



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cabinet

5th February 2025

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

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected:

All Wards

Report Title: Neath Port Talbot Events Strategy 2025-2035

Purpose of the Report:

To outline the Neath Port Talbot Events Strategy 2025-2035 to Members with a view to seeking approval to adopt the strategy as part of the Council's work to support the growth of the events sector within the County Borough.

To update the delegations required to support timely decision making for temporary events.

Executive Summary:

Following the publication of the Destination Management Plan and Culture Strategy and the subsequent formation of the Events Team, this 10-year Strategy outlines how we will aim to deliver the vibrant all year-round programme of festivals and events for Neath Port Talbot.

Developed through extensive research, consultation and public engagement the Neath Port Talbot Events Strategy 2025-2035 looks

to find new ways to celebrate the amazing place that is Neath Port Talbot, bringing people together to ensure that all communities benefit from events and festivals and invest in projects across the borough.

It is widely acknowledged that the impact of events and festivals on an area is far-reaching, improving not only the quality of life for residents but strengthening the identity and pride of a local community, impacting positively on health and wellbeing and encouraging a greater appreciation of an area's unique natural environment.

As well as bringing additional visitors to the area this Strategy aims to increase the quality of events, attracting higher spending visitor markets and delivering a national and international profile for Neath Port Talbot, highlighting the area as a destination for events and holidays, boosting the local economy and paving the way to growing prosperity and sustainability.

Background:

Strategy

In 2023 members approved the publication of the Culture Strategy setting an ambitious tone for place-making in Neath Port Talbot.

At the same time the Destination Management Plan was also approved with the overall aim of bringing sustainable development of the visitor economy in the area.

The ambition to provide a year-round vibrant programme of events and festivals features heavily in both documents. The power of events to be transformational and excite local communities, while having the potential to contribute to the visitor economy is well versed and Neath Port Talbot has great potential to improve the current offering.

The New Events Team and Film Office

In September 2024 Members approved the 'Invest to Save' proposal to establish an Events Team and Film Office alongside the adoption of the new Events Policy which outlines the day-to-day procedures and guidelines on how events on council land will be managed in future. Work is well underway to implement the new policy by having a full team in place to manage council run events and advise external event organisers, the new policy will be introduced as planned at the beginning of April 2025.

Whilst the Event Policy will assist Officers in the day-to day management of events and events enquiries, it is not intended to set out a strategic framework.

The new Destination and Development Team within the Leisure, Tourism, Heritage and Culture Department has worked alongside Alpha1 Events Consultancy to develop a new Events Strategy to grow the number and variety of events taking place in the county borough for the benefit of residents and visitors.

This new team will require the appropriate delegations to enable timely and effective decisions that are required by event organisers and the additional purpose of this report will be to seek a delegated authority for officers to enter into agreements to facilitate the holding of such events.

Consultation and Research

As part of the process of developing the new Events Strategy detailed research and consultation has been undertaken via desk research, public questionnaires and one to one meetings with stakeholders and residents from representative groups in the area.

Following detailed consultations with Local Members, Officers, and Event Organisers, we developed strong ideas to enhance the events offer in Neath Port Talbot. Key outcomes included backing events

that offer low/no cost to attendees, a focus on supporting local businesses, attracting new visitors, and celebrating local culture.

Discussion around the challenges faced by events included access to public transport, disabled access to events was also raised as a priority.

A key outcome of the consultation was the identification of current barriers faced by event organisers when they approach the Council due to increasing regulatory demands, liaising directly with various departments and the cost of implementing safety/ highways requirements. Building relationships and transparency with stakeholders is a key feature of developing the Strategy.

The main aim of our work is to develop an events strategy for the next ten years which helps us to meet the aims of the following key plans:

- Wellbeing Objective 3 of the Corporate Plan: ‘Our local environment, culture and heritage can be enjoyed by future generations’
- The NPT Culture Strategy
- The NPT Destination Management Plan
- The NPT Heritage Strategy.

Vision and Strategic Interventions

The Neath Port Talbot Events Strategy sets out the following Vision to be achieved by 2035.

‘It is 2035 and the Neath Port Talbot area is one of the best places in Wales to visit, live and work, with a vibrant diverse and sustainable exciting calendar of outdoor events and festivals that showcase the rich culture, heritage and community spirit. We are a welcoming place where events grow and thrive, all set in a dramatic landscape.

Local communities, businesses, commercial and community event organisers, public bodies, community leaders and champions have come together and have innovatively and creatively promoted, supported, and organised, an all-year-round colourful and vibrant programme of events and festivals. Their contribution has been recognised in playing a vital role in creating a greater sense of community cohesion, reducing inequality, improving people's mental and physical well-being and driving economic growth.

Working with our neighbours in central South Wales the area now has a strong reputation for holding regional, national and international events and festivals.'

Further to this the strategy sets out six strategic interventions to achieve this vision as follows:

1. Fostering collaboration and partnerships
2. Enhance Community Engagement, Cohesion and Participation
3. Innovate and Adapt Events and Festivals
4. Drive economic Growth
5. Sustainability and Environmental Stewardship.

Full details of the rationale for these strategic interventions, alongside actions to deliver them can be found in full in **Appendix 1: Neath Port Talbot Events Strategy 2025-2035.**

Financial Impacts:

The financial impacts of the activities of the Events Team and Film Office were set out and approved by Cabinet in the September 2024 Cabinet report.

There are no wider financial implications associated with delivering the Events Strategy, however, by attracting additional and a wider variety of events into the County there will be a positive revenue generation impact as a result of delivering the strategy.

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.

The proposal to adopt the new Events Strategy will not negatively impact upon any individuals with protected characteristics. There will be no negative impacts on the use of the Welsh language and the Strategy 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.

There are a range of economic and wellbeing benefits associated with offering a wider ranging programme of events across the county.

Further to this the proposed Events Strategy 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. Public transport, and the ability to access some events may be an issue for some, especially in the valley communities.

Workforce Impacts:

There are no workforce impacts as a result of the proposed adoption of the Events Strategy.

Legal Impacts:

There are no legal impacts as a result of the proposed adoption of the Events Strategy. Where events are to take place on Council land, appropriate agreements will be entered into to ensure legal obligations are complied with.

Risk Management Impacts:

There are no risk management impacts as a result of the proposed adoption of the Events Strategy.

Crime and Disorder Impacts:

There are no crime and disorder impacts as a result of the proposed adoption of the Events Strategy.

Counter Terrorism Impacts:

All events which take place on Council land, and also all those events that fall within the Safety Advisory Group criteria are required to comply with all relevant guidance and legal responsibilities in relation to counter terrorism. The application of counter terrorism measures as part of the responsibilities of event organisers are clarified within the new Events Policy which has already been adopted by Cabinet.

Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Impacts:

No impact.

Consultation:

Consultation has been undertaken across council departments and with event organisers, this was undertaken through the following engagement activities.

Workshops -

- 17th July 2024 - Commercial and Community Event Organisers - including In It together, Neath Town Council, Richard Burton 10k, Ferry Fest, Viva Port Talbot
- 18th July 2024 - Council Officers including representatives for Margam Park, NPT Comedy Festival, Property & Regeneration, Employee Networking Group, Finance, Adult Services, Tourism & Culture.
- 18th July 2024 – Local Councillors - Cllr Laura Williams, Cllr Robert Wood, Cllr Cen Phillips , Cllr James Henton, Cllr Sharon Freeguard, Cllr Alan Lockyer attended.

One to One / Teams meetings - July/August/Sept 2024 -

- Housing & Communities Team
- Youth Service & Youth Council
- Regeneration & Economy Team
- Heritage & Culture Team
- Special Events Manager, Swansea City Council
- Event Wales

Other Event Promoters & Organisers -

- Solo Presents
- Great British Food Festival
- Luminare
- Kilimanjoro Live

Online Survey -

- Public and Event organisers online survey ran from 27th June - 24 July 2024, 349 responses were received. The survey asked respondents what they would like to see, where they want events and why they thought events were important. For Event

organisers the survey also asked what their challenges and priorities were.

Following detailed consultations with Local Members, Officers, and Event Organisers, we developed strong ideas to enhance the events offer in Neath Port Talbot. Key outcomes included backing events that offer low/no cost to attendees, a focus on supporting local businesses, attracting new visitors, and celebrating local culture.

Discussion around the challenges faced by events included access to public transport, disabled access to events was also raised as a priority.

A key outcome of the consultation was the identification of current barriers faced by event organisers when they approach the Council due to increasing regulatory demands, liaising directly with various departments and the cost of implementing safety/ highways requirements. Building relationships and transparency with stakeholders is a key feature of developing the Strategy.

Scrutiny Observations

TBC

Recommendations:

With due regard to the accompanying Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form it is recommended that;

- Members approve the Events Strategy 2025-2035 for adoption by the Council.
- Members delegate the responsibility for agreeing the terms and conditions for temporary events and attractions across the County Borough to the Head of Leisure, Tourism, Heritage &

Culture in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Portfolio Holder where appropriate.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To ensure that the Council has a long-term vision and strategy for to grow the number and variety of events held in Neath Port Talbot for the benefit of local community wellbeing, local culture and the local economy.

Implementation of Decision:

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

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Neath Port Talbot Events Strategy 2025-2035
Appendix 2; Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

Officer Contact:

Chris Saunders, Head of Leisure, Tourism, Heritage & Culture
c.saunders@npt.gov.uk

Karleigh Davies, Destination and Development Coordinator
k.davies16@npt.gov.uk