



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

## COUNCIL CABINET

1 August 2006

# ITEM 12

Cabinet Member for Leisure and Direct Services

## BIG CITY SCREEN FOR DERBY

### SUMMARY

- 1.1 The BBC and the electronics company Phillips are offering to install a big city screen on Derby Market Place, on terms which are likely to be available only for the next few months.
- 1.2 The University of Derby have expressed an active interest in the project, including an offer to co-finance and to provide documentary programmes. Contact is being made with other prospective partners.
- 1.3 Total annual costs are estimated at £75,000 of which the Council may have to provide £25,000. Installation would cost between £25,000 and £60,000

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Signal to BBC and Phillips our agreement in principle provided that planning consent can be obtained and a suitable funding package can be assembled.
- 2.2 Assemble a consortium of partners to progress and fund the project.
- 2.3 Make a planning application and complete the consultation with potential funding partners quickly so that we can secure a screen for installation by the end of this year.

### REASON FOR PROPOSED ACTION

- 3.1 Evidence collected by the BBC demonstrates that a big city screen can act as a stimulus to increase visitor numbers and satisfaction levels. It would assist in regenerating the Market Place and the historic heart of the city.
- 3.2 The possibility of intensive use of the Market Place to view major sporting and cultural events such as the Olympic Games, Wimbledon or the Last Night of the Proms could have an important impact on community cohesion, and help to establish the Market Place as a cultural venue.
- 3.3 The screen could be an important outlet for digital programmes emanating from the University, City Council, QUAD, and Derby's creative industries.



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Report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration & Community

# BIG CITY SCREEN FOR DERBY

## SUPPORTING INFORMATION

### 1.1 The concept of a Big City Screen consists of:

- a large video screen permanently installed in a suitable position in the City Centre
- the services of a professional programmer employed by the BBC and
- an open policy on programming which leaves great scope for the exhibition of video material produced by local companies and groups with the intention of promoting the city's creative industries, its events programme and the breadth of its cultural life.

### 1.2 The BBC has judged that Derby Market Place is an ideal location.

The screen fits with the key strategic aim of the Derby City Partnership to 'create a city centre which people of all ages and background will be able to enjoy at any time of the day'

It also fits with one of the key strategic priorities of City Centre Management which is to 'develop a planned and proactive approach to the use of these (open) spaces and in particular the Market Place which had the potential to be developed as a venue in its own right.

From evidence supplied by the BBC, it has a positive impact upon attracting and increasing levels of footfall in the immediate vicinity of the screen, which would make a contribution to the activity to promote and develop the established shopping area of the city known at the 'Cathedral Quarter'.

- ### 1.3 City screens are already in operation in Liverpool, Manchester, Hull, Rotherham, Leeds and Birmingham. Each screen measures eight metres across and five metres high. Ideally the bottom of the screen should be fixed four metres from ground level. The minimum viewing distance from the screen is recommended at 15 metres and the maximum viewing distance in comfort is estimated at 250 metres.
- ### 1.4 Sound is projected from speakers nearby. Very careful sound zoning is used so that the sound does not intrude outside of the targeted area of the Square. Sound levels can be varied during the day and the sound is always muted from 11 o'clock at night.

- 1.5 The BBC provides a Screen Manager who is permanently based in the City and can control the programming of the screen from a laptop. The job of this person is to organise the content for the screen in close collaboration with local people. The technology is organised so that it can play programming from any of the eight BBC digital channels, but in addition it can be hooked up to cameras elsewhere in the city to show events or to show people images of themselves. An important part of the Screen Manager's job is to organise local content produced by schools, universities, colleges and specialist organisations such as QUAD.
- 1.6 The BBC programming and the work of the Screen Manager would come from the BBC for free. No Channel 4 or Sky material would be shown unless a deal had been negotiated beforehand by the BBC.
- 1.7 The screen would run for 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Advice from the BBC is that the BBC News 24 coverage could be used at any time when local content is not available for the screen. They also recommend that the most popular BBC programming could be used daily, for instance from 6 am the Breakfast Show or in the early evening the 6 o'clock News.
- 1.8 In the case of the largest sporting or cultural events there will be a need for stewarding on Derby Market Place to cope with the numbers of people and their safety.
- 1.9 We have been in contact with the BBC on this project over many months. Initially the revenue funding requirement was £150,000 a year.
- 1.10 At that stage a group was convened to examine the proposal, including the Chamber of Trade and City Centre Management, Derby City Partnership, Derby Marketing and the Council's Department of Community and Regeneration.
- 1.11 The conclusions of the discussion at that stage were:
  - the value of the screen at key moments in the calendar could be enormous in the context of public enjoyment of high profile sporting events, with consequent impact on community cohesion
  - commercial sponsorship of the order needed was unlikely to materialise
  - The amount of locally generated video material would be very small compared with the 24/7 requirement
  - The costs were too high
- 1.12 The latest offer from Philips is for a screen which has recently been in temporary use in Germany for the World Cup. The annual cost for leasing the screen over five years is now quoted at £75,000
- 1.13 The University of Derby has responded to this latest offer enthusiastically with the possibility of long-term sponsorship and the provision of copious high-quality local content, including documentary coverage about the University and creative material produced in relation to their media courses.

## **OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 2.1 We have examined the possibility of hiring a temporary big screen for the Market Place on a daily basis to coincide with the most prominent sporting and cultural events and been quoted a fee of up to £13,000 per day.

- 2.2 We have examined the market to see whether an alternative model is available and found that purely commercial installations relying on advertising work at other international locations. An alternative model was tried at Rotherham recently but the BBC/Philips model was adopted finally in the light of experience.

<b>For more information contact:</b>	Ray Rippingale Tel: 01332 716601 e-mail ray.rippingale@derby.gov.uk
<b>Background papers:</b>	None
<b>List of appendices:</b>	Appendix 1 – Implications

<b>IMPLICATIONS</b>
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**Financial**

- 1.1 Our costings may be affected by the exact siting, but indications from across the existing Big City Screens are that the one-off installation costs between £25,000 and £60,000
- 1.2 We are exploring the possibility of external funding to help with this one-off cost.
- 1.3 The total annual leasing fee payable to Philips is £75,000.
- 1.4 Depending on partnership contributions, the annual funding shortfall could be £25,000 a year, funded from a contribution from corporate reserves for a maximum of five years.
- 1.5 The cost of outright purchase of the screen would be £474,000, if we declined the leasing agreement.
- 1.6 The costs of electricity, communications, insurance and health and safety measures such as stewarding of major events have yet to be assessed, but would have to be net from the existing entertainments budget.

**Legal**

- 2.1 Copyright issues would be dealt with by the BBC.
- 2.2 Draft agreements with the BBC and with Philips are with the Council's Legal Service for scrutiny and amendment: they are based on existing agreements in force elsewhere in the UK.
- 2.3 A partnership agreement would be necessary between the Council and the University and any other long-term sponsors.

**Personnel**

- 3. There would be no impact on Council staffing or conditions of service.

**Equalities impact**

- 4 None

## **Corporate Priorities**

5.1 The proposal predominantly comes under the Council's Objective of:

- improving the quality of life of Derby's neighbourhoods
- building healthy and independent communities

5.2 The proposal relates to the Council's priorities to:

- reinvigorate the city centre and river areas
- promote healthier communities
- deliver joined up services for children and young people that meet the needs of the local community