

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>International Air Show</b>
<b>Committee Report Submitted To:</b>	<b>Leisure &amp; Development Committee</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>21 September 2021</b>
<b>For Decision or For Information</b>	<b>For Decision</b>

<b>Linkage to Council Strategy (2019-23)</b>	
Strategic Theme	
Outcome	
Lead Officer	Director of Leisure and Development

<b>Budgetary Considerations</b>	
Cost of Proposal	TBC
Included in Current Year Estimates	<b>YES/NO</b>
Capital/Revenue	
Code	
Staffing Costs	

<b>Screening Requirements</b>	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/No	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

## **1.0 Purpose of Report**

**The purpose of this report is to update Elected Members on the development of a new International Airshow for 2022, to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. This is further to the Notice of at the full Council on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021.**

Officers are requesting a decision on a preferred date and a new proposed location.

## **2.0 Background**

At the full Council meeting on 5 January 2021, a Notice of Motion was passed,

*'That this Council would develop a new International Causeway Airshow for 2022 to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and explore holding the event every 2 years from 2022. We should make this a key regional event not just for the Borough but for Northern Ireland and therefore explore working in partnership with key partners like the Northern Ireland Office, Ministry of Defense, Department for the Economy, Invest NI and Tourism NI. A project Board involving elected members of no more of 6 by d'hondt should be set up to shape and develop this event along with experts and other key stakeholders.'*

Council Officers established an internal working group. In addition, a Project Board with Elected Members has been convened.

## **3.0 International Airshow Event Delivery Group**

The Working Group, with direction from the Project Board has developed an outline approach for the coordination and delivery of this event in 2022.

Key designated areas for development include:

- Air activity programme.
- Ground activity programme.
- STEM and Corporate Business Engagement.
- Communication and Media.
- Traffic/Transport/Parking.
- Emergency Planning and Safety.
- Physical Resource Provision, Waste and Cleansing.

## **4.0 Development Issues/Opportunities**

The previous air show known as Airwaves Portrush was located on the eastern side of the peninsula in Portrush. Whilst this event was extremely successful, in recent years restrictions on the position of the flight-line imposed by the Civil Aviation Authority, has resulted in a diminished viewing experience for spectators.

The Working Group and Project Board have investigated the option to relocate the venue for the air show to the coastal lands between Portrush and Portstewart. Expert opinion has cited that this will provide a greatly enhanced viewing experience. After scoping and analysis of the site conditions, the Internal Working Group and Project Board recommends that the new location for the air show should be between Portrush and Portstewart.

## Proposed Flight / Display Line



### **5.0 Aims of the International Causeway Air Show**

The aims of the air show are:

- To celebrate the Queens Platinum Jubilee.
- Drive economic and tourism benefit through attracting visits, bed nights and spend from Northern Ireland's domestic and international target markets/segments through a high-quality, distinctive programme;
- In doing so - extends the tourism season, while delivering an authentic sense of place based on the heritage, culture and landscape of Causeway Coast and Glens.
- To act as a regional event for Northern Ireland which enhances the image, profile and reputation of Causeway Coast and Glens as Northern Ireland's premier rural and coastal tourist destination.
- To act as an economic driver through linkage to the Northern Ireland aerospace industry, providing a catalyst for creativity, innovation and distinctiveness. The event is supported and promoted by partners and stakeholders within and outside the Council.

### **6.0 Proposed Dates**

To allow extend the tourism season and provide sufficient time recovery / preparation time following the Lammas Fair, the proposed dates are 10 and 11 September 2022.

### **7.0 Air Show Components - Proposals**

#### **7.1 Air Activity Programme Proposal**

Whilst at an early stage of development, indicative air assets include the following.

- RAF assets including the Red Arrows, the Typhoon and the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight,
- Additional assets from the Royal Navy and Army.

- Civilian Air display teams.

This will be supplemented by further air activities yet to be confirmed:

- Foreign civilian jet teams.
- Applications will be made to Swiss PC7 team, a 9-ship of training aircraft.
- Swedish Air Force Historic Flight - jets such the Viggen, Draken and Lansen.
- Possibility of 'Ultimate Warbirds', a 4-ship of powerful World War 2 fighters.

## 7.2 STEM/Corporate Business Engagement and Sponsorship Proposal

The STEM Village was introduced in 2016 as a means to motivate and enthuse young people to get involved in STEM subjects and proved to be extremely popular with large visitor numbers. Year on year from 2016 to 2019 the STEM marquee increased in size to meet the demand from exhibitors. In 2022, the plan is to build upon this success with a new improved site location to attract more education and industry exhibitors with a particular focus on the aerospace industry sector.

In 2017 the Corporate Hospitality marquee was used to introduce a Business Engagement Day (BED) on the Saturday of the event for industry with key guest speakers, focussing, but not limited to the aerospace sector. Co-located with the STEM marquee, the success of the BED will be continued to attract key speakers and corporate business guests acting as an economic driver through linkage to the Northern Ireland aerospace industry. This event will attract Invest NI, Ministry of Defence, Department for the Economy and Department for Education representatives. A full range of sponsorship packages will be available as a means of income generation for the event. Specifically, a single Title Sponsor to headline the air show and key sponsors for the STEM Village and the Business Engagement Day. Additionally, when headline aircraft displays are confirmed, sponsors will be sought linked directly to those displays. Other sponsorship opportunities will be developed as planning progresses throughout 2022.

## 7.3 Air Show Programme – Ground Activity

The proposed Air Show Ground Activity is currently being scoped by the Events Team). The ground layout is geographically more extensive than the previous Airwaves event in Portrush, with multiple viewing points along the Borough's coastline which will need to be safely managed. This enhanced layout presents an opportunity for a larger ground footprint between Portrush and Portstewart maximising the visitor experience, while requiring extensive business and resident engagement to minimise impact e.g. Traffic Management.

The Council ground programme will focus around 7 dedicated viewing locations, where the 'hubs' of entertainment and programming will be based:

- Portrush Ampitheatre / Kerr Street Green (Animation Hub).
- Black Hill - Viewing Area.
- Ballyreagh Main Event Site -No.2.
- Junniper Hill - Event Space and Viewing Area.
- Rinagree - Event Space and Viewing Area.
- The Pitt's - Main Event Site No.1.
- Portstewart - The Crescent Entertainment Hub.

## Proposed Ground Activity



Ground programming elements which are currently being considered in these 7 locations include (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Artisan Market.
- Soft Play / Amusements.
- Viewing Areas / Picnic Tables.
- Army and Sea Cadets Demonstrations.
- Emergency Services / Event Control.
- Food Trading.
- Motorhome Parking.
- Park and Ride.
- VIP / STEM.
- RAF / Navy.
- Military Stalls.
- Aviation Heritage Display.
- Ulster Military Vehicle Display.
- Royal British Legion.
- Cool FM / Media Centre.
- Ulster Gliding Club.
- Staging Units / Entertainment.
- Trade and Sponsorship Opportunities.

### 7.4 Communication and Media

The event requires a dedicated marketing and communications resource detailing target markets and agreed technical platforms for selling the event and communicating the wider brand of the Causeway Coast and Glen's area as a visitor destination. As a

Council delivered event, PR and communications from a corporate point of view will be factored for. The technical plan and customer reach will be used as a lever to attract key sponsors for the event.

#### **8.0 Budget**

To be confirmed.

#### **9.0 Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Leisure and Development Committee gives consideration to:

- (i) A new venue location and flight line.
- (ii) The proposed dates of 10 & 11 September 2022.