

CULTURE, TOURISM & ENTERPRISE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 33

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject: **Outdoor Events Policy**

Date of Meeting: **24th November 2011**

Report of: **Strategic Director, Communities**

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Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 The Outdoor Events Policy was approved back in January 1998 and a Charging Policy specifically in relation to outdoor events was approved in October 2005. Both policies need to be reviewed to reflect the increased importance of outdoor events to the economy of the city, the increased demand from promoters to hold outdoor events in Brighton & Hove, and the increasingly difficult balance needed to maximise event benefits while minimising the challenges that are faced in holding events. There have been over 250 approvals for outdoor events in 2011 ranging from small events on open spaces to Pride.
- 1.2 In addition, the council were the first local authority in the country to achieve the British Standard BS 8901 for Sustainable Events Management and the requirements of the standard need to be integrated within the Outdoor Events Policy.
- 1.3 The attractiveness of the city for outdoor events leads to a large number of events proposals which are often speculative but take up a lot of officer time to consider for approval. A clear framework is needed for the consideration and potential approval of event proposals.
- 1.4 The current economic climate has led increasingly to event organisers having funding for events reduced. Furthermore, agencies that incur costs when an event is held are also increasingly seeking to recover such costs. The viability of many outdoor events is therefore becoming a greater issue. The city has a strong reputation for partnership working to enable the benefits of outdoor events to be realised. The current economic climate

makes such partnership working even more important to enable the outdoor events programme to be maintained and developed.

2. RECOMMENDATION:

- 2.1 That Members recognise the benefits of Outdoor Events and that Members' views are sought on the scope of the review of the Outdoor Events Policy.

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Outdoor events are at the heart of what makes Brighton & Hove such a distinctive dynamic city and are enjoyed by a great many of the city's residents and visitors. Outdoor events bring many benefits to the city but also present a range of challenges as highlighted below.

Benefits include:

- The creation of jobs through the contribution of outdoor events to the overall visitor economy of £732 million and 17,500 jobs per year. An independent economic impact study on the 2010 London to Brighton Veteran Car Run by the University of Brighton indicated a £1.1 million benefit to the city's economy. This benefit was achieved by the event attracting 66% of spectators from outside of Brighton & Hove of which 93% said they would watch again. Other examples include estimated economic impacts of £3.5 million from the Brighton Marathon and £20 million from the Brighton Festival.
- Developing a sense of community through both large scale events eg White Night and the community events held across the city which brings local people together whether as participants or spectators.
- Promoting sport and physical activity which encourages regular participation and benefits the health and well-being of the city's residents. The Takepart Festival of Sport gives opportunities for people to try sports and then the chance to participate regularly throughout the year at local sports clubs.
- Raising the profile of the city at regional, national and international levels eg Brighton Festival. Outdoor events make a major contribution to the positive reputation of Brighton and Hove as a distinctive city with a cultural and sporting offer enjoyed by residents and visitors alike.

- Providing opportunities for local and national charities to raise funds through participants being sponsored to take part in events. The London to Brighton Bike Ride is a major fund raising event for the British Heart Foundation.
- The council receiving income from commercial events eg Ladyboys of Bangkok, which helps to support community events.

Challenges include:

- Ensuring Safe Events

The enjoyment of outdoor events in a safe environment is of paramount importance and a multi-agency approach particularly for major events is undertaken in conjunction with the city's Safety Advisory Group. The Brighton Marathon was an event that was at least two years in the planning with a huge input from the emergency services before being approved.

Compliance with the Health & Safety Executive Event Safety Guide and Noise Council Guide helps to protect public safety and prevent public nuisance.

- Outdoor Event Approvals

The popularity of the city leads to the number of event proposals exceeding the capacity of the city to stage such events particularly during the peak summer months. A clear policy is needed to evaluate event proposals and the decision making process for event approvals.

The programme of outdoor events is approved at the Cabinet Member Meeting for Culture, Recreation and Tourism in December in respect of the following year. Due to the fluid nature of event proposals it is not possible to include all of the events in the report for that meeting. Therefore, further event proposals may be considered at later Cabinet Member Meetings or delegated powers used to approve events if appropriate. A proposal for an event may be referred to Cabinet if it is a large scale event being considered for inclusion in the programme for the first time. For example, the Shakedown Festival this year.

- Outdoor Event Venues

The council has licensed a range of parks and open spaces including the Old Steine, Seafront and Madeira Drive to hold events. These spaces are clearly identified as event spaces which is recognised as good practice to encourage community events. A balanced approach is required to prevent over use of these areas.

- Developing New Events

A regular calendar of outdoor events has developed over a considerable period of time which is the envy of many larger cities. However, the calendar should not be viewed as providing exclusivity for regular events at the expense of new proposals. For example, there are a series of running events held in the city and a balance is required to ensure the viability of existing events with new proposals.

There is a strong desire from event organisers for events to take place in the peak summer months. There is a challenge for the calendar of outdoor events to be spread even further throughout the year thus maximising the economic impact to the city.

Furthermore, outdoor events can often be viewed as individual “one off “ events but often ‘spin off’ events can be developed which create a challenge in terms of both timing and location eg London to Brighton Bike Ride, Nighttime Ride, Capital to Coast Bike Ride are all linked to the British Heart Foundation.

- Impact On Transport

Brighton & Hove is a relatively compact city with particular transport challenges. The need for large outdoor events to have suitable traffic management plans is important to minimise the disruption to the city. Such events include Pride, Children’s Parade and the London to Brighton Bike Ride which all require significant road closures. Road closures and/or significant increases in pedestrian and vehicle traffic must be properly co-ordinated and inevitably cause disruption for local residents, businesses and local transport services sometimes for as much as an entire day. Parking and transport needs can include not only the participants and the spectators of the events themselves but also the parking requirements of the organisers eg use of the Level for parking for events organised in New Road.

- Sustainable Events

Obtaining the British Standard for Sustainable Events Management (BS 8901) in respect of outdoor events was a significant achievement by the council. However, only by working in partnership with event promoters will it be possible to improve the sustainability of events by protecting and enhancing the environment, meeting social needs and promoting economic success. To ensure that continuous improvement takes place it is proposed that an Environmental Management System is developed via a partnership approach across council services with the following key benefits:

- Compliance with environmental and licensing legislation
- Environmental benefits eg waste and energy reduction
- Financial benefits eg reduced energy consumption
- Positive publicity and a new marketing tool for the council

- Motorised Events

The city has a rich history in the staging of motorised events including the internationally famous Veteran Car Run and the Speed Trials which was first held on Madeira Drive over a century ago. There is a challenge to ensure that the huge benefits of such events are maintained while every effort is made to ensure that negative environmental impacts are minimised.

- Damage to Infrastructure

Outdoor events do inevitably have an impact on grassed areas. A balance needs to be achieved between the use for events and maintenance of such open spaces, particularly where such areas have alternative uses for formal sport eg football pitches or casual recreation eg Hove Lawns. Access to event areas also needs to be considered – for example, large lorries may increase wear and tear/damage access routes to the event location.

- Residents Access

Access to an event area is often restricted to residents during an event including the set up and take down times. For example, Hove Lawns during Paddle around the Pier. The inconvenience to residents who do not wish to attend the event can often be mitigated by good communication of when the event is taking place and the impact on access.

- In addition, the infrastructure required to hold an event and spectator parking can impact upon the normal means of access for members of the public either on foot or cycling. Such parking particularly in public spaces such as parks must be managed effectively to meet health and safety requirements. A consistent approach to whether such parking is appropriate needs to be established eg Hove Park. Again a balance needs to be achieved so that the impact is minimised and the success of the event not compromised.

- Consultation / Publicity of Events

To ensure planning of events appropriate consultation needs to take place with key stakeholders including ward members. Furthermore, the publicity for events should be aimed at minimising disruption caused by events eg promotion of public transport options.

- Animal Welfare

The council has an existing policy in relation to performing animals and circuses: Where it is lawful to do so, the Council will not allow on land it owns circuses and other similar entertainment where caged and or performing animals are used. With exemptions as follows:

- Performances involving equestrian acts using only horses and ponies (animal welfare officers and a council appointed vet check equine welfare)
- Greyhound racing behind an artificial lure
- Horse racing
- Cat or dog breed shows
- Dog agility events
- The showing of birds, rabbits or other domestic animals

Again the tradition of the outdoor events programme needs to be recognised with Zippo's Circus regularly using Hove no1 Lawn for many years.

- Event Charges

A rationale for fees and charges for outdoor events is a particular challenge due to the diverse nature and scale of events. In effect each event is unique. A balance is again required that still attracts events to the city but generates income that is proportionate to the

event that is being staged. Outdoor events often have significant costs to stage eg stewards, fencing etc and charges imposed are critical to the viability of an event. Some events do generate a surplus from which a commercial return can be gained. However, this has to be balanced with those community events that require support to take place. At present events are charged according to the following categories:

- Commercial
- Charity (National & Local)
- Enthusiast
- Community / Voluntary

In addition, the following factors are also issues in relation to the cost of staging an event:

- Re-instatement deposits
- Licensing Fees and the use of sites licensed by the council for events
- Highways – Road Closure and Signage Costs
- Parking – loss of income on Madeira Drive and Parking Bay suspensions
- Cleansing costs

Clarity need to be achieved on the extent to which event organisers or the council meets such costs.

- Notice For Events

In order for the emergency services via the Safety Advisory Group to consider an event proposal a six month lead in time is required. This is following the council giving landlord's consent to the use of a site. Some event organisers for large scale events do not appreciate the necessity for sufficient notice for their event.

- Highways, Environmental Health & Licensing

While the council has responsibilities as the “landlord” of outdoor event areas, it is very important to recognise that the council has a range of statutory duties as the Highways and Licensing Authority. This will include requirements for the correct notice period, licences, signage and staffing. In addition, outdoor events inevitably create noise which is monitored by Environmental Health seeking a balance between necessary protection for residents and

a successful events calendar. Food hygiene is also monitored by Environmental Health.

- 3.2 Each outdoor event is unique which is why they create such an interest and excitement in the city. However, a policy that is all encompassing is very difficult to achieve given the wide range of challenges. Consultation will therefore be undertaken to revise the Outdoor Events Policy with a range of stakeholders both internal to the council and external partners including emergency services.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The challenges identified in the report have been drawn from feedback provided by internal colleagues during the course of the Outdoor Events Programme. Once feedback on the scope of the challenges has been provided, consultation will take place with internal and external stakeholders to inform the revision of the Outdoor Events Policy.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report. The 2011/12 income budget for outdoor events, which is based on the current charging policy, is £209k. The financial implications of any future revisions to the Outdoor Events Policy will be reported in due course.

Finance Officer Consulted: Michelle Herrington

Date: 03/11/11

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 There are no direct legal implications arising from this scoping report.

Lawyer Consulted: Bob Bruce

Date: 01/11/11

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 Outdoor events play an important role in the reputation of Brighton and Hove as a city that is renowned for embracing equalities and diversity.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 The Sustainable implications of outdoor events are embedded within the Environmental Management System being developed for outdoor events.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 Positive involvement in community events could be viewed as a means of discouraging anti-social behaviour.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 The aim of the policy is to provide a framework that is able to manage the risk associated with outdoor events while maximising the potential benefits available.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.7 Outdoor events are very important to the visitor economy of the city and major events have citywide implications. The Safety Advisory Group would consider the impact of major events on the city.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. None

Documents in Members' Rooms:

1. None

Background Documents:

1. Outdoor Events Policy: Arts, Recreation and Tourism Committee, 22/1/98
2. Outdoor Events – Charging policy: Environment Committee, 20/1/05.

