

Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING:	Cabinet	
MEETING DATE:	Wednesday 9 November 2011	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
		E 2268
TITLE:	Events Policy for Bath & North East Somerset	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report: Appendix A – Rationale for the Events Policy Appendix B – Proposed Events Policy Appendix C – Equalities Impact Assessment Appendix D – Consultation Responses		

1 THE ISSUE

1.1 This report sets out the reasons why the authority should adopt a policy in respect of events in the Bath & North East Somerset area. The proposed policy aims to ensure safety and improve the consistency and effectiveness of the service provided by the authority to organisers of local events, both large and small. It also seeks to promote a proactive and integrated approach to the provision of support services and regulatory functions for events by:

- Specifying the requirements that event organisers must fulfil in order to run a safe, legal event which benefits the community.
- Encouraging best practice on issues such as waste management and sustainability.
- Identifying public open spaces, highlighting the type of events that may be suitable for each space and setting out the criteria by which applications to use Council land will be determined.
- Codifying the Council's approach to events on the highway.
- Setting out the Safety Advisory Group's Terms of Reference.

1.2 For the purposes of the proposed policy, an event can be described as organised recreation, sport, cultural or arts activity. Events can benefit both residents and visitors and can be participated in, audience based or a combination of both. They can be indoor or outdoor, in parks or on the public highway.

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet agrees that:

2.1 The proposed events policy is ratified.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 A varied programme of events contributes to a wide range of Council objectives including helping to support economic development, encouraging social and cultural regeneration and promoting a strong tourism base.

4 CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- Building communities where people feel safe and secure
- Sustainable growth

5 THE REPORT

5.1 The area of Bath & North East Somerset plays host to a number of large events each year. Many are well established events that have been running for a number of years and there is a desire to attract and develop new events. In the face of competition from surrounding areas, it is essential that events organisers receive a consistent, seamless service from the Council which both retains and encourages further events into the area. This supports the Arts Development Strategy 2011 - 14.

5.2 In addition to the promotion of cultural and recreational activities, the Council performs a number of diverse roles in relation to the support and regulation of events. These include those of Licensing Authority, Highways Authority (responsible for the authority's infrastructure and traffic operation), statutory functions relating to health and safety, and food safety, landlord and land owner. Facilitating events can place a considerable demand on Council resource and officer time. By providing a framework for event organisers and clearly defining the roles of various Council departments, the Events Policy will allow resources to be directed at the most complex and pressing issues.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 The report author and Lead Cabinet member have fully reviewed the risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

7 EQUALITIES

7.1 The Equalities Act 2010 requires that the Council, in exercising its functions, has regard to the need to:

- (1) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equalities Act 2010;
- (2) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (3) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

7.2 The 'relevant protected characteristics' are age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation.

7.3 A full equalities impact assessment has been carried out using corporate guidelines, a copy of which is attached at Appendix D. Consideration has been given to those relevant protected characteristics which might be affected by the policy.

7.4 By providing a framework for how the Council deals with event organisers, the policy promotes consistency of service delivery and reduces the risk of event organisers with relevant protected characteristics receiving unequal treatment. Paragraph 8 of the policy encourages organisers to ensure their event can be enjoyed by disabled and non-disabled people alike. It was drafted in consultation with a national charity that promotes deaf and disabled people's access to live music. The paragraph highlights organisers' duties under the Equalities Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate disabled people and suggests practical measures that can be taken to ensure access for all.

8 RATIONALE

8.1 The policy will ensure consistency and transparency in the Council's delivery of services relating to events while simplifying the process for event organisers. Furthermore, it will give the Safety Advisory Group a mandate to carry out its work in ensuring that large events are run safely. A detailed rationale for ratifying the draft policy is attached at Appendix A.

9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

9.1 None.

10 CONSULTATION

10.1 Ward Councillors; Cabinet members; Parish Councils; Town Councils; Overview & Scrutiny Panel; Other B&NES Services; Local Residents; Other Public Sector Bodies; Section 151 Finance Officer; Chief Executive; Monitoring Officer.

10.2 Departments and Key Partner Agencies (those on the Safety Advisory Group) with an interest in the Event Policy were invited to contribute their expertise to the policy document. Ward Councillors, Town and Parish Councils, Local Residents and Service Users were also consulted. A record of the responses received and action taken is attached at Appendix D.

10.3 The policy was considered by the Safer and Stronger Overview & Scrutiny Panel at their meeting on 24 March 2011. The Panel welcomed the policy and made the following recommendations:

- **A shorter, 'plain English' version of the Policy should be made available to the public**

This has been provided in the form of an 'Events Toolkit' which is available in hard copy and on the Council website. The Toolkit provides practical advice for events organisers together with links to further resources.

- **There should be a distinction between small and major events; consideration should be given to supporting organisers of small events**

The Events Toolkit provides advice tailored to the type of event; there are separate sections for small events of 500 people or less, and community events such as street parties and fêtes.

In June 2011, the Council's Public Protection service launched the Events Toolkit at three advice sessions in Bath, Keynsham and Midsomer Norton for organisers of small and medium-sized events. These were attended by a total of 135 people.

The cost of advertising a road closure for an event on the highway will normally be recharged to the event organiser however the Council will absorb this cost for small community events such as street parties (see paragraph 62.2 of the draft policy).

- **There should be a single point of contact for events**

Event enquiries can now be made through a single email address (event@bathnes.gov.uk) and telephone number (01225 396181).

- **There should be flexibility for submissions that have missed deadlines and events that are organised at short notice**

The level of flexibility that can be exercised depends on the type of submission and the Council will facilitate events organised at short notice wherever possible.

11 ISSUES TO CONSIDER IN REACHING THE DECISION

11.1 Social Inclusion; Customer Focus; Sustainability; Human Resources; Property; Health & Safety; Impact on Staff; Other Legal Considerations.

12 ADVICE SOUGHT

12.1 The Council's Monitoring Officer (Divisional Director – Legal and Democratic Services) and Section 151 Officer (Divisional Director – Finance) have had the opportunity to input to this report and have cleared it for publication.

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Sponsoring Cabinet Member	Councillor David Dixon
Background papers	None
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	