

# Culture and Sport Committee

10.00am, Tuesday, 8 March 2016

## Thundering Hooves 2.0: Council actions and first annual health check

Item number	7.2
Report number	
Executive	
Wards	All

### Executive summary

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After the launch of *Thundering Hooves 2.0: a Ten Year Strategy to Sustain the Success of Edinburgh's Festivals*, the Council undertook to support that Strategy, and to measure progress through an annual 'health check' of the relationship between the Council and the 12 major Festivals.

This report summarises the findings of the first annual health check meetings, which will serve as a baseline for a progress report to the Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee by the end of this year. Festival Directors expressed great appreciation for the Council's existing support, and made suggestions for further improvement, expressing a willingness to be proactive in meeting key officers to help develop those improvements. Some action has been taken already; others are proposed. It is recommended that this report be referred to the Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee.

### Links

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

# Report

## Thundering Hooves 2.0: Council actions and first annual health check

### Recommendations

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- 1.1 To thank the Festival Directors and their staff, and Festivals Edinburgh colleagues, for the first set of annual health check meetings which informed this report.
- 1.2 To welcome the action taken to date to improve support for the Festivals.
- 1.3 To note the further action which is proposed, as outlined in appendix one.
- 1.4 To refer this report to the Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee, noting that progress against this baseline will be reported to that Committee by the end of this year.

### Background

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- 2.1 The first *Thundering Hooves* study of 2006 led to a Thundering Hooves Action Plan which was implemented by Festivals Edinburgh, the 12 major festivals, and partners including the Council.
- 2.2 Running in ten months of every year, the Festivals, alongside major events, help make the city lively all year round; enhance residents' quality of life and cultural opportunities; attract significant numbers of national and international visitors to the city, along with the world's print, broadcast and online media; and boost Edinburgh's competitiveness as a place to live, study, work and do business. The [Edinburgh Festivals Impact Study \(May 2011\)](#) reported that the Festivals bring significant positive cultural and social benefits to the city, and direct economic benefits to the city and to the Scottish economy (worth in excess of £261m to the latter).
- 2.3 With support from the Council and other funders, the Festivals introduced enhanced programming over 2012 to 2014, to maintain audiences during the period of the London Olympic Games and Glasgow Commonwealth Games, and enhance the Festival City's profile through links to the Cultural Olympiad and the Commonwealth Games. As previously reported, this approach worked well, and enhanced programmes are planned to celebrate the Festival City's 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2017.

### Main report

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- 3.1 [Thundering Hooves 2.0: a Ten Year Strategy to Sustain the Success of Edinburgh's Festivals](#) (TH2.0) was published on 19 May 2015, and sets out six

key themes with 38 recommendations for action, to ensure that Edinburgh retains its global competitive advantage. In considering a report on this topic on [18 August 2015](#), this Committee noted that it would receive a further report setting out recommended actions for the Council, as the basis for annual health check reports.

- 3.2 On [30 November 2015](#), this Committee approved the Council's new Culture Plan, which will be available online soon, and updated regularly thereafter. This dedicated website will act as a single point of contact for information about Council services which support cultural activity and creative industries in Edinburgh.
- 3.3 The Culture Plan focuses on actions to be achieved in partnership, and acknowledges the vital contribution made by the Festivals with this action point: "Regularly assess and report to the Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee the Council's progress in leading and contributing to agreed actions within the Thundering Hooves 2.0 Strategy." The Plan incorporates other actions that are designed to cover the Council's contribution to the TH 2.0 Action Plan; at the time of writing, progress has been made against two of these:
  - 3.3.1 on 30 November this Committee approved an allocation of £200,000 to the Festivals for the 70th anniversary programmes in 2017. This will be allocated by the Culture service between 2015 and 2017, using the Thundering Hooves/Expo Fund Steering Group; and
  - 3.3.2 since its submission in September 2015 to the Scottish and UK Governments, the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal bid has been further refined and updated. If approved, this could make a large contribution towards a range of TH2.0 actions.
- 3.4 The Culture service and Festivals Edinburgh have held the first set of 'health check' meetings with the 12 Festivals to gather feedback on their relationship with the Council. Some immediate action has been taken to provide assistance with current issues specific to individual Festivals.
- 3.5 During these meetings, Festival Directors and staff all expressed appreciation for the Council's grant funding via the Culture service, and in some cases, for additional in kind support they receive. The Festivals made numerous positive comments about the great support they receive from a wide range of service areas and in particular from certain officers with whom they work closely on individual projects and events.
- 3.6 Nevertheless, this support could be improved, and Festival colleagues made suggestions for better communication; more awareness of the Festivals as key stakeholders in and contributors to the city's success; and more intensive care of the city's public spaces. These suggestions are summarised below.

## **Communication**

- 3.7 Early warning to Festivals from Council services of proposed change is essential, if this is likely to have an impact on festival delivery, and ideally, this should be done in enough time to take into account Festival views before such change is introduced.
- 3.8 Council services should give consistent guidance and advice to the Festivals (and to producers and performers within the Festivals) and take consistent action when dealing with the Festivals.
- 3.9 A reliable Council contact with authority to take immediate action is needed after hours and at weekends in case of emergencies.

## **Awareness of the Festivals as key stakeholders in and contributors to the city's success**

- 3.10 While the Festivals understand the pressure on Council budgets, and the need to increase charges, they too face financial pressures, and would appreciate some variation in charges, retention of dispensations and more of a co-production approach where appropriate, given the vital contribution Festivals make to the city's overall economic success.
- 3.11 The current major organisational change in the Council will see rapid turnover of staff, and a potential loss of detailed knowledge, acquired over years of liaising with Festivals, about the support they need in order to deliver their programmes successfully. The Festivals would value opportunities to meet Council colleagues across services and at different levels, to raise awareness of the Festivals, and provide key briefings.
- 3.12 Many of the city's parks and other open spaces have played host to the Festivals over years, and continued access to such spaces remains essential for Festival viability. This access can be affected by temporary changes, such as building works or short term licences to stall holders, or by more permanent changes, such as a reduction in the number of events permitted in any one space, or leases for part or all of certain spaces. Service areas have contacted affected Festivals to invite comment or to inform them of such changes; however, as noted above, the Festivals would appreciate greater liaison on issues which are likely to affect their ability to deliver their programmes.

## **Care of the city's public spaces**

- 3.13 City dressing could be more extensive and prominent, and along with good signage, would help to promote all the Festivals and welcome visitors to the city. The Festivals are keen to play a greater role in this.
- 3.14 Some Festival Directors expressed dissatisfaction with the cleanliness of the city, and whether the Council could provide the requisite high levels of care and

maintenance for the public artworks it has adopted in recent years, and for event infrastructure such as power and bollards in certain spaces.

- 3.15 Some Festival Directors noted that they receive feedback from audience members on a perceived undersupply of parking spaces for people with limited mobility (but who may not qualify for a blue badge).

### **Action in response**

- 3.16 The Executive Director of Place has already discussed the above issues with the Director of Festivals Edinburgh. A follow up meeting is planned this month with the Chair and the Director of Festivals Edinburgh, and a Festival Director member of the Desire Lines Steering Group, with input from the Director of Culture, with a view to developing a shared agenda and programme of work. Actions from this will be added to the Culture Plan.
- 3.17 In addition, there are several other actions which are planned in response to suggestions made by the Festivals. These are listed in appendix one, and will also be added to the Culture Plan. Almost all services areas of the Council will have a part to play in completing these actions, so one of the first actions is to set up an inhouse briefing by the Culture service for key managers, and to follow this with awareness raising opportunities with the Festivals.
- 3.18 As previously agreed, progress made against these new actions will be assessed later this year, and reported to the Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee. In the meantime, it is recommended that this initial report be referred to the Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee.

### **Measures of success**

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- 4.1 Shared agenda and programme of work developed in partnership between the Festivals, the Executive Director of Place and the Director of Culture; better communication between the Council and the Festivals; greater understanding across the Council of the needs of the Festivals and how best to support these.

### **Financial impact**

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- 5.1 There is no direct financial impact from this report.

### **Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact**

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- 6.1 There are no risk, compliance or governance issues arising directly from this report. This work is core to the Council's new Culture Plan, and its support for the Thundering Hooves 2.0 strategy.

### **Equalities impact**

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- 7.1 There is no direct equalities impact from this report.

## Sustainability impact

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- 8.1 The impacts of this report have been considered in relation to the three elements of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 Public Bodies Duties, and the outcomes are positive; supporting the Festivals helps to sustain the city's economic health and provides capacity building opportunities for residents.

## Consultation and engagement

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- 9.1 Key officers across all Council services were invited in 2015 to comment on how their areas could contribute to the Council's support of TH2.0. Meetings with 12 Festival Directors and Festivals Edinburgh have informed this report.

## Background reading/external references

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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](#).

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## Links

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<b>Coalition pledges</b>	P24 - Maintain and embrace support for our world-famous festivals and events
	P31 – Maintain the city's reputation as the cultural capital of the world by continuing to support and invest in our cultural infrastructure.
<b>Council outcomes</b>	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

<b>Single Outcome Agreement</b>	SO1 -	Edinburgh's economy delivers increased investment, jobs and opportunities for all
<b>Appendices</b>	1.	Summary of additional actions to address Festival health check issues

## Appendix 1

### Summary of additional actions to address Festival health check issues

Issue	Proposed action
Council charges and dispensations, and co-production approach to certain events	In first instance, to be discussed with Executive Director of Place
Better communication between all levels of the Council and Festival contacts, and raised awareness of Festivals' contributions and supports needs	Culture service to share details of key Council contacts following completion of the Council's Transformation programme with Festivals, and to assist in setting up awareness raising opportunities
Consistency of Council guidance, advice and action	To form part of discussions between Festivals and relevant Executive Directors, and to be relayed to relevant staff thereafter.  New Culture website will hold updated guidance and advice.
A reliable Council contact with authority to take immediate action is needed after hours and at weekends in case of emergencies.	Access to the relevant contact to be arranged by Director of Culture
City dressing and good signage	Already an action in the Culture Plan
Care of public spaces	In first instance, to be discussed with Executive Director of Place
Parking for people with limited mobility	Culture service liaising with Transport to provide guidance