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## **LIONS RUGBY TOUR**

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### **1. Purpose of Report**

To inform the Strategy and Policy Committee of arrangements to manage the influx of visitors associated with the British and Irish Lions rugby games in Wellington and to seek Committee approval to recommend that Council resolves to invoke a liquor ban for the Wellington Lions versus British and Irish Lions rugby game on Wednesday 15 June 2005 and for during the day of the test match on Saturday 2 July 2005.

### **2. Executive Summary**

The British and Irish Lions are touring New Zealand between 4 June and 9 July 2005. The team is playing two games at Westpac Stadium in Wellington, one on Wednesday June 15 against the Wellington Lions and the second on Saturday July 2 against the All Blacks.

Wellington City Council plays a role in facilitating the event to ensure that the experience is a positive one and that city infrastructure is adequate to meet demand. For planning purposes, the Council is assuming 50,000 people in town for the June 15 game and 65,000 people in town for the test match.

To provide for greater capacity to meet the demand of high visitor numbers the Council is facilitating special liquor licenses so that more bars can operate on the footpaths adjacent to their premises. To ensure pedestrian flow, and as a result of consultation with police, part of Tory Street, Courtenay Place and Blair and Allen Streets will be closed to vehicular traffic from 7pm on Friday 1 July to 8am Sunday 3 July.

Police consider that any large gathering in the city can lead to high levels of disorder and anti social behaviour. The police consider a liquor ban to be an effective tool to manage alcohol related behaviour in the public realm before it escalates. Therefore it is recommended that Council resolves to invoke a liquor ban in the central area, from noon on Wednesday 15 June 2005 until 6am on Thursday 16 June 2005. This ban will aim to address problems associated with public place drinking in the run up to and on the evening of the game between the Wellington Lions and the British and Irish Lions.

A liquor ban is already in place on Friday and Saturday nights in the central area from 5pm to 6am the following day. It is recommended that for the test match, the Council invokes a liquor ban on Saturday 2 July 2005 from 6am to 5pm so that, along with the general ban, there is a ban in force from 5pm Friday 1 July to 6am Sunday 3 July.

Council is working in partnership with NZRU, TourismNZ and PWT to encourage city decorations to “black out” the city in support of the All Blacks.

### **3. Recommendations**

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. *Receive the information.*
2. *Note the British and Irish Lions are playing two rugby games in Wellington this year, on June 15 against the Wellington Lions and on 2 July against the All Blacks.*
3. *Note the test match is sold out and crowds of up to 65,000 people are expected in Wellington city central for the test match and the provincial match is expected to be sold out.*
4. *Note that the Courtenay precinct will be the entertainment zone with live entertainment and there are some road closures to support that activity.*
5. *Recommend that Council resolves to invoke a liquor ban prohibiting the possession or consumption of liquor in public places in the central area, as defined by the District Plan, from noon on Wednesday 15 June 2005 until 6am on Thursday 16 June 2005 under the provisions of Clause 23.2.2 of the Consolidated Bylaw.*
6. *Note a liquor ban is in place on Friday and Saturday nights in the central area from 5pm to 6am the following day.*
7. *Recommend that Council resolves to invoke a liquor ban prohibiting the possession or consumption of liquor in public places in the central area, as defined by the District Plan, on Saturday 2 July 2005 from 6am to 5pm under the provisions of Clause 23.2.2 of the Consolidated Bylaw.*

### **4. Background**

The British and Irish Lions are touring New Zealand between 4 June and 9 July 2005. The team is playing two games at Westpac Stadium in Wellington, one on Wednesday June 15 against the Wellington Lions and the second on Saturday July 2 against the All Blacks. Those games start at 7.10pm and there is pre-game entertainment from 6.30pm. The Stadium seats 39,000 people, the test match is sold out and the Wellington Lions match is also expected to attract a capacity crowd.

### **5. Discussion**

#### **5.1 Council Role**

The tour will create a significant spike in visitor spending in Wellington and is expected to showcase Wellington to thousands of people in our target market, creating long-term word-of-mouth advertising. Therefore it is critical that the Wellington City Council plays a role in facilitating the event to ensure that the experience is a positive one for all

involved and that any negative impacts are minimised. The issues facing the Council are concerned with ensuring city infrastructure is adequate to meet demand so that:

- There is capacity to meet the needs of a large number of visitors to the city
- The city is safe and clean.

The Council also has a role in supporting and assisting other stakeholders such as retailers, the police, liquor license holders, and transport providers to meet the challenges posed by a large number of visitors.

Council officers are coordinating the response to the Lions tour in partnership with the Police, New Zealand Rugby Football Union (NZRU), Westpac Stadium, Stagecoach, Lions Hospitality and Positively Wellington Tourism (PWT).

Key to the success of this event will be a sound communication strategy. A range of information is being provided to PWT, tourism networks and other stakeholders. Council officers in partnership with PWT, NZRU, Retailers Association, Chamber of Commerce and Hospitality Association have met with the hospitality industry and retailers to facilitate the response to the influx of visitors. A further briefing is scheduled for Thursday 19 May. Signage is being installed to advise of road closures and liquor ban provisions.

## **5.2 Visitor numbers**

The number of visitors to Wellington cannot be accurately ascertained because many do not make bookings prior to their trip, and use campervans and backpackers for accommodation. The biggest group of supporters will be the travellers not on official packages such as the Barmy Army. As a result the information on visitor numbers and when, where and how these visitors will travel is relatively speculative. Council in partnership with PWT, NZRU and Police are closely monitoring visitor numbers.

For planning purposes, the Council is assuming 50,000 people in town for the June 15 game and 65,000 people in town for the test match.

## **5.3 Crowd management**

Wellington is expected to be at capacity not only on the day of the test match but also for the week before it as many people will stay in Wellington and travel to the game in Palmerston North on 28 June. Johnston's coach has confirmed that at least 29 coaches will travel the round trip from Wellington to Palmerston North.

The Barmy Army estimates there will be 10,000 individuals without tickets in Wellington for the 15 June game and 20,000 people without tickets for the test match.

The game on 15 June is not expected to stretch resources to the same extent as the test match and is likely to be comparable to a Super 12 match, therefore fewer special arrangements are required.

To provide for greater capacity to meet the demand of high visitor numbers the Council is facilitating special liquor licenses so that more bars can operate on the footpaths adjacent to their premises. Licensees are responsible for meeting the conditions of their

liquor licenses which includes managing alcohol related behaviour. The Council intend placing a condition on special licenses so that glass is not allowed outside. Council officers will also work with licensees who do not require a special license with a view to encouraging the use of plastic drinking containers outside.

With more bars operating on the footpaths, footpaths will be less available to a high level of foot traffic. To ensure pedestrian flow and as a result of consultation with police, Courtenay Place (from Cambridge Terrace to Taranaki Street), Tory Street (Tennyson Street to Wakefield Street), Blair and Allen Streets will be closed to vehicular traffic from 7pm on Friday 1 July to 8am Sunday 3 July. Officers are investigating the feasibility of installing a marquee across Blair and Allen Streets. Additional toilet facilities have been arranged for that area. Stagecoach and taxi companies have been consulted and provision has been made for temporary taxi stands close to the Courtenay precinct.

The road closures enable Courtenay Place to become an entertainment zone for 24 hours. There will be live entertainment throughout the day.

The Police will operate a satellite office in the closed area and will have extra resources on hand for crowd management. It is their policy not to disclose police numbers for such events.

Streetwise are developing a plan to maintain clean and safe streets. Normally Streetwise have seven people on duty throughout the weekend. For the test match weekend, they will have a staff of twelve on duty with frequent rotations along heavy pedestrian places such as Courtenay Place and Cuba Mall.

#### **5.4 Liquor Bans**

The Liquor Control Bylaw prohibits the consumption and possession of liquor in public places on Friday and Saturday nights in the Wellington Central Area. The Liquor Control Bylaw also provides under Part 23.2.2 that Council by resolution may order a prohibition on liquor consumption or possession (including while in a vehicle) in a public place within the Central Area for certain specified times and/or within certain specified public place areas within the central area for specified events.

Police consider that any large gathering in the city can lead to high levels of disorder and anti social behaviour. That behaviour is generally associated with alcohol consumption and is exacerbated by public place drinking. As a part of the responses in the city to reduce alcohol related harm the police consider a liquor ban to be a very effective tool to manage alcohol related behaviour in the public realm before it escalates.

It is recommended that Council resolves to invoke a liquor ban prohibiting the possession or consumption of liquor in public places in the central area, as defined by the District Plan, from noon on Wednesday 15 June 2005 until 6am on Thursday 16 June 2005 under the provisions of Clause 23.2.2 of the Consolidated Bylaw. This ban will address problems associated with public place drinking in the run-up to the game and on the evening of the game between the Wellington Lions and the British and Irish Lions.

A liquor ban is already in place on Friday and Saturday nights in the central area from 5pm to 6am the following day and this will apply on the night of the test match. However given the anticipated crowds, it is recommended that the Council resolves to invoke a liquor ban prohibiting the possession or consumption of liquor in public places in the central area, as defined by the District Plan, on Saturday 2 July 2005 from 6am to 5pm under the provisions of Clause 23.2.2 of the Consolidated Bylaw. Such a resolution will mean that a ban is in force from 5pm Friday 1 July to 6am Sunday 3 July.

The bans will be advertised and signage installed to advise the public. Council officers are working with the Barmy Army to ensure that English tourists are informed in advance of the liquor ban and what it means. Walkwise staff will also advise people in the city about the liquor ban provisions.

### **5.5 Family Friendly Entertainment**

In partnership with NZRU and Lions Hospitality 2005, the Council is organising a family friendly alcohol free venue to watch the test match. The event will take place in the Michael Fowler Centre from 5.30pm to 11.30pm. It will cater for 2,200 Wellingtonians and include musical entertainment, games and activities for children and giveaways for the family.

### **5.6 Corporate Hosting**

Lions Hospitality 2005 (LH05) is coordinating all corporate hosting sites in Wellington. Thirteen hundred people will be hosted for the provincial game while 12,134 will be hosted for the test match. Most hosting will take place at the Michael Fowler Centre, Civic Square, Duxton Hotel and Queens Wharf Events Centre. Several marquees are to be erected to support the corporate hosting.

Nearly 3000 individuals will travel by coach to the stadium from 5:45 – 6:30pm (some 65 buses). Council has organised a comprehensive traffic management plan in partnership with Police and Westpac Stadium to ensure that all hosted guests arrive promptly at the stadium. WCC Roading and Police will monitor traffic lights and Stadium entry points for both games. Police points officers will be at key intersections.

### **5.7 Accommodation and Travel**

For the June 15 game, 70% of available accommodation has been reserved in Wellington and nearly all accommodation in the city is booked from 26 June – 03 July. Positively Wellington Tourism has organised a home hosting page on [www.WellingtonNZ.com](http://www.WellingtonNZ.com) for individuals who would like to rent their homes.

The Pacific Sky cruise ship will be berthed at the Overseas Passenger Terminal from 28 June – 3 July. The ship has the capacity for 1300 beds.

Nearly 1000 guests will fly into and out of Wellington for the Test Match. The airport has consent to allow several planes to depart after the curfew. WCC Events and PWT

are working with ferry companies and the airport to develop contingency plans should a ferry break down or inclement weather close the airport.

### **5.8 Campervans**

It has been estimated that there is likely to be some 2,000 campervans in Wellington between 25 June and 2 July, with approximately 70 percent of these leaving from Christchurch following the test match there. There are seven campervan parks in the region with the largest being at Hutt City which has a capacity for 750 vans. Bookings for campervan sites are not high, as at 3 May there were 897 sites available for 15 June, and 650 sites available for 2 July. Council officers are working with Hutt City regarding shuttle buses from the campervan park to the railway station. Council is holding land at Te Whaea – the National Dance and Drama Centre in Newtown for campervan overflow.

Information has been provided to PWT, the Council Call Centre and tourism networks about facilities for campervans. That advice includes information on the location of two wastewater disposal sites available at Tawa and at Ngarauunga Gorge.

### **5.9 City Decoration**

Council is working in partnership with NZRU, TourismNZ and PWT to encourage city decorations to “black out” the city in support of the All Blacks. There will be four different banners up throughout the city – All Black, 100% at Home, WCC-Rugby Capital and WCC-Party Capital. All 387 banner sites have been booked. In addition there will be retailer’s competitions and the airport and ferry companies have been asked to theme their properties.

Several major All Black sponsors, for example Adidas and Telecom, are providing substantial support for the “black out” theme.

Tourism New Zealand has developed an umbrella marketing campaign called “Make Yourself 100% at Home,” to help provide a coordinated nationwide welcome to the Lions fans. The campaign builds on its 100% Pure campaign.

## **6. Conclusion**

The British and Irish Lions rugby team are touring New Zealand in June and July this year. As part of that tour they will be playing two games in Wellington. It is anticipated that there will be a huge influx of visitors to the city. To ensure the associated festivities proceed with minimal problems, Council officers have been working in partnership with other stakeholders on a planned response. This involves some road closures, facilitation of entertainment and the Council is being asked to invoke a liquor ban for both match days.

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## **Supporting Information**

**1) Strategic Fit / Strategic Outcome**

*The Lions Rugby Tour supports Wellington being an events city. It will attract a significant number of visitors to the city.*

**2) LTCCP/Annual Plan reference and long term financial impact**

*Not applicable*

**3) Treaty of Waitangi considerations**

*Not applicable*

**4) Decision-Making**

*This is not a significant decision.*

**5) Consultation**

**a) General Consultation**

*There has been significant consultation with external stakeholders and that consultation will continue.*

**b) Consultation with Maori**

*Not applicable*

**6) Legal Implications**

*Not applicable*

**7) Consistency with existing policy**

*This report is consistent with Council policy*