

Report To: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 25 March 2014

Lead Member / Officer: Councillor Huw Jones, Cabinet Lead Member for Tourism, Youth & Leisure
Jamie Groves, Head of Communication, Marketing & Leisure

Report Author: Rhian Roberts, Lead Officer for Strategic Leisure

Title: Wiggle Etape Cymru 2014 Cycling Event

1. What is the report about?

To update members about the Etape Cymru closed cycling event scheduled to take place in the county on Sunday 14 September 2014, a week later than last year.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

The Leader and local members raised some concerns about the event that took place in 2013 and want reassurance that these have been addressed before making a decision on the proposed new route and Road Closure Orders.

The report provides Cabinet members with information on the route, communications with the event organisers and planned road closures

3. What are the Recommendations?

That Cabinet note the arrangements put in place to address the communities and members concerns, and that Cabinet agree the road closure and endorse the event taking place

4. Report details.

- 4.1 Etape Cymru is a major closed cycling challenge that begins at Bangor on Dee in Wrexham County. The 88 mile race starts and finishes at Bangor on Dee, but soon enters Denbighshire, taking in stunning scenery around the Dee Valley, the Horseshoe Pass and the Clwydian Range Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 4.2 Organisers of the event have been delighted with the success of the event to date and are eager to return to the region for the fourth year in a row in 2014.

- 4.3 The Welsh Government provides a template for the event organisers to use to collate the economic impact of the event including visitor' spend, contractors used and so on. According to this template, the event organisers say the region benefited economically from staging the event in 2013 and the total estimated spend in the region over the weekend was approximately £500,000.
- 4.4 Of the 2007 entries to the event 80% were from outside of North Wales, 92.7% of participants are inspired to return to the North Wales regions for work or pleasure. On average, each participant brought 1.7 friends or family for support and stayed for 2 nights in the region.
- 4.5 The event itself is managed by Human Race, who are experienced in running events of this nature across the UK. Whilst the Council is not directly involved in the planning, event organisers have stressed that the event would be unlikely to go ahead without the support of both Denbighshire and Wrexham Councils.
- 4.6 The main role for Denbighshire is to facilitate discussions around highways, safety issues and communications with press and local communities.
- 4.7 The Council is aware that there have been concerns around certain aspects of the race and organisers are addressing those issues. A summary can be found in Appendix 1 of this report.
- 4.8 Denbighshire County Council has continued its regular communication with Human Race, the organisers of Etape Cymru, and Wrexham County Borough Council, in relation to the 2013 'closed road' cycling event which was held on Sunday 8 September 2013 and plans are now underway for the 2014 event to be held on Sunday 14 September 2014, a week later than last year to take into account some concerns raised.
- 4.9 Organisers, Council officers and the Cabinet Lead Member for Tourism, Youth and Leisure have met to review alternative routes for this year's event and agreed that Route 5 should be put forward as the most appropriate route in responding to our communities' feedback and avoiding such problems as in 2013.
- 4.10 The Council and Human Race organised a drop in session and focus group prior to the event last year in response to residents wanting more information. Residents along the route came along to discuss their concerns about the route and possible access issues during the event. The event organisers arranged for alternative means for residents to leave their properties with moto support escorting them out, this applied to businesses being able to get staff into their premises.

4.11 Another focus group took place after the event with the Council, residents, Town Councils, businesses and Human Race. Issues with the route were raised with the event organisers and reassurances were given that this would be looked at and once an alternative route was agreed to be taken forward, then a small focus group would meet to discuss the route

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

5.1 Denbighshire is a quality destination for cycling, which as yet is fairly undiscovered, and has a great opportunity to benefit economically from the growth seen in the activity tourism sector. Regeneration is one of the council's corporate priorities.

5.2 Significant parts of Denbighshire have recently been designated the North Wales Cycling Centre of Excellence, with the aim of creating an area of acknowledgement nationally as an outstanding all year round destination for road and off-road cycling.

5.3 Denbighshire County Council is committed to the Leisure Strategy, in which two of its objectives are to work in partnership to plan and deliver leisure opportunities and have access to high quality setting. This partnership shows the support of working with organisations to make the best use of resources to design, deliver and promote leisure opportunities.

5.4 Denbighshire County Council is also committed to the Tourism Strategy for North Wales, in which its Action Plan includes the development of major events and outdoor attractions and activities.

5.5 The event It also supports the council's Economic and Community Ambition Strategy, in which theme 6: A well promoted Denbighshire, includes that Denbighshire is recognised as a great place to visit and plays a key role in making North Wales a top 5 UK visitor destination.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

6.1 No financial contribution has been made to the event from Denbighshire County Council.

6.2 Staff time provided by Highways, Regeneration, Destination Marketing and Communications and Cycling Centre of Excellence project to support the event planning by the organisers

7. What are the main conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) undertaken on the decision? The completed EqIA template should be attached as an appendix to the report.

The project will not unlawfully discriminate against protected groups.
EqIA attached.

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

- 8.1 7 Oct 13 - DCC officers, Head of Service, Jamie Groves, The Leader and Lead Member for Tourism, Leisure and Youth met with organisers to discuss concerns from the 2013 event and ask for a statement of intent from the organisers for the Council.
- 8.2 23 Oct 13 – A focus Group took place, post the event, between residents and the organisers, with DCC officers facilitating to discuss issues raised and looking for a way forward to relieve some of the issues raised.
- 8.3 Consultation and engagement is already taking place with the following departments: Highways, Emergency Planning, Destination Marketing and communications and the Lead Member for Tourism, Leisure and Youth.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

Any costs incurred by the Council will have to be contained within existing Departmental revenue budgets.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

A number of risk/concerns have been identified by the Leader. These are listed in Appendix 1, together with some remedial plans that are being put in place in order to mitigate the risks going forward by Human Race

11. Power to make the Decision

Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 (for the promotion of improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of a local authority area