

Transport & Environment

10am, 29th October 2013

Events in Parks & Greenspaces

Item number	7.7
Report number	
Wards	All

Links

Coalition pledges	P24 Maintain and embrace support for our world-famous festivals and events. P48 Use Green Flag and other strategies to preserve our green spaces.
Council outcomes	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. CO23 Well engaged and well informed – Communities and individuals are empowered and supported to improve local outcomes and foster a sense of community. CO24 The Council communicates effectively internally and externally and has an excellent reputation for customer care.
Single Outcome Agreement	None

Mark Turley

Director of Services for Communities

Contact: David Jamieson, Parks & Greenspace Manager

E-mail: david.jamieson@edinburgh.gov.uk | Tel: 0131 123 4567

Executive summary

Events in Parks & Greenspace

Summary

The Edinburgh Parks Events Manifesto has been operating for three years. Every year a review of major events takes place so that improvements to the management of events in the city's parks can be identified. As well as commenting on specific events in parks, consultee feedback has also raised more general issues about the management of events in parks and it is proposed that they are considered as part of a more comprehensive consultation and review exercise on the Parks Events Manifesto itself

Recommendations

That Committee:

1. Acknowledges the success of the Edinburgh Parks Events Manifesto in managing events in parks in a more sustainable manner.
2. Notes the more general issues being raised by stakeholders regarding the management of events in the city's parks.
3. Approves a review and consultation exercise to determine whether changes are required to the Edinburgh Parks Events Manifesto and to identify any further improvements to the management of events in Edinburgh's parks.

Measures of success

A more efficient and effective means of managing a sustainable programme of events across Edinburgh's parks and greenspaces.

Financial impact

A rental charge and management fee is payable by event organisers for holding events in the city's parks. The amount of rent charged varies according to the location, size of the area occupied and the length of time of occupation. A reparation bond may also be required to meet the costs of repairing any damage to the grounds.

In 2012/13 £65,000 income was generated from events in parks. Total income for 2013/14 currently stands at £26,000. The costs associated with supporting events in parks are difficult to determine, but would include officer time to process applications, liaise with organisers and other parties, and manage operational matters before, during and post-event, including any reinstatement works.

Equalities impact

None.

Sustainability impact

There is a need to balance the requirements of event operators with the wishes of local communities and park user groups to ensure appropriate rights of access to open space and a quality park environment.

Consultation and engagement

Consultation on the management of events in parks and greenspaces will be available to all. The Council will actively seek the views of Neighbourhood Partnerships, Community Councils, Parks Friends Groups, event operators, and relevant user groups.

Background reading / external references

[Edinburgh Parks Events Manifesto, August 2010](#)

[Events in Parks, Collated Comments 2013](#)

Events in Parks & Greenspace

1. Background

- 1.1 Edinburgh's festivals and events are key to the city's image at home and abroad and to its capital city status. Edinburgh's Events Strategy states that Edinburgh should build on its current success and continue to grow as one of the world's finest events city. The city aims to deliver a balanced portfolio of events including established successful events, newly created or commissioned events, and national or international events won for the city through bidding processes.
- 1.2 At its meeting of 31 August 2010, Council approved the Edinburgh Parks Events Manifesto. This has provided a strategic and proactive approach to the planning and management of events within Edinburgh's parks and greenspaces by establishing a decision framework and set of guidelines that balances the need to provide open space locations for events with the obligation to ensure that park's quality is maintained to the highest standard possible.
- 1.3 Major events occurring in parks are reviewed each year so that feedback can be used to make improvements for subsequent events.
- 1.4 Three years of operating the Manifesto has shown that there is value in having an agreed policy basis for determining event numbers, locations and operational practices, not least in ensuring a consistent, justifiable and balanced approach to decision-making. However, feedback from the annual review of major events suggests that further improvements are possible and that refinements to the process can be made to support both the needs of event organisers and park users.
- 1.5 A review of city-wide events governance is currently being led by Corporate Programme Office following consideration by the Corporate Policy & Strategy Committee at its meeting of 6 August 2013. This seeks to improve consistency, transparency, and good practice in the Council's events decision-making and management processes. It is expected to report its findings on 5 November 2013.

2. Main report

- 2.1 Council approved the Edinburgh Parks Events Manifesto at its meeting of 31 August 2010. This established a decision framework and set of guidelines that enables the Council to balance the need to provide open space locations for events with the obligation to ensure that park's quality is maintained to the highest standard possible for park users and communities.
- 2.2 Each year since, the major events occurring in parks have been reviewed by officers and shared with interested parties. The reviews have incorporated consultation with, and feedback from, council officers, event organisers, ward councillors, community councils, and other community stakeholders. This has proven to be a useful exercise for eliciting a wide range of views, and influencing improvements for subsequent events. Discussions with stakeholders have also raised more general questions regarding events management in parks and the Parks Events Manifesto.
- 2.3 Twelve major-event applications for events in 2014 have been lodged, or are anticipated to be lodged shortly. These are:
- Meadows Festival
 - Meadows Festival Funfair
 - Lady Boys of Bangkok
 - Fringe Festival Funfair
 - Rock 'n' Roll Half Marathon
 - Leith Festival
 - Leith Festival Funfair
 - The Mela
 - Christmas Festival
 - Hogmanay Festival
 - Moonwalk
 - Foodies Festival

Events Application Process

2.3 The Council's Scheme of Delegation gives authority to the Director of Services for Communities for 'approving, in accordance with conditions considered appropriate to individual applications and in accordance with Council Policy, all requests from organisations to make use of parks and recreational areas, subject to consultation with:

- (a) the Convener or Vice-Convener of the Transport and Environment Committee;
- (b) the Festival and Events Champion;
- (c) local Ward Councillors;
- (d) as appropriate, other Council service areas; and/or
- (e) as appropriate, Police Scotland and other emergency services.'

2.4 The event application process is as follows. Each application is considered by the local park officer, who provides recommendations. These are considered by the Convenor (or Vice Convenor) of the Transport & Environment Committee, the Festival and Events Champion, and Ward Councillors. Further views are invited from Community Councils, Edinburgh Leisure, Parks Friends Groups, and other park user groups. All views are considered and are used to influence decisions on location, event periods, operations, and conservation and reinstatement measures.

Stakeholder Feedback - Issues

2.5 Although these measures have significantly improved the events management process, feedback obtained from stakeholders over the last three years suggests there are several significant issues that need to be addressed and that further improvements could be made. These include:

- Length of time to make decisions on event applications - Some event organisers would welcome a speedier decision-making process;
- Earlier consultation with community stakeholders - Some community stakeholders such as community councils and Friends of Parks groups would welcome earlier opportunity to consider event applications;
- Transparency - A number of respondents perceive a lack of transparency and would like greater clarity on the extent to which different views are taken into account in the decision making process.

- Rotation of events and number of events - Consideration could be given to further mitigating the impact of large events on parks through the rotation of large events across a number of parks and/or limiting the number of events held in any one park annually.
- Section 11 Orders - The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 establishes statutory rights of responsible access on and over most land. Section 11 of the act gives local authorities the power to exempt an area of land from these access rights, such as for events in parks which levy a charge for admission. To date Section 11 orders have not been used in respect of events held in Edinburgh's parks. However the right of event organisers to prevent access on to the area of land that they are occupying without a Section 11 order has been challenged on several occasions and this issue and its impact on the Parks Events Manifesto needs to be further investigated.

2.6 It is proposed that these issues are best considered as part of a wider review of the Parks Events Manifesto, which would include a consultation exercise with all the relevant stakeholders. If accepted, a draft remit and terms of reference would be drawn up for approval by this Committee and the review would commence in January 2014.

3. Recommendations

That Committee:

1. Acknowledges the success of the Edinburgh Parks Events manifesto in managing events in parks in a more sustainable manner.
2. Notes the more general issues being raised by stakeholders regarding the management of events in the city's parks.
3. Approves a review and consultation exercise to determine if changes are required to the Edinburgh Parks Events Manifesto and to identify any further improvements to the management of events in Edinburgh's parks and green spaces.

Mark Turley

Director of Services for Communities

Links

Coalition pledges	P24 Maintain and embrace support for our world-famous festivals and events. P48 Use Green Flag and other strategies to preserve our green spaces.
Council outcomes	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. CO23 Well engaged and well informed – Communities and individuals are empowered and supported to improve local outcomes and foster a sense of community. CO24 The Council communicates effectively internally and externally and has an excellent reputation for customer care.
Single Outcome Agreement	None
Appendices	None