

# Minutes

## Culture and Communities Committee

10.00am, Thursday 13 October 2022

### Present:

Councillor Walker (Convener), Kate Campbell (**substituting for Councillor Glasgow – items 2 - 4**), Heap, McFarlane, McNeese-Mechan, Meagher, Mitchell, Munro, Osler, Staniforth and Thornley.

### 1. **Dowie's Mill Weir Fish Pass, River Almond**

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An update was provided on the Dowie's Mill Weir Fish Pass on the River Almond and approval was sought to progress with development of a rock ramp at this location to improve fish migration.

#### Decision

- 1) To note the content of the report.
- 2) To agree the construction of a rock ramp at Dowie's Mill Weir.
- 3) To support the development of the rock ramp proposal to detailed design stage and subject to further stakeholder engagement in the design process.
- 4) To allow the Executive Director of Place to progress the necessary arrangements for the construction of a fish pass at Dowie's Mill Weir, subject to Planning consent being approved and adequate funding being in place.

(Reference - report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted)

### 2. **Terms and Conditions for Operating Events in Parks: West Princes Street Gardens and the Ross Bandstand**

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It was reported that an evolving events sector, increasing environmental protection measures and the closure of the entrance to West Princes Street Gardens at King's Stables Road, due to rockfall had required a revision to how event organisers could access and use the Gardens and the Ross Bandstand for events and concerts.

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Officers had drafted a set of operating guidelines that aimed to maintain viable access and egress conditions, enable events to take place safely, sought to minimise disruption to the general public and supported environmental protection the Gardens and access routes. This was attached as Appendix 1 of the Executive Director of Place.

Recognising that the events programme in West Princes Street Gardens was an evolving process (and that an additional report was being considered on the Use of Public Spaces for Events and Filming), Committee was asked to recognise that until a solution was found to the rockfall from the Castle there was a need to control and limit access on grounds of health and safety, as well as reducing the environmental risks to the St Cuthbert's Churchyard entrance to the Gardens. The recommendations in the report still supported the 2014 Edinburgh Parks Events Manifesto and would feed into any subsequent refresh of that document.

### **Motion**

To continue consideration of the matter as these issues were being considered at Committee on 13 December 2022 and agreeing to the recommendations would adversely affect the recommendations in the report in December.

- moved by Councillor Osler, seconded by Councillor Thornley.

### **Amendment**

- 1) To approve the Conditions and Parameters for events in West Princes Street Gardens.
- 2) To approve the proposed number of major events which maintained the ambition of the 2014 Edinburgh Parks Events Manifesto.
- 3) To note that officers would continue to pursue a solution to the rockfall from Edinburgh Castle with Historic Environment Scotland.

- moved by Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor Meagher.

### **Voting**

For the motion - 4

For the amendment - 7

(For the motion: Councillors Mitchell, Munro, Osler and Thornley.)

(For the amendment: Councillors Kate Campbell, Heap, McFarlane, McNeese-Mechan, Meagher and Staniforth and Walker.)

### **Decision**

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- 1) To approve the Conditions and Parameters for events in West Princes Street Gardens.
- 2) To approve the proposed number of major events which maintained the ambition of the 2014 Edinburgh Parks Events Manifesto.
- 3) To note that officers would continue to pursue a solution to the rockfall from Edinburgh Castle with Historic Environment Scotland.
- 4) To agree to provide a briefing note to members concerning the nature of rockfall from the castle and to liaise with Historic Environment Scotland about the impact of fireworks on rockfall and relay this information to members.

(Reference - report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted).

### **3. Fields in Trust Dedications, Ravelston Park and Orchard Brae Park**

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Details were provided that Ravelston Park was dedicated under a Fields in Trust protection agreement. A community asset transfer had been agreed for an area of the park and the pavilion and therefore written consent was required from Fields in Trust to allow the transfer to be finalised. The report by the Executive Director of Place detailed the process involved.

#### **Decision**

- 1) To support the proposal to offer Orchard Brae Park to Fields in Trust as replacement for lost ground in Ravelston Park.
- 2) To approve the launch of a public consultation to seek feedback on the proposal.
- 3) To note the updated Minute of Agreement.
- 4) To clarify if the report referred to Orchard Brae Park or Orchard Park and liaise with Councillor Osler.

(Reference - report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted)

### **4. Emergency Motion by Councillor Heap – Filmhouse and Edinburgh International Film Festival**

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The following motion by Councillor Heap was submitted in terms of Standing Order 4.5 and ruled urgent by Councillor Walker in order that the motion could be considered timeously.

“Committee:

- 1) Believed that film had a long and proud history in Edinburgh, with the Edinburgh International Film Festival (EIFF) operating since 1947.
- 2) Understood how important the EIFF and the Filmhouse cinema were to the filmmaking, cinema and broader cultural heritage of the city.
- 3) Noted with regret that the Centre for Moving Image (CMI), operator of the EIFF and Filmhouse cinema, announced it had gone into administration on 6 October 2022, putting at risk the future of film in the city and with deeply regrettable job loss.
- 4) As a priority action, wished to ensure that support for those most impacted, the staff, is provided as urgently as possible.
- 5) Acknowledged the pressures at play within the cinema distribution and exhibition industry, as digital competition and new market entrants had an impact.
- 6) Further acknowledged the impact of rising costs and cost of living issues in the cultural ecology of the city.
- 7) Understood that the Council Leader and the Convenor of the Culture and Communities Committee were working with Scottish Government, Creative Scotland, Screen Scotland and all other stakeholders to examine all options for the future of the Filmhouse and EIFF, including the possibility that meantime measures were put in place for the Edinburgh Filmhouse to continue to operate and for the EIFF to run in 2023, and requested them to continue to do so.
- 8) Requested Council officers explored working with stakeholders to create a trust (or other suitable entity) to co-ordinate donated and other funds that would ensure the short-term future of both the Filmhouse and EIFF.
- 9) Requested the Council Leader and Convenor of the committee provided the Festivals APOG with regular updates on the Council’s work to support the future of the Filmhouse and EIFF.
- 10) Requested a report to the Culture and Communities Committee in two cycles on (a) how the shorter term future of both could be assured and the role the Council could play in this; (b) how staff were being supported by the Council; (c) How much funding CMI, EIFF and the Filmhouse had received from the Council in the past five financial years and prospects for continuing previous funding in FY 2023/4, (d) how the longer term future of both could be assured and the role of the Council in this, and (e) what could be done to support cultural and community cinema in Edinburgh.
- 11) Requested a verbal briefing to the December meeting of the Culture and Communities Committee regarding (a) update on the situation facing the Filmhouse

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and EIFF (b) the resilience of cultural organisations within the city, given the wider implications of the current environment.”

- Moved by Councillor Dan Heap, Seconded by Councillor Val Walker

### **Decision**

- 1) To approve the motion by Councillor Heap.
- 2) To include in the Business Bulletin for the next meeting of the Committee on 13 December 2022 an update on the situation.
- 3) To have discussions with officers to consider the possibility of creating a mechanism to ensure that cultural delivery across the entire city would be protected.
- 4) To have discussions with Creative Scotland, regarding the financial situation, and what steps could be taken for the future.