

Meeting: Cabinet/Council

Date: 9 and 18 July 2019

Wards Affected: All Wards

Report Title: Torbay Airshow

Is the decision a key decision? No

When does the decision need to be implemented? Immediately

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1. Proposal and Introduction

- 1.1 This report gives a summary of the outcomes of the Torbay Airshow 2019 which took place on 1st and 2nd June 2019 and seeks a decision to support the Airshow again in 2020.
- 1.2 It also recognises that the air show event comes with a carbon footprint and the new Cabinet have indicated that they wish to work towards '*A Climate Fit for the Future*'. Consequently the report request that further work is undertaken to explore a range of options to offset the carbon dioxide produced by the air show.

2. Reason for Proposal

- 2.1 Torbay Airshow is the area's flagship event with a proven record of attracting significant crowds to what is undoubtedly becoming a significant regional and national event. The event is now established as one of the best coastal air shows in the country.
- 2.2 The air show clearly helps position Torbay and the English Riviera as a destination of choice to a growing national and international audience. This year the air show was covered by international TV channels in addition to our local stations. It also supports the local economy by boosting tourism and providing an incredible opportunity for local businesses and other organisations to showcase themselves through their involvement in the event. Furthermore the event allows the Council to build its commercial relationships with local businesses. This year the headline partners and official partners were all local businesses recognising the benefits of being involved with a signature event.

- 2.3 Media highlights from the dedicated Torbay Airshow website indicated the following:-
- 40+ broadcast interviews with organisers, display teams and sponsors.
 - Top story billing on BBC Spotlight and ITV West Country due to incredible pre-filming content with the Red Arrows & the Blades.
 - 2 live radio shows broadcasting from the event (The Breeze & BBC Radio Devon) and 3 shows dedicated to the event in the week leading up to the show.
 - National newspaper coverage in the Mail on Sunday, Mail Online and the Sunday Telegraph.
 - International coverage broadcast live from the Airshow to news channels around the World, including Australia's national news channel, ABC, the Chinese TV Network, WION in South Asia, and CGTN in Spain.
- 2.4 Social Media highlights showed the following:-
- Facebook Page post reach of 966,961.
 - Facebook Event Page reach of 457,000.
 - Twitter total reach 848,600.
 - Instagram just under 10,000 likes.
- 2.5 The ERBID's English Riviera website provided the following summary:-
- Overall website page traffic up 33% year on year.
 - Traffic to the Airshow landing page up by over 2000% year – 16,400 page views vs 764 in 2018.
 - The Airshow page was the second most visited section on their site in April and May.
 - Their blog post "Torbay Airshow Flying Schedule" had 8,600 page views.
- 2.6 As part of its budget savings review in October 2018 the Council agreed to withdraw the anticipated funding of £90,000 for the 2019 Torbay Airshow (the 2018 Torbay Airshow received £120,000 of Council funding) and officers worked with the event contractor Richmond Event Management (REM) and TDA to find a solution to fill the funding gap.
- 2.7 Consideration was given to how to cut the air show costs, which had already been reduced significantly over the last two years, and how to draw in further income. A new Commercial and Marketing Group was set up, with TDA support, to help the contractor and the Council in finding a solution to the funding gap and maintain a viable air show. Options to reduce the air show to either, a Friday evening and a Saturday, or to a one day event were considered but the savings realised were insignificant because the regular traders and caterers that were consulted would not be willing to pay the relevant fees or would not attend at all, and the set-up and infrastructure costs would not have been significantly reduced.

- 2.8 Encouraging progress was made through the Commercial and Marketing Group which was able to draw in approximately £30,000 of additional income from new sponsorship (after commission to specialist sponsorship generators and costs associated with hospitality). Other income came from parking, programme advertising, sales of the programme as well as a bucket collection.
- 2.9 Savings were also made by reducing the cost of the flying displays to £80,000 (£35,000 less than in 2018). However, despite the positive impact of additional sponsorship income, the contractor reported an increase in costs throughout April with the bottom line overspend rising first of all to £65,000, then £78,000 and then to £90,000 just prior to the air show. Unfortunately, due to the inclement weather on the Sunday of the air show, several thousands of pounds of donations and programme sales income were also lost.
- 2.10 The final deficit for the Torbay Airshow 2019 is currently expected to be approximately £90,000. This represents a saving of £30,000 compared to the Council's investment in 2018 but it obviously means that the event is not at a point where the Council can achieve a zero budget.
- 2.11 Looking at the experience of most other air shows including Bournemouth, Eastbourne and Swansea, it takes at least seven years for such an event to become fully established and consistently draw in the larger crowds. Following discussions with the contracted event organiser, REM Ltd, it is clear that operating costs cannot be reduced much further and commercial income will only increase once the event becomes fully established. Therefore, it will be necessary to raise additional sponsorship and financial support to ensure that an air show in 2020 operates within a balanced budget.
- 2.12 The new Commercial and Marketing Group set up this year, have clearly indicated that an early decision by the Council, to stage an Airshow in 2020, would allow additional sponsorship to be raised. This year they raised an additional £38,000 but this work only really started in January and many companies had already spent or committed their annual sponsorship budget. If discussions can commence with potential sponsors at an early stage (i.e. in July 2019), they are confident that the level of additional sponsorship can be raised by another £40,000 for 2020. Consideration should also be given to the Council making a long-term commitment to fund the event as this will certainly help with securing sponsorship and in particular the opportunity for multi-year deals.
- 2.13 Discussions with the English Riviera BID Company (ERBID) have indicated that they would increase their level of sponsorship if the event was rebranded as the "English Riviera Airshow". The Cabinet and Council will be recommended to support this change of name to allow this sponsorship deal to be finalised.
- 2.14 Continuing to make the Torbay Airshow an annual event generates the potential for a substantial boost to Torbay's economy by attracting new and repeat visitors and inward investment. This year it is estimated that the local economic benefit exceeded £7million and this will grow over the next few years.
- 2.15 Agreement by the Cabinet and Council to move forward and support the Torbay Airshow 2020, to be held on 6th and 7th June, will allow officers, REM and TDA to engage with sponsors ahead of their annual budget setting, as well as allowing

local traders, caterers and accommodation providers to promote the event and develop their own business ideas to capitalise on the event for next year.

- 2.16 Although an air show on this scale delivers a significant economic boost to Torbay and provides clear marketing benefits to the English Riviera, it also comes with a carbon footprint. The Cabinet have indicated that they wish to work towards 'A *Climate Fit for the Future*' and although it is not possible to completely remove the carbon dioxide produced at the event, it can be offset through other Council activity.
- 2.17 A number of environmentally friendly initiatives are already in operation at the air show but further progress can and should be made. Some examples of existing arrangements are set out below:-
- GWR were the lead travel partner to encourage more sustainable travel to and from the event village.
 - The new Skybar only issued reusable plastic cups to serve their drinks. These cups required a £1 refundable deposit. Returned cups are washed and re-used to cut down on single use plastic.
 - Water bottle filling stations were available in the event village to reduce the need for plastic water bottles.
 - A 'Recycling Information' stand was situated in the event village.

3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

Cabinet Recommendation to Council:

- 3.1 That the Council be recommended that the Torbay Airshow 2020 (6th and 7th June) be supported and a revenue contribution of £25,000 towards the Airshow be approved.

Cabinet Decisions:

- 3.2 That the Interim Director of Place be requested to work with Richmond Event Management along with the Commercial and Marketing Group, to engage with potential sponsors for the 2020 Torbay Airshow at the earliest opportunity.
- 3.3 That the renaming of the Torbay Airshow to the 'English Riviera Airshow', be approved subject to the Interim Director of Place negotiating an appropriate level of sponsorship.
- 3.4 That the Interim Director of Place and Chief Finance Officer be requested to negotiate a risk share arrangement that would see the Council and TDA share the burden of any unforeseen budget overspend, should the air show event not reach a break even position.
- 3.5 That the Interim Director of Place be instructed to explore a range of options to offset the carbon dioxide produced by the air show and one such measure, which could also help to tackle fuel poverty, should include a higher standard of wall and roof insulation for new affordable homes commissioned by the Council.

Appendix 1

Section 1: Background Information	
1.	<p>What is the proposal / issue?</p> <p>The report gives a summary of the outcomes of the Torbay Airshow 2019 and the Cabinet and Council are asked to support the Torbay Airshow 2020, to enable the Interim Director of Place to work with Richmond Event Management, along with TDA, to engage with potential sponsors at the earliest opportunity. Also, the Cabinet and Council are asked to support the renaming of the Torbay Airshow to the English Riviera Airshow, subject to the Interim Director of Place negotiating an appropriate level of sponsorship.</p> <p>Additional funding is required and the Cabinet is asked to recommend a revenue contribution of £25,000 towards the Airshow in 2020 when it puts forward its proposed budget to the Council for 2020/21.</p> <p>That a risk share arrangement is sought that would see the Council and TDA share the burden of any unforeseen budget overspend, should the air show event not reach a break even position.</p> <p>It is recognised that the Torbay Airshow show comes with a clear carbon footprint and the new Cabinet have indicated that they wish to work towards 'A <i>Climate Fit for the Future</i>'. Consequently this report request that further work is undertaken to explore a range of options to offset the carbon dioxide produced by the air show.</p>
2.	<p>What is the current situation?</p> <p>This year the weather had an impact on the Torbay Airshow. The Saturday was a huge success in terms of the public response and audience involvement, with a full flying programme and exceptionally good weather. As a consequence, on the Saturday, the crowd numbers in and around Paignton Green and Preston Green were certainly up on previous years. Reasonable crowds were also observed on Roundham Head, along the seafront areas of Torquay, the Torquay harbourside, on Abbey Meadows and on Corbyn Head.</p> <p>Unfortunately the weather closed in on the Sunday and there were far fewer people on the event site, although people did still attend to watch the curtailed flying programme. It is estimated that overall there were similar numbers of spectators across Torbay in 2019 as there were in 2018, with an estimated 165,000 viewing around the Bay.</p> <p>As in previous years the air show consisted of a combination of military and civilian display pilots, including the UK's first two displays of the season by the RAF Red Arrows. There is a very limited opportunity to see the Red Arrows in 2019 as they head to the United States at the end of July. Other</p>

	<p>displays included the Typhoon Eurofighter, The Battle of Britain Memorial Flight, The Blades and a number of other incredible aerobatic displays.</p> <p>There were some new additions in a much improved ground display on Paignton Green. These included the SkyBar hospitality area and bars from Bays Brewery, as well as simulators and other additional traders but in overall terms, less caterers. The event also saw an increase in local business sponsorship with companies such as Newcross Healthcare, Great Western Railway (GWR) and a number of other organisations seeing the benefits of being associated with the event and supporting the event financially. More significantly, the English Riviera BID Company (ERBID) also contributed to the event and have indicated that they would like to further support the event moving forward, as have several other organisations who weren't involved this year but who were invited to attend the hospitality area at the SkyBar.</p> <p>In February 2019, the contractor REM reported a number of issues including the slow take-up of catering and other traders, along with an inability to reduce the security and traffic management costs in the way that was envisaged without safety levels being compromised. Hospitality provision was also difficult with limited margins to work with and additional costs were incurred due to dissatisfaction with the previous year's set-up.</p> <p>Options to reduce the air show to either, a Friday evening and a Saturday, or to a one day event were considered but the savings realised were insignificant because the regular traders and caterers that were consulted would not be willing to pay the relevant fees or would not attend at all, and the set-up and infrastructure costs would not have been significantly reduced. Advice was also received that since the request for flying assets was submitted to the RAF in October it would be seen as poor form to adjust our request and the Council would run the risk of losing the RAFs support for future events.</p> <p>In the UK air shows are the second most popular outdoor event after football, and nearly 1 in 10 Britons will go to see an air show each year. There are over 700 air shows each year globally with each show attracting anywhere between 10,000 and half a million spectators each day.</p> <p>A funding approach was agreed by the Council in July 2016 and July 2017, however, the budget was cut in October 2018. There is a need to change this approach to encourage long-term growth of the air show event as a tourism and marketing opportunity, as well as an economic driver. The benefit to the local economy is approximately £7million per annum.</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>What options have been considered?</p> <p>The Torbay Airshow cannot currently be run on a zero budget despite substantial cost savings made in the last three years.</p>

	<p><u>Option 1</u></p> <p>Make a commitment to the air show but with a review of funding in October 2019. This will restrict growth and economies of scale as well as long-term buy-in from investors and sponsors but it might enable short-term solutions to be realised.</p> <p><u>Option 2</u></p> <p>Make a commitment to the air show for the remainder of REM Ltd.'s 5 year contract, three more air shows, by underwriting the event by at least £75,000 each year. This will allow growth and economies of scale as well as long-term buy-in from investors and sponsors but would put extra strain on the Council's revenue budget.</p> <p><u>Option 3</u></p> <p>Not to continue staging the air show. This is not considered an option given the current and future benefits to the local economy from a minimal investment and growing support from sponsors and the wider community.</p> <p><u>Option 4 (Recommended)</u></p> <p>To provide support for the air show in 2020 with a revenue funding commitment of £25,000. Enable the air show to be rebranded to secure additional sponsorship and to make an early decision about the future of the event so as to provide the best opportunity for securing additional sponsorship income. Support the implementation of a risk share agreement to cover any budget deficit.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>How does this proposal support the ambitions, principles and delivery of the Corporate Plan?</p> <p>Ambitions: Prosperous and Healthy Torbay</p> <p>Principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use reducing resources to best effect • Reduce demand through prevention and innovation • Integrated and joined up approach <p>Targeted actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working towards a more prosperous Torbay • Ensuring Torbay remains an attractive and safe place to live and visit
<p>5.</p>	<p>How does this proposal contribute towards the Council's responsibilities as corporate parents?</p> <p>This year, on the Saturday of Torbay Airshow, eight looked after children, along with six carers and two members of staff were treated to VIP hospitality, which included a three course lunch, afternoon tea and cakes. As well as enjoying the flying display and the catering, the group were visited by Red 10, Squadron Leader of the Red Arrows, who gave a Red Arrows pin</p>

	<p>badge to each of the children. This experience was well received by the children, carers and staff alike. It will be repeated in future years.</p>
6.	<p>How does this proposal tackle deprivation?</p> <p>If one of the options explored to offset the carbon dioxide produced by the air show includes a higher standard of wall and roof insulation for new affordable homes commissioned by the Council, then this will help to tackle fuel poverty.</p>
7.	<p>How does this proposal tackle inequalities?</p> <p>No discernible impact.</p>
8.	<p>How does the proposal impact on people with learning disabilities?</p> <p>The event is a family event with opportunities for families and intergenerational activity across the Bay. There were facilities available for disabled visitors and their carers.</p>
9.	<p>Who will be affected by this proposal and who do you need to consult with?</p> <p>This is a financial commitment for three years by the Council. The impact of the decision will affect the whole of Torbay.</p> <p>Feedback has already been received from businesses, traders and partners, and this has been overwhelmingly positive with support to continue with the event.</p>
10.	<p>How will you propose to consult?</p> <p>Further feedback/consultation is currently being undertaken with help from the ERBID company and their members.</p>

Section 2: Implications and Impact Assessment

11. What are the financial and legal implications?

At the Council meeting held on 20 July 2017 (minute 63/7/17 refers) the Council agreed a five year funding commitment to the Torbay Airshow as follows:

“(i) that the Council amends its existing commitment and makes a new five year funding commitment to develop the Torbay Airshow with a maximum commitment of up to £100,000 for year 1 (2018); year 2 reducing to £90,000; in year 3, £81,000; in year 4 £73,000; and in year 5 £66,000. These figures represent a 10% reduction year on year in the Council’s investment in the Airshow. Whilst this commitment provides financial stability, in order to achieve best value for the Council it will deem this to be financially successful if the reduction in funding can be increased further to 20% per year and that actual performance is to be measured against both these targets;”

However, funding was removed from the base Revenue budget in 2019/2020 following the budget setting process for this year.

A financial commitment from the Council’s revenue budget to contribute £25,000 towards the funding of the event in 2020.

To fund any potential budget deficit from the event as part of a risk share agreement to be negotiated with TDA for 2020. The funding gap in 2019 is expected to be approximately £90,000. Additional funding in 2020, to close this gap, could be achieved as follows :-

- Extra sponsorship via the Commercial & Marketing Group – circa £40,000
- Core funding from Torbay Council - £25,000
- Core funding from economic regeneration budget – not yet agreed
- Increased sponsorship from ERBID – figure not yet confirmed
- Increased bucket collection, programme sales & Just Giving Page

12. What are the risks?

1. **Risk of not funding the air show.** We can lose the potential to build a significant long-term, signature event for Torbay and the significant associated benefits to the local economy of circa £7million per annum.
2. **Risk of funding the air show.** The original proposals for the air show assumed a tapering of funding for future years. Whilst there have been significant cost savings made over the past three years, tapering cannot be guaranteed as previously anticipated due to the current climate and a risk share arrangement for the event is more appropriate along with increased sponsorship/income opportunities.

	The Council will need to consider its future commitment against other competing priorities.
13.	<p>Public Services Value (Social Value) Act 2012</p> <p>Not applicable to this decision.</p>
14.	<p>What evidence / data / research have you gathered in relation to this proposal?</p> <p>The increased sponsorship income of £38,000 this financial year will be increased with an earlier start date and the ability to do more long-term planning and sponsorship deals.</p> <p>Previous research has shown that the Torbay Airshow has at least a £7m positive impact on the local economy.</p>
15.	<p>What are key findings from the consultation you have carried out?</p> <p>As previously outlined above, a number of businesses, traders and partners have overwhelmingly expressed a desire to continue with the event. The ERBID has also made it very clear that the air show is by far and away the most significant event hosted in the Bay from a tourism and marketing perspective.</p>
16.	<p>Amendments to Proposal / Mitigating Actions</p> <p>None.</p>

Equality Impacts

17.	Identify the potential positive and negative impacts on specific groups		
	Positive Impact	Negative Impact & Mitigating Actions	Neutral Impact
Older or younger people	The event is a family event with opportunities for families and intergenerational activity across the Bay		
People with caring Responsibilities	The event is a family event with opportunities for families and intergenerational activity across the Bay. There were facilities available for disabled visitors and their carers.		
People with a disability	The event is a family event with opportunities for families and intergenerational activity across the Bay. There were facilities available for disabled visitors and their carers.		
Women or men	The event is a family event with opportunities for families and intergenerational activity across the Bay		
People who are black or from a minority ethnic background (BME) <i>(Please note Gypsies / Roma are within this community)</i>			No discernible impact
Religion or belief (including lack of belief)			No discernible impact
People who are lesbian, gay or bisexual			No discernible impact

	People who are transgendered			No discernible impact
	People who are in a marriage or civil partnership			No discernible impact
	Women who are pregnant / on maternity leave			No discernible impact
	Socio-economic impacts (Including impact on child poverty issues and deprivation)	The event is focused at attracting new visitors to Torbay and to have a positive impact on businesses and therefore increase the level of investment in the area. There is the potential for at least £7million of economic benefit to be generated each year over the next 5 years.		
	Public Health impacts (How will your proposal impact on the general health of the population of Torbay)	This is an outdoor event supported by sustainable travel options.		
18.	Cumulative Impacts – Council wide (proposed changes elsewhere which might worsen the impacts identified above)	N/A		
19.	Cumulative Impacts – Other public services (proposed changes elsewhere which might worsen the impacts identified above)	For this to be a sustainable event then it relies on the support of departments from across the Council and partners to ensure its success.		