South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee

Cyd-bwyllgor corfforaethol De-Dwyrain Cymru

**REPORT SUMMARY**

**ITEM 8: Events and Sponsorships**

**Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on Cardiff Capital Region's approach to Events & Sponsorship and seek approval for resources and funding.

**Recommendations**

The Corporate Joint Committee is asked to:

(1) Approve the approach to Events & Sponsorship and associated resourcing & funding requirements to May 2025 for which resources have been allocated in the 24/25 budget; and

(2) Note the proposed development of a three-year Events & Sponsorship plan to be delivered by autumn 2024, in alignment with the revised Corporate Plan and Medium-Term Financial Plan.

**Contact Officer**

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| **Report for:** | ACTION |
| **Contains Confidential or Exempt Information** | NO |

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| For Consideration By | Corporate Joint Committee |
| Report Title | Events & Sponsorship |
| Report of | Kellie Beirne, Chief Executive Officer |
| Contact Details | Kellie.Beirne@cardiffcapitalregion.gov.uk |
| Date to be Considered | 26 July 2024 |
| Implementation Date | 26 July 2024 |
| Affected Council Areas | All South East Wales local authorities |
| Keywords / Index | Events, inward investment, regional promotion, unleashed |

**Report Summary**

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**Recommendations**

1. The Corporate Joint Committee is asked to:

   1.1. Approve the approach to Events & Sponsorship and associated resourcing & funding requirements to May 2025 for which resources have been allocated in the 2024/25 budget;

   1.2. Note the proposed development of a three-year Events & Sponsorship plan to be delivered by autumn 2024, in alignment with the revised Corporate Plan and Medium-Term Financial Plan.

**Reasons for Recommendations and Options Considered**

**Background**

2. Events & Sponsorship are an important part of Cardiff Capital Region's communications and marketing. This applies to both the promotion of the South East Wales region nationally and internationally and also CCR's wider activity and funds, through regional promotion and sponsorship.

3. CCR has delivered or been a partner in the delivery of an increasingly ambitious programme of events. From a standing start as a City Deal, CCR has become the lead partner and accountable body for the regional presence at the leading international property convention, MIPIM.

4. Likewise, CCR led the design, development and delivery of the Unleashed Conference in 2023, convening more than 350 representatives from regional businesses and a wide range of stakeholders at a prestigious event in Newport's Celtic Manor.

5. In terms of sponsorship, CCR is frequently approached to sponsor events, activities, or organisations. This has been conducted on the basis of alignment to our Competitive, Connected and Resilient strategic goals and, where possible, contribute to key performance indicators – for example, business engagement.

6. Overall, events & sponsorship activity to date as part of the CCR City Deal has been designed and managed as part of the annual business planning process, making it necessarily tactical in nature and inhibiting the ability of CCR to sufficiently track outcomes longitudinally and better understand impact as part of a longer-term strategy.

7. Given that CCR now, by virtue of the statutory power of economic wellbeing vested in the SEWCJC, which must be delivered concurrently with other actors (such as local authorities, Welsh & UK Government and business), there is an opportunity to reappraise the approach to this important function and set agreements in place for delivery.

8. Likewise, as a new public body, CCR needs to engage citizens from across the region and encourage participation with a diverse range of stakeholders, to ensure the organisation continues its drive to productivity, inclusivity and sustainability.

9. For this reason, there is a pronounced need for a three-year Events & Sponsorship plan, allied to a revised Marketing & Communications strategy, which underwrites the ambitions of CCR, as outlined in the Regional Economic & Industrial Plan (2023-28).

10. This is being developed in alignment with the new Corporate Plan and Medium-Term Financial Plan, to ensure that there is sufficient resource and funding to deliver a medium-term events & sponsorship programme. This will be brought forward in autumn 2024, along with a partnership programme to drive revenue in support of CCR activities.

11. In the interim, CCR must navigate current and near-term commitments and ambitions, and this paper seeks CJC approval of the proposed approach and funding requirement to June 2025.

**Events & Sponsorship 2024-25**

12. Detailed below is the proposed approach to Events & Sponsorship for 2024-25, while a medium-term strategy is developed. This covers National &

International; Regional; and Sponsorship. The associated resourcing & any funding requirement is detailed thereafter.

13. Upon approval of the approach and resourcing requirement, CCR will develop a detailed plan for each event, including core objectives, logistics and key performance indicators.

**National & International Events**

14. CCR's place promotion is focussed on supporting inward investment, including support for direct investment and infrastructure. To do this requires the promotion and marketing of the City Region to attract both specific project investment, and the profile of the area generally for investment.

15. CCR has utilised national and international events to strategically position itself in target markets as a leader in, and enabler of, innovation and growth. This highlights the region's growing expertise in developing industrial innovation-led clusters.

16. The involvement of regional businesses in attending these events, building on the work of our partner local authorities, has also been pivotal. This growing network support the ambition and growth of the region's business community by helping them collaborate and innovate together, and ultimately leveraging economic and social benefits across the region.

17. Over the past two years, Cardiff Capital Region has committed to two main annual events, the international property and investment convention **MIPIM** in France and the national built-environment and investment convention and exhibition, the UK Real Estate Investment & Infrastructure Forum (**UKREiiF)** in Leeds.

18. The key drivers for attending these events are:

- Place promotion of CCR for national and international investors;
- Alignment with our strategic goals, particularly around infrastructure and transport investment;
- Secure investment for regional projects and development schemes;
- Supporting local business partners in attracting investment;
- Promotes CCR to national governments and to other UK and international regions, encouraging collaboration and engagement.

19. **MIPIM** is the international property and investment convention which is held every year in Cannes and is in its 34th year. This attracts over 126 countries world-wide with circa 25,000 delegates and brings together global cities and city regions with investment needs and prospects, with the investment community.

20. Building on the work of Cardiff Council Economic Development colleagues, this is an important and distinctive event for the CCR, bringing together UK City Regions, with which we have developed strong working relationships.

Other UK regions in attendance include London, Manchester, Liverpool, Southampton, Newcastle and Belfast.

21. MIPIM has a focus on high value investments and stronger outcomes are realised over time and with relationship development - for example, Cardiff's Central Square investment discussions commenced at MIPIM. Active leads from 2024 attendance are in the areas of life sciences, leisure / hotel, green energy, visitor attractions and residential development. Likewise, CCR Energy have seen a significant increase in international interest post MIPIM.

22. MIPIM 2025 takes place from 10 – 14 March 2025, and CCR must confirm by end of July 2024 its intention to participate and commit to the proposed site, which has a financial commitment of circa £100,000. The intention is that the costs for this will be met by private sector partnership. The detailed case for this will be brought to a meeting of the CJC prior to calendar year end 2024.

23. **UKREiiF** is the fastest growing UK-based built-environment and investment convention and exhibition. Held annually in Leeds, it has significant investor presence, and there were 12,500 attendees in 2024, with 16,000 attendees expected in 2025. It is also becoming increasingly known for thought leadership, addressing key policy issues, and is supported by UK Government (UKG), Welsh Government (WG), 'invest in' institutions, think-tanks, and the Metro Mayors of combined authorities.

24. Unlike MIPIM, CCR exhibited with Western Gateway in 2024 and is developing a partnership model, working with Invest Bristol & Bath. UK cities and regions are heavily represented and there is a need for a more distinct CCR offering within the Western Gateway presence.

25. While UKREiiF 2025 takes place from 20 – 22 May 2025, CCR must confirm its commitment to be an event partner with Western Gateway by August 2024. The event partnership has a cost of £10,000.

**Regional Events**

26. Unleash is CCR's platform for engagement with the region's businesses (particularly SMEs) focusing on funding, innovation and inclusion. The Unleash 2023 conference was attended by over 350 businesspeople last year and more than 300 have attended Regionally Unleashed events.

27. The Unleashed programme is tightly aligned with our strategic goals - critically, it drives a pan-regional approach and focuses businesses on innovation, inclusivity and sustainability. Regionally Unleashed is a key component of our Unleash commercial engagement with businesses and SMEs in the region, delivering funding advice and innovation case studies. It also gives exposure to some of CCR's key funding opportunities, such as the Innovation Investment Capital, Strategic Premises Fund and Northern Valleys Initiative.

28. The Unleashed events also enable senior leaders and officers the opportunity to meet and engage with local businesses, communities and work collaboratively with local authority colleagues. Three Regionally Unleashed events have been held since 2023, most recently Torfaen in April 2024. Future

events are planned for Newport in October 2024 and Rhondda Cynon Taf in February 2025.

**Events Sponsorship**

29. Sponsorship of events by CCR must align with one or more of our 'Competitive, Connected, Resilient' strategic goals and, typically, directly align with tactical milestones or activity as detailed in the Annual Business Plan.

30. On a tactical basis, and particularly in relation to the Shared Prosperity Fund sponsored Cluster Development & Growth Programme, sponsorship can be in support of CCR priority sectors. Likewise, sponsorship which supports key partners in delivering against CCR goals and / or KPIs is given consideration - for example, working with higher education to leverage investment.

31. For example, CCR is a regular sponsor of Wales Week London; leveraging this opportunity and aligned to the Annual Business Plan, CCR increased participation by holding a key event at the House of Lords aimed at raising awareness of the region and opportunities. A brief was developed, stakeholders consulted and approved by CCR's Chief Executive and SLT.

32. Since the transition to the CJC, consideration must also be given to CCR's citizen engagement, particularly participation with wider communities, for example, as detailed in the Strategic Equality Plan.

33. Among the CCR sponsored events forthcoming are:

- National Eisteddfod, co-sponsor Science & Tech Village, August 2024, Pontypridd;
- WipDA Conference, compound semiconductor sector, September 2024, Cardiff;
- Western Gateway Business Conference, (one category only), October 2024, ICC Wales (subject to decision);
- Wales Tech Week, (one category only), Nov 24, ICC Wales.

**Resourcing and funding**

34. As detailed above, approval is sought from CJC of the approach for the remainder of 2024-25. Allied to this, there are resource and funding considerations. It is worth noting that CCR have secured co-funding from partners for sponsorship activities, for example the National Eisteddfod.

35. In regard to resourcing, CCR Communications & Marketing staff, with assistance and input from the wider team and support from colleagues across local authorities, currently design and deliver events, and manage sponsor presence, where required.

36. As part of Cardiff Council's contribution of MIPIM, we are also exploring in-kind resource to support the delivery of the event and its associated programme. This will also support the development of a partnership package, which will be

used to leverage revenue to support the programme. For example, a current MPIPM sponsor will be given the opportunity to feature across a number of the CCR events, enhancing both revenue and quality of engagement.

37. The table below details the current position, with details on funding requirements, where appropriate.

| Area | Detail of costs | Funding approach |
|---|---|---|
| National & International Events: MIPIM, 11-14 March 2025 | Total cost in the region of £280k, with significant space lease and stand build; marketing, event and agency support. | Co-sponsors Welsh Government and Cardiff Council (cash and in-kind support), allied to CCR's contribution (£50k in 2023-24). The remainder is private sector funding from regional businesses. |
| National & International Events: UKREiiF, 20-22 May 2025 | £10k for partnership funding to Western Gateway, and costs for travel, public relations support, accommodation, and delegate passes (estimated at £10-£15k). | Using private sector partnership model to offset costs of the event and seeking Welsh Government funding |
| Regional Events | Each Regionally Unleashed event costs approximately £4k, excluding CCR staff and other internal resources. There are two further events planned for 2023-24. | CCR funded - the cost is not significant, but they are resource intensive. Working with IIC and potentially other funds to offset costs and enhance value. |
| Sponsorship | Costs vary and a hybrid approach is taken, depending on the case being made, including SPF funding and programmes such as the Cluster Development & Growth Programme, co-sponsorship and partner contribution. | 65% funded from CCR SPF funds to support strategic goals and engagement with key stakeholders in the business and wider communities. |

## Comments of the s.151 Officer

38. The CJC approved its 2024/25 Revenue Budget at its meeting of the 29 January 2024. Table 2 of that report set out details in respect of operational budget heads relating to the City Deal funding programme, the costs of which are met from CCR Local Authority Contributions (43.8%) and the Wider Investment Fund (WIF) Top-Slice Contributions (56.2%).

39. In-line with previous years, the City Deal Office General Budget includes £50,000 in respect of the CCR's contribution to the MIPIM. The report sets out that cost of the event is likely to be in the region of £280,000, which includes lease space and stand build, marketing and agency support. In previous years these costs have been managed through a combination of co-sponsorship with

Welsh Government and Cardiff Council, with the balance being met through private sector sponsorship funding.

40. The deadline for confirming lease space at the 2024/25 event is July 2024. Therefore, the report is seeking an approval in principle for the CJC to attend the event ahead of a detailed report being brought back for consideration in the autumn. That report will fully set out the arrangements for the 2024/25 event, including total event costs and how these are to be funded (Financial Plan). Members should note the cost of the lease space is circa £100,000 and will need to be paid in 3 instalments over the next 9 months.

41. Should other funding sources outlined in the Financial Plan not materialise, CJC contributions would need to be increased or a decision made not to proceed with the event. It should be noted that those funding sources have successfully been secured in the past. Any CJC costs over and above the £50,000 budget identified would need to be managed from potential underspends in other areas. Should the CJC subsequently decide not to attend, then payments made in respect of the lease space will be lost.

42. Similarly, the deadline for attending UK REiif in May 2025 is Augst 2024. The report seeks approval to commit £10,000 as an event partner, which can be met from the annual Marketing, Communications & Events budget and subject to its approval, will represent a forward commitment against the 2025/26 Budget.

43. The report highlights a range of activities in respect of Regional Events and approach to Sponsorship, with further details being brought back to Members in the form of a three year Events & Sponsorship Plan later in the year. The Plan will be developed in conjunction with the current year's approved budget, with commitments to future year's being considered as part of the 2025/26 Budget and the CJC's overall Medium Term Financial Plan. To the extent the Plan is reliant on external grant funding e.g. Shared Prosperity Funding (SPF), then use of such funding must be in accordance with its terms and conditions.

**Comments of the Monitoring Officer**

44. The CJC is not required by statute to have regard to the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authority Publicity issued by the Welsh Ministers under section 4(1) of the Local Government Act 1986. However, the broad principles governing the use of publicity are the same for any public body.

45. Section 2 of the 1986 Act prohibits local authorities from publishing material which appears to be designed to influence public support for a political party.

46. Section 6 of the Act defines publicity as "any communication, in whatever form, addressed to the public at large or to a section of the public". The Code therefore covers all local authority decisions on publicity and most public relations activities, such as paid advertising, and sponsorship of exhibitions and conferences, as well as assistance to others to issue publicity.

47. Publicity should be relevant to the functions of the CJC, and the CJC must use its resources economically, efficiently and effectively. Any publicity describing the CJC's policies and aims should be as objective as possible.

48. Any material produced should be in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and should be produced in accordance with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the relevant standards specified by the Welsh Ministers under Part 4 of the Measure.

**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

49. The Committee must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty arising under s.149 of the Equality Act 2010, and the need to: (1) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act; (2) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not; and (3) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not.

50. There are no specific equalities implications arising from this report.

**Sustainability and Climate Considerations**

51. There are no specific sustainability or climate change implications arising from this report. Any implications arising will be addressed as part of future reports.

**Consultation**

52. CCR officers are working collaboratively with colleagues in local authorities, particularly those with whom events are delivered cooperatively.

**Welsh Language Implications**

53. In accordance with the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, and the CJC's statutory obligations, consideration has been given to the impact the recommendations made in this report may have on opportunities for people to use and promote the Welsh Language, whether the proposals treat the Welsh Language more or less favourably than the English Language, and opportunities for increasing the positive effects, or decreasing the negative effects, of the proposals on the Welsh Language. No negative impacts were identified which would prevent approval being sought to implement the proposal. In particular, consultees will be offered an equal opportunity to respond in either the Welsh or English language.

**Well-being of Future Generations**

54. In developing the Recommendations of this report, regard has been had to the well-being duty arising under the to the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ('the Act'), and no negative impact has been identified.

**Kellie Beirne, Chief Executive**
**22 July 2024**