

# LIVE MUSIC CONCERTS ON THE HOE 2024

Briefing Paper Part I



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Date: 25/10/2023

## **1. Background**

From 2014 to 2018 Plymouth City Council (PCC) worked with MTV to deliver five live music events on Plymouth Hoe. The objective of the events was to reposition the city nationally and globally via broadcast across MTV's flagship music channels.

Over 154,000 people attended the events with an economic impact of around £10 million.

However, delivering commercial live music events is an extremely volatile and high risk business requiring a significant amount of investment. In recent years the festival market has become saturated and costs have escalated, with 100% increases in some areas.

We therefore needed to develop a new model which would enable us to maintain events of this nature on the Hoe, whilst minimising financial investment and risk to PCC.

Due to the challenging nature of the Hoe as an event site, an investment of c. £1.2 million is required to stage a large live music event. A procurement was undertaken in 2019 to find an independent promoter who would shoulder this financial risk but no suitable candidates tendered.

In 2020, we were approached by the previous Head of Events at MTV who was now working as an independent promoter and who wished to develop an event for Plymouth entitled I Big Summer. The first I Big Summer was planned for 2021. Whilst PCC did not make a financial contribution, the PCC Events Team worked closely with the promoters to facilitate the safe delivery of the event. Due to operational challenges related to Covid 19, the event was postponed in 2021 and held in 2022. The second event was planned for 2023 but was subsequently cancelled by the promoter due to rising costs coupled with a lack of early ticket sales.

It is clear that to develop an annually recurring live music event on the Hoe, stable investment over a period of years is required. The promoter needs to have enough financial backing to make a loss in the early years whilst the event is established, and to bounce back following a difficult year. The PCC Events Manager has liaised with Plymouth Culture and a number of local live music promoters, but none have the required investment or funding available to develop an event of this scale.

## **2. Decision Overview**

Live Nation Entertainment is the world's leading live entertainment company comprised of global market leaders: Ticketmaster, Live Nation Concerts, LN Media and Artist Nation Management.

Having visited the Hoe and met with the PCC Events Team, Live Nation (t/a Cuffe & Taylor) are keen to invest in a long-term strategy to grow an event in partnership with the Council.

We are proposing to enter into a commercial agreement for up to 4 consecutive concert days in 2024 with a ticketed capacity of 15,000 to 20,000 per day. Following a review of the event in year one, there would be an opportunity to extend the agreement for years 2-5, and again for years 6-10. Each year, event dates and capacity would be mutually agreed.

### **3. Model of Operation**

Live Nation will be responsible for the entire set up and organisation of the event with PCC offering assistance, access, and use of Plymouth Hoe. Live Nation will seek to obtain a Premises Licence for the event and they will be supported by the PCC Events Team who will broker relationships with the emergency services and other key stakeholders, as well ensuring all measures are in place for the safe execution of the event.

### **4. Links with the Council's overarching strategic objectives**

This event will form the backbone of Plymouth's annual signature event programme alongside the British Fireworks Championships and Armed Forces Day. The delivery of these events plays directly into the vision and ambitions laid out in the Plymouth Visitor Plan 2020-2030:

*Our waterfront and our culture are part of the DNA and 'urban spirit' of the city and have shaped our place and our people over generations and continue to do so today. That means we will deliver original experiences that visitors and local people alike will want to enjoy.*

*We will continue to use events, festivals, sport and significant celebration years to showcase what is distinctive about our city, project strong positive images to our target markets, attract new visitors and leverage further benefits for our city.*

### **5. Financial Implications**

The agreement will not require PCC to make any financial investment or take any financial risk, in fact, the event would become income generating for PCC from year 2 onwards if the agreement is extended. The income received will help fund the British Fireworks Championships and Armed Forces Day, keeping these events free for the public.

The full financial implications are set out in Part II of the report.

### **6. Economic Recovery**

The proposed event is modelled on the Lytham Festival which Live Nation have successfully delivered for 10 years in Lytham St Anne's, Lancashire. In 2023 Fylde Borough Council commissioned an independent social and economic impact report which revealed that the event injected more than £9 million into the Fylde coast economy.

We know that large scale events on the Hoe create a massive boost for local businesses including restaurants, bars and accommodation providers, not to mention the use of local suppliers and workforce in the delivery of the event itself. The British Fireworks Championships in 2023, for example, delivered a direct economic impact to Plymouth of £5.2 million

## 7. Climate Impact

As the world's leading live entertainment company, Live Nation have a clear Environmental Sustainability Charter with set goals and targets for all their offices, venues and live events. They recognise that they have a responsibility to preserve the live music experience for generations to come and a tremendous opportunity to use their platform to inspire global environmental actions.

A PCC Climate Impact Assessment has been undertaken and has identified that the areas of highest impact with regards to this event will be Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions, both of which will have a short term or limited negative impact. With regards to Air Quality, there will naturally be an increase in vehicle use as people travel to the event. However, the event will take place in close proximity to the main transport Hub at Royal Parade, and we will work closely with Live Nation to develop a sustainable transport plan which will include additional public transport provision plus a communications campaign to encourage sustainable travel to the event.

In terms of GHG Emissions, the event will use shore power wherever possible but due to the amount of power required temporary generators will likely be required. Live Nation will measure the events GHG Emissions and has set targets with the aim of meeting their overarching goal of 50% reduction in scope 1 and 2 GHG emissions by 2030.

## 8. Inclusion and Access

The PCC Events Team have been working hard to ensure all events are inclusive and accessible. To this end we have established the Events Inclusion and Access Group which has representation from different groups working and living with disabilities both visible and invisible. The purpose is to listen and gather feedback to improve our events by working together collaboratively and constructively. The proposed new music event will be included in discussion and development with this group.

In addition, Live Nation will work towards the Silver level accreditation on the [Attitude is Everything Live Events Charter](#), which is an industry standard designed to help build disability equality into all aspect of the event. The charter will cover many points including:

- Pre-event information and communications.
- Bookable access such as companion tickets and viewing platforms.
- Access-related policies such as assistance dogs, food and drink.
- Physical accessibility around the venue or event.
- Access to performance such as viewing platforms/areas
- Accessible facilities
- Accessibility for artists, volunteers and employees.
- Staff briefing and training.

Live Nation will also provide PCC with 200 free tickets per concert day which we will distribute to identified communities, particularly care experienced young people.

## 9. Community Impact

The PCC Events Team have a well-established process of ongoing dialogue with partners and stakeholders which includes pre-event consultation and feedback. We listen seriously to any feedback and strive to improve year on year.

Following the last I Big Summer event, the Hoe Neighbourhood Forum collated 27 responses from their members which provided a very balanced view of the event with many positive comments as well as concerns. The chair said *“I think it is a measure of the respect people have for you and your ongoing engagement with the forum that members have taken such time and trouble to write their feedback.”* We have also collated individual feedback from businesses.

Key emerging themes which we have already discussed with Live Nation are:

- The length of time the fencing was in place which prevented access through the middle of the Hoe
- The imposing nature of the fencing used, blocking the view for concert goers as well as other Hoe users
- Perception that there was no public access to the Naval Memorial

With regards to the fencing we are aiming to have a more phased approach for the site build closing smaller sections of the Hoe at a time, as well as minimising the use of ‘steel shield’ fencing wherever possible.

There will be a much better communications plan to advertise the process for people to access the Naval Memorial.

## 10. Summary

We are requesting approval from Plymouth City Council to enter into an agreement with Live Nation to enable the annual development of live music concerts on Plymouth Hoe as outlined above and in Part 2 of this Briefing Paper.

This event will be of significant benefit to the City, generating additional income for businesses, positioning Plymouth nationally and giving the residents of Plymouth a fantastic event to attend in line with the Visitor and Corporate Plans.