



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cabinet

7th August 2024

Report of the Head of Leisure, Tourism, Heritage & Culture.

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected:

All Wards

Report Title: Events and Festivals Review

Purpose of the Report:

To summarise the findings of the recently commissioned Events and Festivals Review to guide decision making around supporting, managing and resourcing events organised by the Council and/ or on Council land.

To propose the formation of a small team, on an invest to save basis, to manage events and festivals on public land in Neath Port Talbot and to maximise the commercial opportunities from filming enquiries.

Executive Summary:

Alpha1 Events have been commissioned to undertake a review of the Council's existing procedures for supporting, managing and resourcing events organised by the Council itself and/ or on Council land.

Considering the significant levels of staff time currently spent on assisting and organising events across various departments of the Council, this commission also included:

- A review of existing Safety Advisory Group (SAG) processes
- A review of non-statutory licences and agreements currently issued to event organisers by the Council. For the avoidance of doubt this does not include statutory licensing.
- Current charging structures and income received from event organisers and film companies for use of Council land.

Following consultation with a range of Council officers and external; event organisers involved in event management and administration, a draft events policy is provided for proposed adoption by the Council (please refer to Appendix 2).

A new events application process is proposed to replace the existing event registration process as well as a proposed set of charges for hire of Council land for events that maximises commercial opportunities including film production.

The Alpha1 Events report also provides sample event licence/agreement documentation, which act to grant agreement to hold an event on council land. Further work is required to produce template agreements which set out the terms and conditions to be set by the Council, however the sample agreements in Appendix 6 and 7) provide an indication of the simplified process that officers are seeking to achieve.

Please note that no amendments are to be made to statutory licencing requirements which event organisers must secure in order to comply with legislation such as alcohol, street trading or food hygiene for example.

Further to the above a revised Terms of Reference for a Safety Advisory Group has been set out which reflects national guidance and acknowledges the principle that the SAG is there to support the endeavours of event organisers.

A proposed future staffing structure for an 'Events and Film Office' is set out which manages the events policy and events application process and will enable the Council to fully realise the cultural and economic benefits of encouraging more events within the County.

Background:

Recent consultation which has been undertaken to devise the Neath Port Talbot Culture Strategy and Destination Management Plan (DMP), which were approved by Cabinet in September 2023, has established that a strong programme of events organised by the Council and external stakeholders is key in meeting the aims of these strategies.

Both the Culture Strategy and DMP include specific actions relating to the future management of events and encouraging and supporting events organised by third parties. In order to do this specialist skills are required through a dedicated 'Events Team' within the Council.

The Culture Strategy also identifies the opportunity to establish a new 'film office' to attract more filming enquires to the area, deal with the logistics of this and to generate additional revenue for the Council to fund some of the activities outlined in the Culture Strategy.

The Alpha1 Report is structured as follows:

Main Report: Outdoor Events Administration and Management – Report for Neath Port Talbot Council	Please Refer to Appendix 1 of this report
Appendix A: Draft Neath Port Talbot Events Policy	Please refer to Appendix 2 of this report

Appendix B: Current Event Administration Process Flow Chart	Please refer to Appendix 3 of this report
Appendix C: Proposed New Event Administration Process Flow Chart	Please refer to Appendix 4 of this report
Appendix D: Safety Advisory Group Terms of Reference – Proposed Changes	Please refer to Appendix 5 of this report
Appendix E: Sample Letter of Agreement – Minor Events	Please refer to Appendix 6 of this report
Appendix F: Sample Licence – Major Events	Please refer to Appendix 7 of this report

The recommendations for further action within the Alpha 1 report can be summarised as follows;

- Present the Draft Events Policy (Appendix 2) to Members for adoption (as set out within this report)
- Adopt the new proposed events application process as outlined in Appendix 3
- Create and fund an ‘Events Team’ with specialist event management expertise to be responsible for:
 - Management of the applications process for outdoor events
 - Advising event organisers and encouraging events in the county
 - Delivery of specific events by the Council
 - Operation of a new film office to encourage filming opportunities and generate revenue.

- To agree the proposed structure of the Events Team and the options to resource the team as outlined.
- Agree the remit of the team to include the chairing of the Safety Advisory Group. An independent Vice Chair will be required in order to substitute the Chair where there are conflicts of interest (such as in the case of Council run events).
- Consider minor amendments to the Safety Advisory Group Terms of Reference as set out in Appendix 5.
- To create an event application form to rationalise the information required from event organisers and create an online application process (e.g. Zoho or use of a commercial platform).
- Maximise commercial revenues by agreeing the creation and adoption of a charging policy for events and filming enquiries.
- To simplify event agreements in place for third parties, particularly for small events on Council land.
- Further develop the Council's thinking around the development of large scale events.

Events Policy Overview and Implementation

The proposed Events Policy (Appendix 2) has been subject to consultation with internal officers who have involvement in events, the Safety Advisory Group and external event organisers who have recent experience of taking events of varying scale through the current Council process.

The policy updates existing guidance and clearly maps out the responsibilities of all parties. In addition to this the policy identifies events which will and will not be permitted on Council land.

It is proposed that the new Events Policy and proposed charging structure are introduced from April 2025. This will enable sufficient lead in time to recruit the proposed team, finalise legal agreements and payment systems and prepare event organisers for the introduction of the new policy.

Officers would anticipate the earliest that the new Events Team could be put in place is by September 2024, subject to job evaluation and recruitment.

A new Events Strategy, funded via the Shared Prosperity Fund, is also in the process of being prepared. Whereas the proposed Events Policy sets out practical guidance for event organisers, the Event Strategy will provide a vision for how the Council and wider partners can attract more events to the area for the benefit of the local economy and wellbeing of residents of Neath Port Talbot. An Events Strategy will come forward for consideration towards the end of the 2024/2025 financial year.

Subject to adoption of the proposed Event Policy, a further report will be brought to members in due course to confirm the appropriate delegations and authorities to enter into agreements with event organisers.

Proposed Events Team Structure

The structure of the proposed Events Team would be as follows;

- Senior Events Officer – Grade 8, full time (a temporary contract until December 2024 funded via Shared Prosperity Funding has been advertised and a candidate appointed)
- Events Development Officer – Grade 6, full time
- Events Co-ordinator (SAG Administration) – Grade 5, 30 hours
- Film Office Co-ordinator – Grade 5, 22.5 hours.

Further detail on the proposed responsibilities for each of the above roles is set out in point 88 of the Alpha1 report (Appendix 1).

A properly resourced Events Team will be required to effectively manage existing events organised by the Council, provide sufficient guidance to event organisers and ensure that there is overarching work undertaken to implement an events strategy and attract large scale signature events to the County in future.

There will need to be a phased handover of existing events organised by the Council to the new Events Team in order to ensure that the events continue to run smoothly and safely. The Events Team would therefore shadow the existing departments which organise Neath Fair, Neath Food and Drink Festival and Remembrance Day Parades in year 1 and would then take over the organisation of the events in year 2.

The above arrangement is subject to all roles within the new team being occupied to undertake shadowing and safely operate the event the following year. This is with the exception of the Events Development Officer role which is scheduled to commence in April 2025 to coincide with the introduction of the proposed Event policy.

Subject to receiving approval to proceed, further consideration is required into developing job descriptions and person specifications for the proposed roles in addition to taking the posts through the job evaluation process.

Cost and Income Projections

The Alpha1 report identifies the following options for resourcing the new Events Team in future;

- Restructuring within the Council and review of existing staffing resources which contribute to event administration.

- Maximise income generation through the proposed charging structure for events and filming.
- Secure external funds to resource some of the activity of the Events Team.
- Review delivery options for Neath Fair and Neath Food and Drink Festival which may offer external commercial appeal and development potential

A detailed breakdown of costs and estimated income projections for the Events Team and Film office has been compiled and can be found in Appendix 8, these figures are summarised in Table 1.

Whilst the additional income targets are a risk, the Alpha 1 report is clear that we are currently missing opportunities to maximise revenue from filming in particular. Further discussions with Creative Wales suggest there is a real untapped potential to grow the filming offer across the whole County Borough and mirror the success Margam Park has seen.

Table 1: Summary of Team Costs and Funding

	2024/ 2025	2025/ 2026	2026/ 2027
Costs			
Staff costs <i>Assumes inflationary pay rise of est. 4%, figures based on top of grade.</i>	(£73,954)	(£159,426)	(£165,683)
Operational costs <i>covers IT, training, equipment & resources etc</i>	(£17,000)	(£37,000)	(£47,000)
Total Cost	(£90,954)	(£196,426)	(£212,683)
Funding			
Existing revenue budget <i>Special Events staff budget</i>	£13,854	£23,750	£23,750
Grant Income <i>SPF funded post up to Dec 2024.</i>	£29,339	£0	£0

Estimated income from introduction of event and filming fees	£0	£72,964	£113,083
Estimated income from potential future operating contracts	£0	£2,500	£10,500
<u>Added Value</u> Estimated income generated for Margam Country Park (will go towards the Park's existing MTFP saving target)	£0	£50,000	£110,000
Total Funding Available	£43,193	£149,214	£257,333
Net (cost) / surplus	-£47,761	-£47,212	£44,650
Total funding required from reserves		£94,973	

The proposal requests £94,973 from reserves on an invest to save basis to cover the deficit for the first two years. The proposal is then estimated to generate a surplus of £44,650 from year three onwards.

Funding has already been secured via the SPF funded Heritage, Culture, Tourism and Events fund to recruit a Senior Events Officer on a fixed term contract until 31st December 2024, this will cover 7 months of the 2024/2025 salary costs against the Senior Events Officer post. This officer has now been recruited.

As part of the SPF funding this officer will be responsible for producing an Events Strategy for the County in addition to managing the forthcoming Comedy Festival and undertaking two feasibility studies into large scale events which could be held within the County in future.

Existing staff budgets linked to staff currently covering event administration within the Authority has also been included in income projections, this covers the salary costs related to the Events Co-ordinator (SAG Administration) role.

All of the above sources of funding have been examined by Finance Officers who have confirmed that;

- There are no duplications or overlaps between the proposed budgets and existing Council budgets.
- That the proposed movement of event related staffing budgets is not detrimental to existing departmental activities.
- That estimated income is based on realistic projections of the proposed activities of new Events Team.

A key activity of the Events Team and Film Office will be to build relationships with Creative Wales and Events Wales. The aim of this is to generate new event and filming enquiries to Neath Port Talbot.

Initial discussions with both of these Welsh Government Departments has been hugely positive with encouraging levels of demand indicated in bringing more activity to the County.

Added Value

As a result of relationship building with key contacts in Creative Wales and Events Wales it is anticipated that both filming and events at Margam Park (and potentially our other country parks) will see an increase in demand.

The income generated from these events and filming enquiries will go directly to Margam Country Park and therefore cannot be reflected as a hard figure in the calculations of income for the Events Team, however this income adds to the overall net gain of investing in the team as their activities will generate additional income against Margam Park budgets, which in turn can assist with reducing existing subsidy targets.

Consideration of the wider economic benefit to the County should also be given, as attracting more events and filming will in turn increase spend in local supply chains and create local employment opportunities.

Creative Wales uses a formula for local economic impact based on a return on investment of 10-1 for every £1 invested by the organisation via grants. In order to make a crude estimate of the potential local economic impact of filming (through stays in local hotels and use of local skills and suppliers etc.) we can apply the same formula based on the income we anticipate to receive from filming enquiries. This would result in an estimated total value of filming to the local economy of £1.35m by the end of 2026/2027.

This formula can be refined at a future date and a formula for events included to determine a more comprehensive picture of local economic impact relating to the activities of the new team.

Proposed Charging Structure for Events and Filming

It is essential that the Council is able to access currently untapped revenue generation opportunities which contribute towards the costs of encouraging events and filming to the area. These fees need to be finely balanced against creating compelling reasons for events and filming companies to see the area as a viable location.

All events and filming productions are different in size, scope and nature and it is therefore proposed that commercial fees are agreed on a case by case basis.

For community events with little or no commercial trading taking place, it is proposed that a nominal fee be charged of between £25 and £100 depending upon anticipated attendance at the event.

Community events make up around 95% of the overall Officer workload on events, introducing a nominal charge for the use of council land in these instances will have a limited impact on community level event organisers, but will help to sustain the Events

Team, and the range of support it will be able to offer these organisations in the longer term. Research has shown that most local authorities in the UK charge fees for community events.

The proposed charging structure for events and filming permissions can be summarised below (full details can be found on pages 19, 20 and 21 of Appendix 2)

In summary,

- Community events will be charged a nominal fee (of between £25 -£100) for the use of Council land. Applications for road closures/ temporary road traffic orders (TRO's) will remain free of charge for non-commercial community events (where less than 33% of third party operators are trading commercially).
- Commercial events will pay a fixed fee which will be agreed on a case by case basis depending on the site location, size and scale of event and the level of staff involvement required. This will be provided via a quotation in advance of an event making an application. There will be a charge for road closures/ TRO's up to the level of full cost recovery to the Council.
- Filming crews will pay a fixed fee which will be agreed on a case by case basis depending upon filming location, disruption to local facilities and staff involvement required. There will be no charge for student filming. There will be a charge for road closures/ TRO's relating to filming up to the level of full cost recovery to the council.

In terms of the proposal to introduce full cost recovery to implement road closures/ TRO's for commercial events and filming productions, it is intended that this will be introduced on a 6 month trial basis in the first instance.

This trial period will enable us to analyse if full cost recovery for road closures/ TRO's has a detrimental impact on the Council's ability to

attract events and filming in future. Should this be the case the Council will need to reconsider this proposal and introduce an alternative arrangement to recover at least some of these costs in future.

Financial Impacts:

Appendix 8 sets out in detail the anticipated costs and income generation activities associated with the proposed Event Team and Film Office.

Whilst a significant level of income is expected from the activities of the Events Team and Film Office, there will need to be an ongoing allocation of revenue budget to cover staff and operational budgets.

Allocating any income targets is a risk and there is no guarantee. However, through the due diligence and engagement process leading to this review officers are as confident as possible the targets are achievable.

The aim is for the team to eventually become self-funding, subject to increasing demand for events and film productions in addition to securing external funding to carry out supplementary activity.

The anticipated costs to NPTCBC in putting in place an Events Team and Film Office are set out earlier in the report.

Integrated Impact Assessment:

A first stage impact assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its legislative duties (under the Equality Act 2010, the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

The first stage assessment has indicated that a more in-depth assessment is not required. A summary is included below.

The proposal to introduce a new Events Policy and to resource a dedicated Event and Film office team will not negatively impact upon any individuals with protected characteristics. There will be no negative impact on the use of the Welsh language and the proposal will have the potential to impact positively on biodiversity by only holding events in suitable locations and appropriately advising event organisers on the biodiversity impacts of their own events.

Further to this the proposed new Events Policy and staff resource will support sustainable development principles and links directly with delivering outcomes against Wellbeing Objective 3 of the NPTCBC Corporate Plan which states, '*Our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations*'.

Valleys Communities Impacts:

The valleys communities will benefit from being able to access a wider range of events and festivals within their local community. There is potential to attract filming productions to our valleys areas which will help to showcase our natural landscape and change perceptions of what our valleys areas offer to visitors and residents.

Workforce Impacts:

This report proposes to introduce a new Events Team. If formally approved this will result in the creation of a number of new roles to manage events across the Council including Neath Fair, Neath Food and Drink Festival and Remembrance Day Parades. The creation of this specialist team will in turn result in freeing up capacity in other service areas which are currently tasked with organising these events including Estates, Regeneration and HR.

Legal Impacts:

Amendments will need to be made to existing legal agreements and licences which are issued to event organisers for events on Council land. This will act to clarify roles, responsibilities and liabilities of event organisers. This will include the introduction of hire fees and charges for the events administration process.

Risk Management Impacts:

By adopting the proposed Events Policy, revising existing agreements/ licences for holding events on Council land and putting in place an Events Team to build relationships and guide event organisers through the event administration process, it will be possible to mitigate the risks associated with holding large scale events, both from the Council's perspective and the perspective of event organisers themselves.

Crime and Disorder Impacts:

No impact

Counter Terrorism Impacts:

The application of counter terrorism measures as part of the responsibilities of event organisers are clarified within the proposed Events Policy. This reinforces existing SAG requirements for event organisers.

Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Impacts:

No impact.

Consultation:

Consultation has been undertaken across all Council Departments which are currently involved in the management and/ or administration of events in the County. A range of event organisers who have recently been through the SAG process have also been consulted for their views to inform the draft policy.

The current Safety Advisory Group has been consulted on the changes to the Terms of Reference.

Further to the above, a wide range of consultation has been undertaken in the community and among the arts, culture and tourism sectors in devising the Culture Strategy and Destination Management Plan which has resulted in events being identified as a priority within these plans.

Scrutiny Observations

The proposal was considered at the Education, Skills and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee on the 25th July 2024

Scrutiny raised that the organisers of the Pontardawe Remembrance Parade are unable to proceed with this years' event. Officers confirmed that they will consider the issues. When a team is in place Officers would hope to give Remembrance Parade organisers the support needed to continue.

Scrutiny asked for clarification on what constitutes a Community event as opposed to a commercial event. Officers provided clarification.

Scrutiny sought clarification on whether the new team would be responsible for arranging licences and road closures for events. Officers clarified that the team would signpost to relevant departments, but the event organisers would be responsible for securing all statutory consents.

Scrutiny requested one amendment to Appendix 2: Draft Events Policy to clarify within Table 1 the criteria for non-commercial and commercial Community Events of the policy. This has been noted and actioned.

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Recommendations:

With due regard to the accompanying Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form it is recommended that Cabinet provides endorsement of the following recommendations to progress through the decision making process:

- Provide approval to create and fund a dedicated Events Team (including a Film Office function) within the Council to assist in realising the aims of the Culture Strategy and

Destination Management Plan which align with Wellbeing Objective 3 of the Corporate Plan;

- Provide approval to adopt the Events Policy and proposed charging structure;
- Provide approval to utilise £94,973 from reserves on an invest to save basis to cover the anticipated deficits in years 1 and 2.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To ensure that the Council is able to deliver a comprehensive events service for internal and external events, generate additional revenue through events and filming productions and meet the aims Culture Strategy and Destination Management Plan which align with Wellbeing Objective 3 of the Corporate Plan.

Implementation of Decision:

The decision is proposed for implementation after the three-day call-in period.

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Main Alpha1 Report: Outdoor Events Administration and Management – Report for Neath Port Talbot Council

Appendix 2 (A): Draft Neath Port Talbot Events Policy

Appendix 3 (B): Current Event Administration Process Flow Chart

Appendix 4 (C): Proposed New Event Administration Process Flow Chart

Appendix 5 (D): Safety Advisory Group Terms of Reference – Proposed Changes

Appendix 6 (E): Sample Letter of Agreement – Minor Events

Appendix 7 (F): Sample Licence – Major Events

Appendix 8: Events Team and Film Office Income and Cost Projections

Appendix 9; Integrated Impact Assessment

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