

Culture and Communities Committee

2.00pm, Tuesday, 20 March 2018

Code of Practice on the Use of Volunteers at Festivals and Events – Update Report

Item number	8.6
Report number	
Executive/routine	
Wards	All
Council Commitments	46

Executive Summary

A motion by Councillor Staniforth to the Culture and Communities Committee on [30 January 2018](#) called for a code of best practice on the use of volunteers at events to be proposed within one Committee cycle.

In conjunction with the 11 major Festivals and Festivals Edinburgh officers are working to ensure that a consistent code of practice can be proposed across all events and Festivals. The code of practice requires consultation not only with the Festivals but with external partners such as Volunteer Edinburgh.

This report provides an update on progress. A final code of practice will be reported separately to the Culture and Communities Committee on 19 June 2018.

Code of Practice on the Use of Volunteers at Festivals and Events – Update Report

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that Committee:
 - 1.1.1 notes the scope of this work; and
 - 1.1.2 notes that a full report on a code of practice for the use of volunteers at Festivals and events will be presented to Committee on 19 June 2018.

2. Background

- 2.1 Volunteering at Festivals and Events offers a number of benefits to participants, attendees and event organisers. Major events and Festivals often run volunteer programmes that allow participants to get involved in major events either to meet new people, build new skills either for personal or career development, take on new challenges, or to give back to their local community or area.
- 2.2 Festivals Edinburgh also piloted a [Festival City Volunteers](#) programme during the summer Festivals. A presentation to the [12 September 2017](#) meeting of Culture and Communities Committee highlighted the success of this initiative.
- 2.3 Separate to this, recent media reports highlighted the need for a consistent set of guidelines on the use of volunteers at events to provide assurance that both volunteers and Festivals and events benefit from the experience and that no paid roles are replaced by volunteers.
- 2.4 A motion by Councillor Staniforth to the Culture and Communities Committee on [30 January 2018](#) called for a code of best practice on the use of volunteers at events.

3. Main report

- 3.1 Volunteering has become a key element of most major festivals and events, recognising the important role that volunteers provide in welcoming and assisting event attendees and event organisers.
- 3.2 While volunteering is undertaken on a non-contractual basis, it is important that volunteers are treated fairly and benefit from the experience. In order to protect the volunteer and the organisation, a code of practice should be developed to clearly define what is expected of organisations who use volunteers, how the volunteers should be treated, what benefits should be available and to ensure that volunteer roles are not used to replace paid employment.

- 3.3 Council officers are working with the 11 major Festivals and Festivals Edinburgh to deliver a code of practice that can be applied across all festivals and events.
- 3.4 At present, a number of existing policies from across the Festivals are being reviewed to develop one consistent code of practice that can be applied to all Festivals and events.
- 3.5 The code will be developed in consultation with relevant partner organisations including Volunteer Edinburgh, and will consider how relevant provisions from the [Charter](#) of volunteering principles and good practice produced by Volunteer Scotland and the STUC can be reflected.
- 3.6 The motion from Councillor Staniforth specifically requested that guidelines on the use of volunteers are applied to the Council's procurement contracts. Advice from the Council's Commercial and Procurement Service states that the inclusion of guidelines within the procurement process cannot be achieved under the current regulations.
- 3.7 The Council's Procurement arrangements are governed by the Procurement Reform Act 2014 and the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015. Neither the Act nor the Regulations make reference to volunteering, effectively meaning it cannot be included within a procurement process.
- 3.8 The Scottish Government produces Scottish Procurement Policy Notes (SPPN), which are amendments or additions to the Act and Regulations, and are sent out to all Procurement professionals within Scotland. Such updates allow procurement processes to reflect changes in the Act or Regulations as policy changes at a national level. However, without a mandate from the SPPN to include volunteering guidelines within procurement processes, the Council is unable to incorporate them.
- 3.9 Additionally, enforcement or assessment of use of volunteers will be difficult to achieve within existing resources.
- 3.10 However, the Council has a number of policies that can and are referred to within the procurement process. It is suggested that developing a Volunteering Policy that sets out the code of practice may be the most appropriate mechanism for achieving the objective.
- 3.11 Policies can be appended to the procurement process where appropriate. Unless mandated by law, such policies are unenforceable but respondents are expected to contribute to Council policies and requested to provide information on how they will achieve this through the delivering the contract. It is proposed that a volunteering code of practice be included as an appendix to the procurement process, once agreed.
- 3.12 In response to concerns raised over the use of volunteers at Edinburgh's Hogmanay, the organisers have commissioned specific research on the use and experience of volunteers at the 2017/18 festival. This data is currently being collated by an external research organisation and will be included in the final report to this Committee.

4. Measures of success

- 4.1 The success of the code of practice will be measured through its adoption as Council policy and across any of the 11 major Festivals that involve volunteers.
- 4.2 The code of practice contributes to the delivery of the following Culture Plan objectives:
- Support greater partnership working in the cultural and creative sectors and maximise resources available to help them thrive all year round; and
 - Ensure that everyone has access to world class cultural provision.

5. Financial impact

- 5.1 There is no direct financial impact associated with this report.

6. Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

- 6.1 There are no risk, policy, compliance or governance impacts arising from this report.

7. Equalities impact

- 7.1 The outcome of this report and the code of practice on the use of volunteers will ensure that volunteers are treated equally and without exploitation or discrimination where this exists. The report itself has a positive equalities impact.

8. Sustainability impact

- 8.1 The impacts of this report have been considered in relation to the three elements of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 Public Bodies Duties, and the outcomes are summarised as follows: the proposals in this report will have no significant impact on carbon emissions; be neutral in relation to climate change; and will help achieve a sustainable Edinburgh through the promotion of the city nationally and internationally, positive economic impact and contributions to the quality of life and well-being of residents.

9. Consultation and engagement

- 9.1 The Council has engaged with the relevant partners and Festivals bodies to develop the code of practice. The Council will continue to engage with key partners in the development of the code of practice.

10. Background reading/external references

- 10.1 [Culture and Communities Committee](#) – 30 January 2018

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11. Appendices

None