

Proposed Events and Festivals Policy

Cabinet Member for Visitor and the Local Plan - Cllr Iain Eadie

Date:	24th November 2020
Agenda Item:	3
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Key Decision?	NO
Local Ward Members	N/A



**Economic Growth,
Environment and
Development
(Overview and
Scrutiny)
Committee**

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of the results of consultation on a draft Events Policy and procedure considered by the Council's Cabinet meeting of the 6th October 2020 and to allow the EGED Committee to input its views.
- 1.2 The aim of the new policy is to facilitate the continued delivery of high quality, well run events and festivals in Lichfield District, to ensure they are well managed, add to the economic growth of the district and are enjoyable for all. The draft policy can be viewed at **Appendix 1**.
- 1.3 Consultation on the draft policy opened on the 21 October 2020 for a 28 day period. Existing event organisers, landowners, parish councils, and the Chairs of the Regulatory and Licensing and the Economic Growth, Environment and Development committees were informed of the consultation and invited to respond. The consultation was also publicised on the district council website for anyone else with an interest to consider and respond to.
- 1.4 The consultation closed on 18 November. In total 31 people/organisations completed the questionnaire, in addition 5 separate responses were received by email. The overall feedback has provided some useful information which will help fine tune the draft policy, please see **Appendix 2** for a summary of the responses
- 1.5 The general feedback indicates that a policy would help to help facilitate the continued delivery of high quality, well run events and festivals in Lichfield District, that bring a varied events programme to the district for all to enjoy. The introduction of a two stage application process will further help streamline applications and help facilitate/support event organisers. A good clear process was welcomed. The suggestion of a 28 day window for expression of interest applications was well received. It is clear that event organisers wish to work with the district council and many have a good working relationship with the events team at Beacon Park.
- 1.6 Areas in which the draft policy could be improved included, defining what an event is for the purpose of this policy and which events would be required to use the new application process. Concern was raised with regards to civic and more traditional events, should these be covered by the policy as they tend to be set by tradition and date, these events are more for Civic Pride and may struggle to meet the evaluation criteria. Queries were raised about the experience of the officer panel who would evaluate the expression of interest applications and then make recommendations to the cabinet

member for approval. We have sought to address the key concerns that were highlighted in the consultation and have provided suggested responses to these, which can be found at **Appendix 3**.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the comments made in response to the consultation on the draft policy and procedure, contained in **Appendix 2**.
- 2.2 It is recommended that the Committee note the suggested responses to the key issues raised in the consultation at **Appendix 3**.
- 2.3 It is recommended that the Committee notes the suggested amendments to be made to the draft policy as outlined in **Appendix 3**.

3. Background

Context

- 3.1 Following the EGED committee meeting in March 2018, when a review of the 2017 events programme and a preview of the 2018 events programme was discussed, the council commissioned Bournemouth University to undertake a study to look at the economic impact events were having on the city, local businesses and council services.
- 3.2 The findings of the work undertaken by Bournemouth University study were reported to this committee on 21 January 2020 (See **Appendix 4**) and the views of the committee sought on the findings. The committee noted the various impacts of events and festivals, the views of interviewed stakeholders and the stated benefits and also dis-benefits. The committee duly resolved that it would be in the interests of the Council and the district if a clearly defined policy was drawn up to help deliver on an annual basis a high quality, attractive and beneficial programme of events to meet as wide an audience as possible. Such a policy and its subsequent implementation should take into account and address the concerns raised about the management of events and the impacts on local residents and business.
- 3.3 Over the past few months officers have developed a policy in response to the request of the EGED committee and in discussion with the responsible Cabinet member. A draft policy was duly presented to Cabinet at a meeting on the 6 October 2020, whereby it was agreed to approve the draft policy for the purposes of consultation and subject to any subsequent minor, non-material amendments being made adopt the policy. The cabinet report can be viewed at **Appendix 5**.
- 3.4 The consultation on the draft events policy opened on 21 October 2020 for a 28 day period, ending on 18 Nov 2020. At the close of the consultation a total of 36 responses had been made. The comments received can be viewed at **Appendix 2**. Overall the comments have been positive with people supportive of a policy and generally content with the suggested policy put forward for comment. A number of respondees have sought clarification as to where and how the policy would apply and others have highlighted where the policy would be further enhanced with the inclusion of additional details. Some respondees have raised concerns at the impact of the policy on the delivery of traditional events held in Lichfield.
- 3.5 At **Appendix 3** is a suggested response to the issues raised together with an indication of whether as a result the draft policy should be amended. Members are asked to consider the comments made and the Council's response. It will be noted that compared with the list of comments made it is not

suggested that many changes to the policy itself are required. In many cases the comments relate more to the implementation of the policy and these can be addressed in the procedures associated with the policy and the supplementary guidance which the Council has prepared to help people understand and engage with the policy. The guidance is attached at **Appendix 6**.

3.6 It is not considered necessary given the feedback to significantly amend the policy as originally drafted. The recommended changes provide for more clarity and help readers to understand things better. If the Committee is content with the suggested changes the policy would be amended accordingly and then implemented.

Alternative Options	The council could decide not to have a policy or to agree an amended policy to that proposed including with the suggested amendments. The previous view of the EGED committee was that the Council and the district would benefit from having a suitable policy to facilitate an appropriate events programme.
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Consultation	<p>Internal consultation with all relevant service areas within the Council has taken place.</p> <p>Public consultation on the draft policy opened on the 21 October 2020 for a 28 day period. Existing event organisers, landowners, parish councils, and the Chairs of the Regulatory and Licensing and Economic Growth, Environment and Development committees were advised of the consultation and invited to respond. The consultation was also available on the district council website for anyone else with an interest to respond.</p>
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Financial Implications	None from this report.
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Contribution to the Delivery of the Strategic Plan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A key theme of Lichfield District Council’s strategic plan 2020-2024 is that we will work collaboratively to shape our place and develop prosperity across Lichfield District. 2. Events and festivals are recognised as a key part of showcasing our district, and encouraging economic growth. A varied events programme, helps us build on our heritage, tourism, and cultural offer and encourages more footfall, both to the events and afterwards as events help showcase the district for future return visits.
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Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Implications	An equality impact assessment has been undertaken.
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Crime & Safety Issues	<p>A well prepared event management plan, should consider the impact events may have on crime and disorder, plans should be put in place to prevent any disorder, working with the safety advisory group can help to mitigate any impact.</p> <p>Events provide a social activity for residents and visitors.</p>
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Environmental Impact	The environmental impact of any event will be assessed, managed and mitigated
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	through the event booking enquiry/assessment process. The draft policy includes a set of environmental criteria against which to judge any expression of interest applications.
GDPR/Privacy Impact Assessment	A privacy impact assessment has not been undertaken at this time.

	Risk Description	How We Manage It	Severity of Risk (RYG)
A	Will the events policy be implemented in time to develop a varied events programme for 2021?	Subject to a policy being agreed and adopted, review the various procedures and processes within council service areas.	Likelihood: Yellow Impact: Red Severity of Risk: Red
B	Will the environment be right, post covid, to run an events programme in 2021?	Continually review the policy and its application in the light of current guidelines issued by government with regards to mass gatherings/events.	Likelihood: Green Impact: Red Severity of Risk: Red
C	Consideration should be given as to whether the policy and associated guide will deter event organisers from wishing to run events in Lichfield.	Continually monitor and review the policy to ensure that it meets the councils and other stakeholder's requirements.	Likelihood: Green Impact: Yellow Severity of Risk: Yellow

Background documents:

1. Economic impact assessment report from Bournemouth University, January 2020
2. Minutes of the EGED committee meeting of the 21 January 2020
3. Cabinet report and decisions from the 6 October 2020 cabinet meeting

Relevant web links