
- Venues and Infrastructure
- Commercial and financial
- Partnership working
- Organisation and experience
- Developing Rugby league
- Community engagement
- Marketing support
- Fit with the wider tournament

4. Corporate considerations

4.1 Consultation and engagement

4.1.1 The bid process has required extensive consultation between all the major stakeholders. Discussions have taken place with all interested parties and an event stakeholder board has been set up to have oversight of the bid process. The board has representation for example from The Leeds Rhinos, Leeds united, tourism, inward investment, transport, and rugby league development. The bidding process has required potential host cities to work with RLWC2021Ltd and one of their account managers to help inform the development of each bid and to help shape the most realistic bid.

4.1.2 Should the bid be successful then the existing stakeholder/consortia board will be reconstituted to become the event delivery stakeholder board and have oversight of the event delivery plan that will include community consultation and engagement plans.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

4.2.1 The tournament has inclusion as one of its key values and the bid submission from Leeds will focus on the work that can be done to ensure that the event reaches out to all communities across both in terms of opportunities to watch games as well as the development opportunities that will emerge as part of the legacy proposals. A full equality impact assessment will be undertaken. At this stage it is not possible to undertake an assessment as it is wholly dependent upon the outcome of the bid.

4.3 Council policies and best council plan

4.3.1 Hosting the RLWC2021 will significantly support the best Council plan aim of;

- Supporting a strong economy and compassionate city.

It will also especially support the two wider outcomes of:

- enjoying happy, healthy and active lives;
- enjoy greater access to open spaces, leisure and the arts.

4.3.2 Best Council plan priorities supported include:

- **Inclusive growth** – This strategy references directly supporting people to live healthy and active lifestyles and development of good social values in support of addressing labour market inequalities. The major event helps to support this as well as generating significant economic value and positive international profile.
- **Health and wellbeing** - the strategy provides a vision for Leeds as a healthy and caring city for all ages, where people who are the poorest improve their health the fastest. Enabling people to live active lives is a key part of the legacy element of the event delivery.
- **Child-friendly city** –The Children and Young People’s Plan aims to improve outcomes for all our children whilst recognising the need for outcomes to improve faster for children and young people from vulnerable and deprived backgrounds. Giving young people the best start in life in crucial and the benefits of being active early and building positive habits are essential. Again the event will help support initiatives that target young people to be active as well as supporting educational attainment through the work of the local Rugby Foundations.
- **Safe and strong communities** –We can use Rugby league and the event to engage with people locally and as gateway to other wider outcomes and services. Again the work of the local Professional clubs and their Charitable Foundations provide good examples here (Leeds Rugby Foundation/Leeds United Foundation).
- **21st century infrastructure** –RLWC2021 aspires for the event to be the most digitally connected ever. Work will continue to explore ways in which digital technologies can extend the reach of the event to as many local communities as possible.
- **Culture** – the Leeds Culture Strategy confirms the role culture can play in promoting confidence, respect and cohesion in the city. Rugby League is in the city’s DNA and a component part of Leeds’s rich cultural and sporting heritage.

4.4 Resources and value for money

4.4.1 Rugby league is in the DNA of Leeds and there is considerable expectation that Leeds would play a high profile role in the tournament. RLWC2021 clearly indicated that there is a requirement of significant cash input in addition to the Value in Kind as part of the overall rights fee calculator.

- 4.4.2 The final bid is ambitious and the financial contribution required will require a combination of cash and in kind support in excess of £250,000. This is a key requirement of RLWC2021. The actual contribution will ultimately depend on the outcome of the bid so at this stage it is only possible to indicate the maximum financial exposure to the Council and partners. High profile games will require greater financial contributions and the figures outlined reflect this.
- 4.4.3 It has been agreed with RLWC2021 that a significant number of tickets can be allocated/targeted towards priority groups for games across men's, women's and wheelchair events and this can be counted as part of the rights fee calculator from the cash contribution.
- 4.4.4 Executive Board considered a report about a successful bid to the Business Rate Pool at its October meeting. The RLWC2021 fell outside of the criteria as funding was only available for projects up to the end of the 2020/21 financial year. It is proposed that a bid is made to a future years Business Rate Pool in order to cover the revenue element of the hosting fee (£150,000). Should this not be successful the Council would need to make revenue provision in 2021/22 financial year of £150,000. There is a modest fund available (up to £30,000) from the successful Transforming Leeds Events Business Rate Pool bid (reported to the September Executive Board) that is available to undertake some cross boundary legacy work in advance of the RLWC2021.

4.5 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in

- 4.5.1 The Council will need to enter in to a host city agreement that will legally obligate the City Council as "host entity" to deliver what is submitted. It is proposed that the Chief Officer Culture and Sport will be responsible for entering into the final hosting agreement submission. The deadline for signing the hosting agreement is not yet clear.
- 4.5.2 The information contained in the Exempt Appendix 1 attached to this report relate to the financial or business affairs of RLWC2021 Ltd and of the Council. This information is not publicly available from the statutory registers of information kept in respect of certain companies and charities. It is considered that since this information is subject to one to one discussions and further assessment, it is not in the public interest to disclose this information at this point in time.
- 4.5.3 Also it is considered that the release of such information would or would be likely to prejudice the Council's bid to RLWC2021 Ltd given that there is an ongoing bid assessment process within a competitive bidding exercise. It is considered that whilst there may be a public interest in disclosure, much of this information will be publicly available from RLWC2021Ltd and or the Council after the outcome of the bid process is known and consequently the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing this information at this point in time. It is therefore considered that this element of the report should be treated as exempt under Rule 10.4(3) of the Access to Information Procedure Rules.

4.6 Risk management

- 4.6.1 The appropriate Governance arrangements have been established to oversee the bid and the subsequent work required to deliver on the hosting agreement. The financial risk to the Council associated with hosting the tournament will attempt to be mitigated through seeking financial support from the Business rate pool. There would be significant reputational risk should Leeds not agree to play a significant role in hosting the event.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 Given the status of the city there is weight of expectation that Leeds submits a strong bid for the RLWC 2021. Rugby league is in the city's DNA and a strong, ambitious bid would help cement our reputation as a world class host, accumulating the benefits of hosting accordingly. Both Elland Road and a brand new Emerald Headingley stadium can feature as the centre piece of our bid and are totally committed to helping the city stage a tournament to remember.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 Executive Board is asked to:

- (i) Note the original bid made to RLWC2021 on the 31st July 2018.
- (ii) Note the work of the Council and partners at the Candidate stage.
- (iii) Note the value in kind support offered by stakeholders and the Council.
- (iv) Note the contents of the confidential appendix.
- (v) Agree to the city council entering into a hosting agreement with RLWC2021 Ltd.

- (vi) Agree that the Council provides revenue support of a maximum of £150,000 towards the hosting fee.

- (vii) Agree that the Chief Officer Culture and Sport will enter into the hosting agreement using delegated powers.
- (viii) Agree that the Chief Officer Culture and Sport is responsible for implementation.

7. Background documents¹

- 7.1 None.

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

