

Culture and Sport Committee

10.00am, Tuesday, 31 May 2016

A new Events Strategy for Edinburgh

Item number	7.4
Report number	
Executive	
Wards	All

Executive summary

This report presents a new Events Strategy for Edinburgh following an independently-led review of the Council's existing Events Strategy, first adopted in 2006.

The Events Strategy incorporates key principles of the refreshed National Events Strategy, which was published in 2015, as well as aligning with other key documents (the Council's Business Plan, Parks and Green Spaces Manifesto, Physical Activity and Sport Strategy and Culture Plan; Thundering Hooves 2.0). The Strategy focuses on how to deliver three specific categories of events for Edinburgh, as detailed in this report, and governance arrangements for citywide ownership of the strategy. Approval is sought for adoption of this new Events Strategy for Edinburgh.

Links

Coalition pledges	P24, P31
Council outcomes	CO8, CO20, CO26
Single Outcome Agreement	SO1, SO3

A new Events Strategy for Edinburgh

Recommendations

- 1.1 Approve the adoption of the new Events Strategy; and
- 1.2 Note that the report on each year's proposed core programme of festivals and events will now include an update on the delivery of this Strategy.

Background

- 2.1 The original Events Strategy was approved in 2006. The Council commissioned a refresh of the Events strategy in 2014 to ensure that it is fully fit for purpose and to take account of developments in the events sector, and the current events marketplace, since the creation of the original document in 2006.
- 2.2 An independently-led review process was undertaken, consisting of one-to-one consultation with event stakeholders; an Events Sector Seminar with sector practitioners; and a session with the Strategic Implementation Group of Edinburgh's Tourism Strategy. The views of those involved in delivering events in Edinburgh and the wider tourism sector were also sought on the future direction of events in Edinburgh and where support could be best delivered.
- 2.3 A report to the Culture and Sport Committee on a proposed approach for a new Events Strategy for Edinburgh was approved on [8 March 2016](#).
- 2.4 In 2015, EventScotland published the refreshed [National Events Strategy](#) for 2015 to 2025. This is reflected in the content of the new Strategy for Edinburgh.

Main report

- 3.1 In 2014 the Council commissioned a consultant to undertake a refresh of the Events Strategy. Key individuals within Edinburgh's events sector, including officers and elected members, were interviewed about their perception of the Council's role in delivering and supporting events and what should be delivered in future.
- 3.2 As a result of this consultation a new Events Strategy for Edinburgh has been developed with an emphasis on city-wide delivery and ownership of the strategy.

- 3.3 The **vision** of the new Strategy is that Edinburgh sustains a core programme to host world class sporting and cultural events, delivering the maximum possible benefits for residents and visitors, while enhancing the city's and Scotland's international profile.
- 3.4 The Strategy categorises events in three tiers: level one – major international events; level two – major national events; and level three – events bespoke for the city. Details of each of the tiers and event examples can be found within the appended Strategy.
- 3.5 A number of organisations are involved in the delivery of events in Edinburgh. An advisory board of representatives from the city's key stakeholders, including funding agencies and potential partners, will be appointed by the Chief Executive of the Council to leverage city-wide delivery of and support for events in Edinburgh.
- 3.6 The board will meet two or three times a year (and more frequently if required) to review proposed events, to assess potential commitment by member organisations to these events, and to allow the city to compete effectively to secure major events.
- 3.7 This Strategy covers the period until 2025, to match the duration of the National Events Strategy, and will be reviewed in 2020, to match the period covered by the Council's [2016-2020 Business Plan](#).
- 3.8 If approved by Committee, the attached document will be converted into a fully designed electronic document and will be hosted on the Council's external and Culture Plan websites.

Measures of success

- 4.1 The measure of success is a new Events Strategy for Edinburgh that aligns with the National Events Strategy while reflecting Edinburgh's status as a capital city, delivering events that complement the major Festivals and continuing to contribute as a core strategic planning mechanism making Edinburgh a great place in which to live, work, study and invest, and a great place to visit.
- 4.2 The Events Strategy contains three performance indicators that will be reported annually to this Committee.

Financial impact

- 5.1 The Events budget held by the Culture Service, including Edinburgh's Hogmanay and Edinburgh's Christmas, is £1.7m for 2015/16. (This is projected to reduce by £0.5m by 2017/18.)
- 5.2 There is no direct financial impact from this report. If the Events Strategy is approved, this could entail requests for additional financial support from the Council for a level one or two event. Following strategic oversight by the

Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee and consideration by the Culture and Sport Committee, level one and level two events whose costs cannot be contained in existing revenue budgets would be referred to the Finance and Resources Committee and then Council for approval.

Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

6.1 There are no risk or compliance issues arising directly from this report.

Equalities impact

7.1 The new Strategy ensures that events remain attractive and accessible to families, and accessible to community groups. The Strategy suggests a mixture of sporting, cultural and civic events that are accessible to all and inclusive.

Sustainability impact

8.1 It is a condition of funding that any events supported through the Event Strategy have an Environmental Policy which includes undertaking to minimise impact on the environment by the reduction of emissions; the efficient use of energy; the use of biodegradable and recycled products; and minimisation of waste amongst other activities. BS8901 is used as a guideline and suggestions are made to event organisers on how they can minimise their impact on the environment.

Consultation and engagement

9.1 The Council has engaged a wide range of stakeholders across Edinburgh's events industry through one to one interviews and workshops. Key individuals within Edinburgh's events sector, including officers and elected members, were interviewed about their perception of the Council's role in delivering and supporting events and what should be delivered in future. The details of the organisations consulted are listed in Appendix 2. The outcomes of this consultation and the recommendations of those who were consulted have been used to support and shape the final strategy and its implementation.

Background reading/external references

Report on a New Events Strategy for Edinburgh to Culture and Sport Committee on [8 March 2016](#).

The most recent reports on the Council's annual Core Festivals and Events Programme were presented to the Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee on [3 November 2015](#) and the Culture and Sport Committee on [30 November 2015](#).

Edinburgh’s Events Strategy published in [2006](#); Edinburgh’s Events Guide published in [2006](#); and Edinburgh’s Events Review published in [2006](#).

EventScotland [National Events Strategy](#) published in 2015

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Links

Coalition pledges	P24 -	Maintain and embrace support for our world-famous festivals and events
	P31 –	Maintain our city’s reputation as the cultural capital of the world by continuing to support by continuing to support and invest in our cultural infrastructure
Council outcomes	CO8 -	Edinburgh’s economy creates and sustains job opportunities
	CO20 -	Culture, sport and major events – Edinburgh continues to be a leading cultural city where culture and sport play a central part in the lives and futures of citizens
	CO26 -	The Council engages with stakeholders and works in partnership to improve services and deliver on agreed objectives
Single Outcome Agreement	SO1 -	Edinburgh’s economy delivers increased investment, jobs and opportunities for all
Appendices	1 –	One Edinburgh: Events Strategy to 2025
	2 –	List of Consultees

One Edinburgh: Events Strategy to 2025

Vision: Edinburgh sustains a core programme to host world class sporting and cultural events, delivering the maximum possible benefits for residents and visitors, while enhancing the city's and Scotland's international profile.

Building on a strong track record of success

Edinburgh has built an enviable reputation for presenting major high profile events alongside its 12 major Festivals, and as Scotland's capital city, acts as the gateway to the rest of the country. In the 1990s, Edinburgh hosted an EU Summit and a Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, and launched Edinburgh's Hogmanay. In quick succession, the city hosted a series of major cultural, sporting and civic events including the Tall Ships Race, MTV Music Awards, and the Make Poverty History rally and camp at the time of the 2005 G8 Summit. Following these high profile events, the city's reputation grew when it hosted two Heineken Cup Finals and Rugby World Cups, welcomed the Pope in 2010, and successfully delivered a variety of major sporting events including the World Cross Country Championships, the Archery World Cup Finals, Olympic, Paralympic and Queen's Baton Relays and hosted the 2014 Commonwealth Games diving competition. All of this complemented the city's world-leading festival programme and celebrated Hogmanay event.

Edinburgh's events contribute to the economic and cultural vitality of the city. They promote Edinburgh as a vibrant, contemporary international city; encourage people to visit the city and live and invest in Edinburgh; and strengthen the city's international relations and international development work. Alongside the major Festivals, Edinburgh's events help animate the city in all seasons; reflect the political and civic importance of Edinburgh as the capital city; and provide significant promotion of the city as a great place in which to live, invest, study and work, and as a great place to visit.

Some more recent examples of successful events held in the city include public art installations Field of Light and KEYFRAMES, the Edinburgh stage of the Gumball 3000 Rally, the IFSC European Youth Climbing Championship, the Great Edinburgh Cross Country, and a stage of the Tour of Britain.

The Council's existing Events Strategy was published in 2006. In revising the 2006 strategy, key stakeholders within the city were consulted through an independently-led review process comprising one-to-one consultation with event stakeholders; an Events Sector Seminar with sector practitioners; and a session with the Strategic Implementation Group of Edinburgh's Tourism Strategy.

The views of those involved in delivering events in Edinburgh and the wider tourism sector were also sought on the future direction of events in Edinburgh and where support could be best delivered.

Supporting Scotland's National Events Strategy

Edinburgh's high profile events support Scotland's events strategy, *Scotland – the Perfect Stage*.

The national vision is that "Scotland's reputation as the perfect stage for events is recognised nationally and internationally". The mission to deliver this national vision is "To develop, through a one Scotland approach, a strong and dynamic events industry producing a portfolio of events and festivals that delivers sustainable impact and international profile for Scotland." Council officers were involved in the development of the National Events Strategy.

This strategy covers the period until 2025, to match the duration of the National Events Strategy, and will be reviewed in 2020, to match the period covered by the Council's [2016-2020 Business Plan](#).

Supporting the City of Edinburgh Council's vision for Edinburgh

The Council's overall vision is that Edinburgh is a thriving, sustainable capital city in which all forms of deprivation and inequality are reduced. The Council has adopted three overlapping themes to support this vision: improve quality of life; ensure economic vitality; and build excellent places. Central to achieving this vision, events and the city's wider Culture Plan make significant contributions to improving Edinburgh's quality of life, economic vitality and place-making.

Edinburgh's Events Vision

Edinburgh sustains a core programme to host world class sporting and cultural events, delivering the maximum possible benefits for residents and visitors, while enhancing the city's and Scotland's international profile.

Edinburgh's strong existing partnerships in proactive event planning and management will ensure that this Council strategy is delivered by the whole city – a 'one Edinburgh' approach.

This vision also supports other national strategies including [Tourism Scotland 2020](#);; [Awakening The Giant: A Strategic Framework for Scotland's Marine Tourism Sector](#) and the [SportScotland Corporate Plan 2015 - 2019](#) and other Edinburgh strategies and plans including [Thundering Hooves 2.0](#), the strategy to sustain the success of Edinburgh's Festivals, the City of Edinburgh [Council's Business Plan](#), the Culture Plan, and the Physical Activity and Sport Strategy.

Edinburgh's Strengths

Over the last 20 years or so, Edinburgh's unique set of strengths has made it possible to build a reputation for event excellence.

This strategy will build on the city's clear strengths, which include:

- capital city status;
- strong existing partnership approach;
- a dramatic and compact city centre famed for its architectural heritage and beauty, featuring iconic skylines and generous greenspace, which lends itself as a natural and telegenic arena for major outdoor events;
- thriving international airport and strong transport connectivity; coastal location; and
- world class indoor and outdoor venues.

Edinburgh's natural heritage makes it extremely desirable as an events destination. The city's parks and green spaces are highly sought after for events, particularly those spaces which have the Castle and Old Town, or Arthur's Seat, as their backdrop. The 2010 Archery World Cup Finals event was hosted in Princes Street Gardens for this reason and broadcast globally. Given the interest in the use of the spaces it is important that they be managed and protected. The Council's [Edinburgh Parks Events Manifesto](#) governs the number, scale and duration of events permissible in each of the city's parks and green spaces.

The city's streetscape provides an equally desirable events arena. As well as the annual Riding of the Marches and the Festival Cavalcade, the city centre has hosted two stages of the Gumball Rally and two rounds of Red Bull Hill Chasers and the Tour Series cycling; a Johnny Walker Formula 1 display; and the Harmonium Project, which

launched the 2015 Edinburgh International Festival (EIF) and is to be followed by another free public event by the EIF, called Deep Time, in August 2016. The city also has world-class expertise in providing temporary event infrastructure for the Festivals, transforming prominent city centre spaces into cultural hubs each year (such as Bristo Square, the Mound Precinct, George Street and Princes Street Gardens.)

A Protocol for the use of public spaces in the city centre is currently being developed and will work in tandem with this Strategy to ensure the appropriate use of these spaces.

In addition to the outdoor venues, Edinburgh has world class indoor venues, both sporting and cultural. The Edinburgh International Climbing Arena, Edinburgh International Conference Centre, BT Murrayfield Stadium, the Royal Commonwealth Pool, and Oriam, the National Performance Centre for Sport, provide unrivalled sporting facilities, while the Usher Hall is a world class concert hall hosting a broad range of events, and part of a wider infrastructure which includes many other significant venues (such as the Castle esplanade and the Royal Highland Centre).

All of these strengths help attract high quality events to Edinburgh.

A new strategic event portfolio for Edinburgh

The existing annual core programme comprises a number of recurring annual festivals and events supplemented by new events each year.

The annual programme will itself change over time but currently comprises the twelve major festivals, the Great Edinburgh Cross Country and Great Winter Run, Edinburgh's Christmas, winter light installations, the Edinburgh Award, TradFest, the Tour Series, the Edinburgh Marathon, Festival of Sport, Words on the Street and several others. A full programme of upcoming events is reported annually to the relevant committees of the Council. The 2016 report can be viewed [here](#).

In line with the national events strategy, Edinburgh will seek to build a new event portfolio, by developing and attracting the following three categories of event, which work well within the capital: major international events; major national events; and bespoke events for the city.

Level 1: Major international events

Examples of these would include the MTV Europe Music Awards, Commonwealth Youth Games and the Grand Depart stage of the Tour de France.

These major international events attract significant global interest. Such events would be led nationally by EventScotland and support the National Events Strategy. Funding would have to be realised through national partnerships, as the budget required for these events would not be available from the Council alone. These events would be expected to generate significant economic impact and international media attention for Edinburgh.

Level 2: Major national events

Examples of these would include Papal visits, Heineken Cup Finals and the Tour of Britain.

The Council will identify a strategic event opportunity, and identify a one-off additional funding resource in order to pursue the opportunity. These events could also be led nationally by EventScotland with the Council acting as a key player in mobilising local resources and 'activating' the city through city dressing, destination marketing, business partner promotions, satellite events, etc. This would require some separately identified financial resource and/or a major contribution in-kind from the Council. Level 2 events would provide national media profile and generate positive economic impact for the city through the attraction of UK-wide audiences.

Level 3: Events bespoke for the city

Some examples include Field of Light, [Words on the Street](#), KEYFRAMES and Edinburgh's Christmas. The Council's Events team in the Culture Service will continue to identify appropriate tailored events across the calendar year, focusing on the shoulder months outwith the Festival periods.

These events will be flexible and bespoke for the city, designed to fill gaps in the city's calendar with animation and excitement. These events will be chosen to leverage investment in the city's events and festivals through commercial and public partners. Level 3 events would generate lower levels of economic impact for the city but would still contribute to raising Edinburgh's profile.

The significant number of civic events (including marches, parades and rallies) and royal events (including Royal Week in July) also add important profile and variety, and

attract substantial interest from local residents and visitors; such events will be promoted as an asset for the city.

Edinburgh enjoys several busier periods throughout the year, notably during the winter and summer festival seasons. The Council aims to provide a balanced portfolio of events throughout the year and actively encourages events outwith these periods in the 'shoulder' months on either side (February to May and September to November).

This Strategy will focus on using Level 3 events to create a year-round calendar of events for the city and make best use of the financial and physical resources available. Level 3 events will tend to be shorter in duration and have lower physical and financial impact on the city, allowing several to be held throughout the year between the busier periods of the winter and summer.

Examples of Level 3 events include public art installations; major arts and crafts exhibitions; lectures; city centre spectator sports events (such as the Tour Series); and commissions to mark national thematic years or significant Edinburgh anniversaries, such as the 70th Anniversary of Edinburgh as a world class Festival City, as well as events commissioned to promote Scotland's themed years, such as the Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology (2017) and Year of Young People (2018).

Selection criteria for building the portfolio

The Council will select events to be part of this portfolio if they meet criteria 1 to 4, and at least one criterion from 5 to 12.

Events must meet all of these criteria:

1. fit this Strategy's definition of a Level 1, 2 or 3 event;
2. complement the calendar of events of the day – priority will be given to events which fall within the calendar's shoulder months;
3. promote Edinburgh as a vibrant, contemporary international city; and
4. encourage people to live or invest in the city or to visit Edinburgh.

In addition, events must meet at least one of these criteria:

5. help to build a strong profile for Edinburgh as an active city (as defined by the Physical Activity and Sport Strategy);

6. help to grow participation in all types of physical activity, but particularly in walking, running and cycling;
7. make effective use of Edinburgh's world class built facilities, cultural infrastructure or natural environment;
8. strengthen, or have the potential to strengthen, the city's international relations and international development work;
9. generate money for city, national or international charities;
10. include the city's diverse communities;
11. include young people or offer opportunities for volunteering; and
12. help to regenerate parts of the city.

Criteria 5, 6 and 7 are from the Council's Physical Activity and Sports Strategy, with an additional reference to cultural infrastructure.

Edinburgh's natural and built resources provide a competitive advantage as an events destination. Nevertheless, the city must take a proactive approach to securing events. While work with national partners (eg EventScotland and the Scottish Government) may be responsible for securing many of the Level 1 events for the city, the Council will work with its partner agencies to bid for and secure events of all levels for Edinburgh.

Delivering the Strategy

City partners working together to build the events portfolio

A number of organisations support events in Edinburgh. An advisory board of representatives from the city's key stakeholders, including funding agencies and potential partners, will be appointed by the Chief Executive of the Council to leverage city-wide delivery of and support for events in Edinburgh.

The board will meet two or three times a year (and more frequently if required) to review proposed events, to assess potential commitment by member organisations to these events, and to allow the city to compete effectively to secure major events.

The board will comprise representation from the main tourism, marketing, promotion, transport and economic development agencies within the city and will be responsible for ensuring that a 'one Edinburgh' approach to delivering and supporting events in the city is adopted. This will include using events as a driver for tourism and regeneration and co-ordinating city dressing and use of public spaces.

Event Governance

The Council's Events Management Group ensures that the Council takes a co-ordinated approach to the delivery of events in the city. It is composed of officers from a number of Council services and has representation from Marketing Edinburgh. It is not intended to act as a steering group for the strategic development of events. Instead, this Group focuses on operational issues and ensures events are delivered through internal partnership working. A key role of the Group is to alert stakeholders to any significant impact an event may have on either the city or the Council's services (through an internal Red Flag Alert system).

The majority of events in the city will engage with the Council's Events Planning and Operations Group (EPOG). EPOG is an advisory body and assists event organisers in ensuring their events are well-planned, safe and successful. Developed by the Council, EPOG is a model for Safety Advisory Groups that is recognised as best practice and is to be rolled out nationally by the Scottish Government. This Group, chaired by the Culture Service's Public Safety team, allows event organisers to engage with the key partners and stakeholders in event delivery in Edinburgh in one forum rather than individually, and to benefit from a cohesive and co-ordinated approach to events in Edinburgh. Stakeholders include Roads, Licensing and Parks teams as well as Public Safety; the emergency services; stewarding and security; and venues.

The Events Management Group and EPOG process will embed this Strategy as one for the entire city, with the Council as custodian; the delivery of the Strategy will be the responsibility of many partners, while the Council will retain the responsibility for ensuring it is monitored, implemented, and updated.

Measuring performance

The 2006 Strategy stated that as part of the city's events portfolio the Council would aim to present at least one new major event of national or international standing each year. In the intervening years, the city has fulfilled this ambition and will continue to use this as an indicator of success, in a slightly amended format, to take account of the number of events which are drawn to Edinburgh because of its capital city status. The first indicator for this new Strategy is therefore:

Indicator	Target
Secure or host one major event of national or international standing which is new to Edinburgh	In each calendar year, one event of Level 1 status

'New' in this context means either an event created for Edinburgh, or an existing event which has either never previously taken place in the capital or has not taken place for several years.

Some important recurring events have been established since 2005 as part of the core programme, such as the biennial Edinburgh International Culture Summit. These are important for the city's reputation and require ongoing support. Bespoke events have also worked well in recent years. The second and third indicators for this new Strategy are therefore:

Indicator	Target
Sustain key significant events in the Council's annual core programme	In each calendar year, a minimum of two Level 2 events
Commission and/or develop bespoke events for the Council's annual core programme	In each calendar year, a minimum of two Level 3 events

Measuring impacts

Since 2006 it has become increasingly important to demonstrate the value of events and any investment, financial or otherwise, made by the Council. The Council recognises and requires the use of data to measure cultural, social and environmental impacts. This Strategy will require events supported by the Council to report on these metrics.

While full impact assessments can be extremely expensive, eventIMPACTS provides a relatively easy method for event organisers to assess the impact of their events and is the methodology approved by the national events strategy. A reporting template will be provided to event organisers and the results will be reported annually to the relevant Council committee.

Appendix 2

List of Consultees

One to One Consultation

Title	Organisation
CEO	EventScotland
International Events Director - Culture	EventScotland
Events Director - Sport	EventScotland
Head of Service - Environment	City of Edinburgh Council (Council)
Strategic Development Manager (Physical Activity and Sport)	Council
Head of Culture & Sport	Council
Festival & Events Champion	Council
Chief Executive	Marketing Edinburgh
Chief Executive	Essential Edinburgh
Director	Festivals Edinburgh
Chair	ETAG (Edinburgh Tourist Action Group)
Director, Edinburgh Institute: Festivals, Events & Tourism	Edinburgh Napier University
	Scottish Enterprise

Events Sector Seminar Attendees

Beltane Society

Business Improvement District – Grassmarket

Business Improvement District – West End

Edinburgh Festival Fringe

Edinburgh's Christmas

Edinburgh's Hogmanay

Edinburgh Jazz and Blues Festival (and Carnival)

Edinburgh Marathon

Edinburgh Rugby

Essential Edinburgh

EventScotland

Festivals Edinburgh

Great Scottish Events

Northern Light

NOVA International

Previously, Scotland's History Festival

Rare Management

Regular Music

Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo

Royal Highland Show

Scottish Chamber Orchestra

Scottish Rugby

Underbelly

Unique Events

and representatives from these areas of the Council:

City Strategy and Economy, City Centre Neighbourhood, Communications,

Parks and Greenspace, Physical Activity and Sport, Planning, Public Safety and Roads

Strategic Implementation Group: Tourism Strategy

Title	Organisation
Chief Executive	Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce & Enterprise
Chief Executive	City of Edinburgh Council
Senior Director - Food & Drink, Tourism and Textiles	Scottish Enterprise
Chief Executive	Edinburgh Airport
Chief Executive	Marketing Edinburgh
Director General	National Galleries Scotland
Head of Business Partnerships	City Strategy & Economy, Council
Destination Manager	Scottish Enterprise
Chair	Edinburgh Hotel Association
Convener	Economy Committee, Council
Chair	Edinburgh Tourism Action Group