
**Meeting of the Executive Member for Leisure,
Culture and Social Inclusion and Advisory Panel**

2 December 2008

Report of the Assistant Director (Lifelong Learning and Culture)

York and the 2012 Olympics

Summary

1. This report proposes ideas for discussion for how York may get involved in, and make the most of the opportunities presented by, the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games to be held in London.

Background

2. The Olympic Games are the largest sporting event in the world. Though in 2012 they are taking place in London many parties are working together to ensure that the country as a whole will gain benefit. At the closing ceremony of the Beijing Olympics the Olympic flame began its journey to London signifying the beginning of the UK's turn as Olympic hosts. The Cultural Olympiad, which began in September, represents a special period for the UK's cultural activity, seeking to maximise the benefits to be had from hosting the Olympics in this Country.
3. The Yorkshire Committee for the 2012 Games has produced the *Yorkshire Gold* strategy which outlines the region's key aspirations for the games in '5 Golden Opportunities':
 - Putting sport centre stage
 - Healthy and cohesive communities
 - A carnival of culture
 - Enhanced profile and tourist potential
 - Winners in business
4. This report focuses on issues and opportunities relevant to the Leisure and Culture portfolio.
5. To support the development of the Cultural Olympiad throughout the country the organising committee, LOCOG, have appointed a 'Creative Programmer' in each region. A programme is being developed for Yorkshire around the theme "I move therefore I am" and a £2.4m bid is being made to the Legacy Trust to fund this programme (the fund is not available for individual organisations to bid into). Other nationally funded programmes that were announced by Lord Coe on 4 September are:

- 'Shakespeare Today' – national festival to emphasis Shakespeare's international connections led by RSC
- 'Stories from around the World' being lead nationally by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council.
- 'Artists Taking the Lead', 12 new commissioned art works organised by Arts Council England regionally
- 'Film Nation' a digital film making programme for Young people led by the regional film agencies and the BFI
- 'Unlimited', a national sports and arts disability programme
- 'Live Screens', led by the BBC

Consultation

6. Consultation has taken place with the sports and cultural sectors through Active York, York@Large and North Yorkshire Culture with whom we have undertaken a workshop with all the North Yorkshire local authorities to map out a whole range of proposed and planned activities (over 160 across the sub-region). The regional 'Creative Programmer' has also run workshops for cultural organisations. Members may wish to consult York residents about the ideas put forward in this paper.

Options for York for 2012

7. It is suggested that we should aim to create a celebratory atmosphere that gets the whole city involved in a series of community events running from 2009 – 2012. This would culminate in the reinstatement of Lord Mayor's Day (2013 will mark 800 years of York's Lord Mayoralty).
8. The following key areas are suggested:
 - **A York Festival of the Flame** – using the inspiration of the games to increase participation in sport and active leisure
 - **Promoting volunteering** - using the opportunities presented by the games to promote volunteering in sport and other community activity
 - **Promoting cycling** - combining the potential of 2012 with that of the Cycle Town initiative to increase participation in cycling
 - **The Cultural Olympiad** – using the Cultural Olympiad as an umbrella for community activity and linking to and participating in the regional theme of "I move therefore I am"
 - **Pre-Games training Camps** – supporting the facilities that have put themselves forward as a means of increasing York's involvement in the games
 - **A Big Screen for York** – securing a big screen for the city centre as a means of showcasing York's cultural offering and experiencing 2012 together

Analysis

9. **A York Festival of the Flame:** This would pick up the regional theme of putting sport centre-stage. The key outcome would be increased participation which would be achieved through: creating new and imaginative opportunities, enhancing access to sports facilities, increasing people's skills / capacities to support sport, e.g. coaching, teaching, volunteering, supporting clubs and their development, promoting and marketing, and developing sporting talent.
10. The sample ideas suggested below would stretch from 2009 through to 2012. (Ideally this festival would culminate in the arrival of the Olympic Flame - we have written to ask that the Flame come through the city on its way to London though we don't know whether this will be possible. Perhaps we should also create our own 'Olympic Torch' from the Foss Islands Road chimney for the duration of the games!)
11. The following are ideas for discussion. If supported, they would of course be subject to funding being available:
 - 2009 could see the start of the schools based programme called Sporting Giants. The aims of this programme would be to:
 - Get all schools involved in physical activity
 - Make 2012 a focus for the development of schools based sports activity
 - Build up a resource of information in each school about the Olympics sports and a link to local sports club practitioners, which would then build into a citywide network
 - Make giant puppet figures in each school which can be used in school celebratory events, transformed through choreography and physical movement skills into tableaux, used in local fêtes and festivals and brought together in a massive procession for a Lord Mayor's day celebration
 - Incentives to participation e.g. free residents' open days at the city's facilities, a buddying scheme for taking part in sport e.g. 2 for 1 if go to facility
 - New and interesting events, e.g. An Olympic 'Superstars' challenge, junior & senior, a York marathon and/or a relay marathon (teams from schools, communities), city centre events e.g. a Minster dash, Tai – Chi in parks, a York tri-athlon, (adults and youth games event), 2012 sessions in a variety of sports e.g. cycling, swimming, running, rowing, having a 'come and try' month for the 38 Olympic disciplines, then Paralympics the next month, a '12 months to do 20 activities in York' campaign, sports activities in unusual cultural venues
 - Providing support for elite athletes through talent identification, profile raising, and access to facilities for junior and senior athletes, developing talent pathways,

- Encouraging National Governing Bodies to have centres of excellence in and around York and aiming for every sport to come to the region between now and 2012
- Providing support to disability sports clubs, creating a Sportsability forum, identifying and supporting disabled athletes
- Supporting clubs e.g. through open days, creating more coaches in the City through coaching courses
- Supporting volunteering e.g. by creating a 'Legacy officer', setting the target that York will provide 200 people volunteering at the Olympics, recognising the value of people who volunteer in City, e.g. by reinstating the York Sports Awards
- School projects directly based on Olympic themes e.g. History of Olympics, Olympic theme projects, getting schools to interact with any pre-games training camps
- Encourage businesses to fund sports opportunities in city, e.g. sponsored activity to provide everyone with a bike
- Fitness initiatives, e.g. trim trails at big sports clubs and key locations, workplace initiatives, promoting healthy eating, especially in the city centre
- Co-ordinating the events calendar to promote events as a series e.g. race for life / cycling / swimming
- Using twin city links / exchanges
- Gardeners (in bloom) 2012 Olympic colours e.g. grow flowers in public places in shape of Olympic rings
- Using dance through festivals around the Olympic theme

11. **Promoting volunteering:** Increasing opportunities for volunteering is an important objective for 2012. It is also a target in York's LAA. There are two particular routes that we can use:

- Working with the two Schools Sports Partnerships in developing their young people's leadership programmes including 'Step into Sport'.
- Participating with York CVS in the National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA) pilot to link increasing participation in volunteering with increasing participation in sport. There are three key action areas:
 - creating a common database of sports club contacts
 - presenting an attractive menu of volunteering opportunities
 - working with CVS's volunteering brokerage service

12. **Promoting cycling:** Potential ideas could include:

- Mountain bike track at Rawcliffe and around existing / would be / past Olympians role models
- Encourage workplaces to reward to cycle to work

- Car free days in the city centre
- Participation to competition programmes – encouraging local cycle clubs to lead participation rides and an Olympic cycle challenge
- Working alongside North Yorkshire Sport “cycle champion” to bring high profile regional events to the city pre and post 2012
- Guided rides programme across the city and production of differentiated independent ride maps
- Parliament street cycling festival
- Schools mountain bike challenge – led by school sports partnerships

13. **The Cultural Olympiad:** The Cultural Olympiad is for everyone. It will:

- bring together culture and sport
- encourage audiences to take part
- animate and humanise public spaces – through street theatre, public art, , live big screen sites
- use culture and sport to raise issues of environmental sustainability, health and wellbeing
- honour and share the values of the Olympic and Paralympic Games
- ignite cutting edge collaborations and innovation between communities and cultural sectors; and
- enhance the learning, skills and personal development of young people by linking with our education programmes.

14. The aim for York should be to enhance the city as outward facing and culturally rich, in short, a great place to live and visit. We should also use 2012 to help us aim for more active, healthier and inclusive communities. Possible areas of actions include managing local environments to encourage physical activity (walking, cycling, active play), developing projects that enhance children’s learning by exploiting interest in sport, using sport to promote community involvement and cohesion, and establishing volunteer investment programmes.

15. Potential ideas could include:

- Working with Pilot Theatre and KMA on a web and digital media based event called Olympic Rings. Launched in York as part of Illuminate the project would create a ring of light and sound that interacts with dance performance or physical movement on the street. This ‘Olympic Ring’ would be programmed with music and light based designs sourced from submissions from young people all around the world so we could have Music from a Melbourne teenage band and lighting designs from Lyons being transmitted in York for York based public and performers to interact with. The ‘Ring’ activity would be uploaded on to a website and shared internationally. From its launch in York the Olympic Ring will then move to the five key cities in Yorkshire, then onto five regions, five countries and five continents. The five rings would travel around the world in the run up to the 2012 Olympics. People from York could contribute via the web at

all stages of the journey but this would be a great international ambassador for the creative work undertaken here in York. This would provide a cultural activity of regional, national and international significance that helps raise the profile of the, York itself and of our cultural strengths.

- City of Festivals would support the commissioning of themes tying in with 'I move therefore I am', for example:
 - 2009 Rail – working with the NRM
 - 2010 Roads working with the Wagon Plays
 - 2011 River working through Festival of the rivers
 - 2012 Bringing all those themes together
- In 2012 we also want to work through the Neighbourhood Services team's programme of ward based parties, picnics and celebrations and enhance these to bring the atmosphere of the Queens Silver Jubilee street parties to big community celebrations. Some wards already have these celebrations well established (Copmanthorpe Gala for example) but other wards will need more help and support. But the idea is that there might be some common themes e.g.:
 - Nostalgic egg and spoon races/ sack races, three legged races
 - Sporting Giants figures from each school in the ward procession
 - A Big Picnic with a (bread) baton relay. The more fun the idea the better. I'm sure lots of people in the community would love to contribute and the most important part of this programme would be to facilitate that to make sure that it happens.
 - Winners from each ward could then be invited to represent their wards in a City Centre big Street Party, which would mark the return of the Lord Mayor's Day. As well as a float procession the whole city centre should be blocked off with street party atmosphere, bunting, performers and a major procession. York itself should become a community village green that day. As you can tell I'm doing a bit of a splurge here and I'll leave it to you to decide the details of the report.
- Coming from the York@Large's 2012 York Gold group is the recommendation that we should work with Visit York to produce a special short video to promote as a cultural destination during this period. There may be additional funding required for this. A small promotional film on our Sporting Facilities might aid the take up of the offer given in the training camps brochure.

16. **Pre-games training camps:** Active York put forward a package of four sporting venues in the City and this has been included in the pre-games training camp guide for the games:

- Huntington Stadium: Athletics
- University of York: Archery

- York Community Gymnastics Foundation: Rhythmic and Artistic Gymnastics and Trampoline
- York College: Basketball, Boxing, Trampoline and Judo.

These four York facilities are amongst the 600 venues selected nationwide for inclusion in the guide and the only ones in the sub-region. No York venues were selected for the Paralympics. The guide will be circulated to all National Olympic Committees.

17. Some funding for training camp venues will be available from LOCOG. The role of the Council will be to continue to assist in trying to attract potential pre-games training camps to the city and then in using those camps to engage interest and activity across the city.
18. The Council is also of course working with its partners to move forward a community stadium for York. Although this will not be ready in time to serve for pre-games training camps it should be up and running in time to harness interest arising from the 2012 games and to provide significant opportunities for community involvement in sport and other active leisure activities.
19. **Big Screen:** The Executive has already agreed to include consultation on a possible big screen for York in the City Centre Area Action Plan. A screen would allow York people and organisations to innovate, create, communicate, educate, and entertain each other through:
 - Creating a digital city centre focal point and meeting place bringing residents and visitors together, especially through events surrounding the screen
 - Forming a public news and information point, improving public awareness of local issues, developments, initiatives and activities
 - Providing a high profile outlet for visual arts, digital innovation and local filmmaking
 - Offering a hi-tec showcase for educational and community activity
 - Enhancing the city's profile regionally, nationally and internationally through partnership with the BBC
 - Showcasing York and the Yorkshire region to potential visitors through the screen's networking capabilities
 - Helping make the city centre a vibrant, family-friendly place
20. The content would be a mixture of:
 - Locally-made video content
 - Live camera coverage of local activities
 - Back-drop to events staged around the screen
 - National and international events (e.g. Pre 2012 content, Live8, Opera in the Park and the 2012 Olympics)
 - Exclusive screenings (e.g. from the Royal Opera House, commissioned digital art, and networking and touring projects)

- Viewer generated content (e.g. pictures and information)
 - Interactivity (e.g. games, uploads and downloads)
 - BBC channels, including News and information (text, video, pictures)
 - 2012 coverage
21. There is a huge wealth of local video content already available to us from our universities, schools, community organisations, heritage organisations, archives (notably the Yorkshire Film Archive), events and festivals. There will be no difficulty in providing local content and no danger of relying solely on BBC content.

Conclusions

22. There is a wide range of ways in which York can get involved in 2012 and harness the inspiration of the games to get more people participating. As well as pursuing any of the above ideas we will be able to give a 2012 theme to much of our already planned work in order to increase its appeal and profile. We will also continue to support York's Special Olympics initiative for people with learning disabilities which has just been awarded £62,500 by the Norwich Union Community Sports Fund.

Implications

23. **Finance:** A budget would be required to support the above ideas. It is suggested that the Council might be asked to fund around £150k in total with a similar amount to be sought from external sources. Growth bids would need to be submitted for 2010/11 and 2011/12. Funding would also be sought from ward budgets and funds redirected from existing operational budgets as appropriate. It may be possible for York@Large to bid to the LAA pot if it can be demonstrated that particular projects will make a substantive contribution to the achievement of the city's LAA indicators. The financial implications of the screen have been previously reported.
24. **Legal** – there are no immediate legal implications although the eventual use of branding linked to the Olympic Games and the Cultural Olympiad is likely to have restrictions and conditions.
25. **Equalities and Diversity** – the first objective of the Cultural Olympiad is to, inspire and involve the widest range of London and UK-wide communities. All of York's Olympiad projects will seek to be universally inclusive and accessible.
26. **Human Resources, crime and disorder, property and IT implications** may arise through the implementation of individual elements of the programme and will be reported and addressed when they arise.

Corporate Priorities

27. There is potential for involvement in 2012 to make a positive impact across all five of the Lifelong Learning and Culture outcomes:

- **Making York More Eventful** - More York residents and visitors will enjoy participating in, and taking the lead in cultural events and activities.
- **Engagement in Learning** – More people will be supported into learning by providing opportunities for everyone to be part of a creative learning community, particularly focusing on the most disadvantaged.
- **Being Healthy** – More residents will enjoy the good physical and mental health that comes from increased participation in active lifestyles.
- **Supporting Stronger Communities** – Local communities will be supported to direct their own cultural activities and to take ownership of well maintained public spaces. Access will be open to all and we will enhance the quality of life of individuals and communities.
- **Developing a Vibrant Cultural Infrastructure** – Residents will enjoy an increasingly thriving cultural sector and the economic benefits that flow from it.

Risk Management

28. In compliance with the Council's risk management strategy the main risks that have been identified are reputational risks associated with the ability to deliver activities where funding is uncertain. Measured in terms of impact and likelihood, the risk score has been assessed at 9, placing the issue in the Low category as an acceptable risk. This means that the risks will be regularly monitored.

Recommendations

29. The Executive Member is asked to comment on the ideas outlined.
Reason: In order that planning can move forward.

Background Documents

Yorkshire Gold – Yorkshire and Humber Strategy for 2012

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**Report
Approved**

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Wards Affected: All

For further information please contact the author of the report