

<b>Committee:</b>  <b>OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY</b>	<b>Date:</b>  <b>5 April 2011</b>	<b>Classification:</b>  <b>Unrestricted</b>	<b>Report No.</b>	<b>Agenda Item No.</b>  <b>5.1</b>
<b>Report of:</b> <b>Assistant Chief Executive</b>		<b>Title: Cabinet Decision Called-in:</b>		
<b>Originating Officer(s):</b> <b>Amanda Thompson</b> <b>Team Leader, Democratic Services</b>		Commercial Activities in Victoria Park		
		<b>Wards:</b> Primarily Bow East and Bow West		

## 1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The attached report of the Corporate Director, Community, Localities and Culture was considered by the Cabinet on 9 March 2011 and has been "Called In" by Councillors Marc Francis, Carlo Gibbs, Anwar Khan, Joshua Peck and Amy Whitelock for further consideration. This is in accordance with the provisions of Part Four of the Council's Constitution.

## 2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Committee consider the contents of the attached report, review the Cabinet's provisional decisions arising and decide whether to accept them or refer the matter back to Cabinet with proposals, together with reasons.

---

### Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended)

### List of "Background Papers" used in the preparation of this report

Brief description of "background paper"

**Cabinet report - 9 March 2011**

Name and telephone number of holder  
and address where open to inspection

**Amanda Thompson**  
**02073644651**

### **3. THE CABINET'S PROVISIONAL DECISION**

#### **3.1 The Cabinet after considering the attached report provisionally agreed:-**

1. That the number of commercial and non-commercial event days in Victoria Park (excluding 2012) be restricted to ten days or less where this can be achieved whilst still securing income targets. This limit to exclude events such as charity fun-runs;
2. That the Corporate Director Communities, Localities and Culture be instructed to explore the possibility of reducing the number of commercial event days for 2011;
3. That the current closing time (11.00pm) remain unchanged;
4. That one consecutive weekend of commercial music events be permitted;
5. That Officers continue to monitor levels of security, stewarding and traffic management and improve these as necessary in response to need;
6. That noise control levels continue to be monitored and adjusted as necessary in the light of ongoing experience;
7. That negotiation for the Live Site in 2012 be considered outside of these arrangements;
8. That arrangements to allow a maximum of ten commercial events in Victoria Park in 2011 continue;
9. That the two-day Paradise Gardens event no longer proceed;
10. That in place of a single major fireworks event in Victoria Park, four smaller community fireworks events take place, one in each paired LAP;
11. That the opportunity to promote events in Victoria Park be tendered for the year 2013 and onwards;
12. That income generating opportunities in other suitable parks continue to be pursued where these do not impact unduly on the local community and planned sporting arrangements;
13. That the Corporate Director Communities, Localities and Culture examine the location of commercial and non-commercial events within Victoria Park with a view to mitigating any noise impact on nearby residents.

14. That the Corporate Director Communities, Localities and Culture be instructed to keep the Authority's policy in respect of events in parks under review and to advise the Mayor and Cabinet of any appropriate revisions.

#### **4. REASONS FOR THE 'CALL IN'**

- 4.1 The Call-in requisition signed by the five Councillors listed above gives the following reasons for the Call-in:

'The proposed programme of ten commercial events in Victoria Park for summer 2011 is in direct contravention to the motion which was overwhelmingly supported by councillors on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2010.

We are not opposed to the use of Victoria Park to stage major commercial events, but believe this programme is excessive. It takes no account of local residents who will be subject to loud noise for up to 10 hours on each of these days and park users who will be denied the use of much of the eastern half of the park before, during and after these events because of the security hoardings.

The original principle was that the two-day Lovebox weekend event funded the Bonfire Night fireworks display. Residents surrounding Victoria Park accepted this disruption resulting from Lovebox because they accepted the benefit to themselves and the wider community of the fireworks display.

Furthermore, while we understand the difficulties some residents in the south and west of Tower Hamlets experience in accessing the annual Bonfire Night fireworks display in Victoria Park and recognise benefit of smaller displays around the Borough, we are disappointed the council has specifically decided Victoria Park will not be a venue for one of them. As a result, residents near Victoria Park will now get all of the nuisance of the commercial events and not even have easy access to a fireworks display. This adds insult to injury.

We recognise that Tower Hamlets Council is facing budgetary pressures and that these events raise income for investment in Victoria Park itself and local community events. However, tickets sales have been estimated at up to £10 million from the ten commercial events in 2010, and Tower Hamlets Council was paid a fraction of that sum. We believe the council is failing to maximise the income it generates from each specific event through its negotiations with promoters, which means it ends up putting forward a bigger programme than necessary.

Finally, we note that the report fails to adequately explain why the costs of both the annual fireworks display and the Paradise Gardens free to access community event have spiralled out of control in the past three years, so that in 2010, they cost around £170,000 and £260,000 respectively. This failure to control costs or facilitate democratic scrutiny of these budgets is

unacceptable and should not be repeated again on the fireworks displays or any other free to access community events.'

## **5. ALTERNATIVE COURSE OF ACTION PROPOSED:**

### **5.1** The Councillors submitting the Call-in requisition have proposed the following alternative course of action:

'We call on the Mayor to restrict the number of commercial events in Victoria Park during the summer of 2011 to a maximum of six days/nights.

We call on the Mayor to publish details of the income generated from the commercial events in 2010.

We call on the Mayor to undertake consultation with residents of those wards surrounding Victoria Park about the maximum number of events that should be held in future years.

We call on the Mayor to continue the Victoria Park fireworks display, and formally ask LBH to contribute to the cost of this event.

We call on the Mayor to continue the popular Paradise Gardens event, exploring ways to reduce the cost.'

## **6. CONSIDERATION OF THE "CALL IN"**

### **6.1** The following procedure is to be followed for consideration of the "Call In":

- (a) Presentation of the "Call In" by one of the "Call In" Members followed by questions.
- (b) Response from the Lead Member/officers followed by questions.
- (c) General debate followed by decision.

**N.B. – In accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Protocols and Guidance adopted by the Committee at its meeting on 5 June, 2007, any Member(s) who presents the "Call In" is not eligible to participate in the general debate.**

### **6.2** It is open to the Committee to either resolve to take no action which would have the effect of endorsing the original Cabinet decisions, or the Committee could refer the matter back to the Cabinet for further consideration setting out the nature of its concerns and possibly recommending an alternative course of action.