

Culture and Communities Committee

10.00am, Tuesday, 7 March 2023

Response to motion by Councillor Mowat – Festivals Review

Executive/routine Wards Council Commitments	Routine All, but in particular Ward 11, City Centre
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1. Recommendations

- 1.1. It is recommended that Culture and Communities Committee notes:
 - 1.1.1. The review of the Summer Festivals 2022 (Appendix 1) and the actions being progressed to address the operational issues identified (Appendix 3); and
 - 1.1.2. That the Festivals and Events All Party Oversight Group will be kept updated on progress on these actions in advance of the Summer Festivals 2023, with the first update planned for May 2023.

Paul Lawrence

Executive Director of Place

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Response to motion by Councillor Mowat – Festivals Review

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. This report has been prepared in response to the motion by Councillor Mowat, approved by the Council on 25 August 2022, titled Festivals Review. The report summarises the findings of a review of the Summer Festivals 2022 and sets out the actions being progressed to address these issues.

3. Background

- 3.1. On 25 August 2022, the Council approved the following adjusted motion by Councillor Mowat titled Festivals Review:
 - 3.1.1. To congratulate the Edinburgh International Festival, Edinburgh Fringe Society, Edinburgh Book Festival, Edinburgh Art Festival, Edinburgh Jazz Festival and Edinburgh Film Festival for delivering successful and full Festivals, after 2 years of very limited programmes and in bringing the return of the activity to the City;
 - 3.1.2. To note that after 2 years not holding the Festivals' events and restructuring within Council departments, there had been some challenges in the delivery of Festivals (including but not limited to resident engagement re the impact of outdoor performances returning, lines of communication and responsibility to ensure timely resolution of complaints, management of safe and enjoyable numbers of people in public spaces, traffic management and travel advice to walk/wheel/cycle/take public transport as a preferred option) and the required interdependencies with Council Departments in supporting that delivery and call for:
 - 3.1.2.1. A report to the relevant Committee (to be determined according to what issues come out of the two meetings below) by the end of November at the latest detailing – issues raised; areas that needed improving and any inter service concerns so that we capture any weaknesses in process that had emerged and how we can work to improve these processes to ensure delivery of future festivals works for the Council, the Festivals, Residents and visitors.

- 3.1.2.2. The report should be informed by re-establishing the Festivals All Party Oversight Group (Festivals APOG) by the end of September to capture concerns raised with councillors and to consider what worked, what didn't and what needed to be improved.
 - 3.1.2.3. The report should be informed by a meeting by the end of September with Festival organisers and officers to determine what worked, what didn't and what needed to be improved.
 - 3.1.3. To note overall the hosting of the biggest arts festival in the world had gone extremely well.
 - 3.1.4. To note this year had seen several challenges such as strikes, increased delivery costs and extensive infrastructure works but the multi-agency team made up of festival operators, emergency services and council officers had met and continued to meet on a regular basis to discuss and help each other with any operational difficulties faced.
- 3.2. Following the motion and the conclusion of the Summer Festivals, debrief meetings were held by the Summer Festivals City Wide Overview Group (CWOG) and Event Planning and Operations Group (EPOG). Further information was collated by Festivals Edinburgh and a presentation for the Festival and Events All Party Oversight Group (APOG) took place on 18 October 2022.

4. Main report

- 4.1. The Council and its partners work hard to understand and balance the needs of the residents, visitors and businesses whilst enabling the summer festivals to take place successfully within the City of Edinburgh.
- 4.2. As noted in the approved motion, the hosting of the Summer Festivals 2022 went extremely well, despite several challenges.

Scorecard development

- 4.3. Prior to the outbreak of COVID-19, an annual festivals scorecard was prepared. An updated scorecard (Appendix 2) has been developed using some of the same data points from the last available report (2019) as well as adding in new data points which provide additional relevant information or where there is a suitable alternative to data no longer available. The scorecard provides a snapshot of activity levels and perceptions of the city year on year from which overall patterns can be observed.
- 4.4. The scorecard will continue to be developed to include new information from the Summer Festivals 2023, with the most notable inclusion to be from the new CCTV City Operations Centre where the technology available will greatly enhance the data available to officers. In particular, information on crowd and vehicle movements will help inform future workstreams.

Realising the benefits of the Summer Festivals

- 4.5. A summary of the Summer Festivals activity in 2022 is provided in Appendix 1. Further information will be gathered on Edinburgh's Christmas and Edinburgh's Hogmanay to prepare a detailed summary for all of the festivals in 2022.
- 4.6. The analysis from the Summer Festivals 2022 shows that Edinburgh residents are still the main attendees of the festivals with around 40% of audiences being from Edinburgh. Around 20% of attendees are from the rest of Scotland, 30% from the rest of the UK and 10% are international visitors.
- 4.7. Over 60,000 free tickets were made available to local residents, alongside community-led programming such as the Wester Hailes Community Wellbeing Collective, Citizen Writers' Group, and Young Programmers takeover of Film in the City.
- 4.8. The festivals' agility, supported by Omicron emergency funding, enabled them to successfully present a programme at 75% of previously capacity only six months after the winter lockdown.
- 4.9. Stability in core funding programmes and initiatives such as Place and Expo have been crucial to supporting investment in local creatives and supply chain as well as broadening engagement initiatives for city audiences, which are not income generating.

Festivals Review

- 4.10. The feedback in Appendix 1 provides a summary of what went well , what could be improved and of the strategic challenges highlighted.
- 4.11. There were many things identified that went well and there were some external factors which impacted on delivery in 2022 which will hopefully not be repeated in future years.
- 4.12. In response to the operational challenges identified, an action plan has been developed (Appendix 3). All of the improvement actions are being progressed and are due to be completed by the end of June 2023.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1. In preparing for the festivals in 2023, the focus will remain on balancing the needs of residents, businesses, visitors and the festivals.
- 5.2. The actions set out in Appendix 3, together with actions to address the strategic challenges, will continue to be progressed. The APOG will continue to be kept updated on progress in preparation for the Summer Festivals in 2023, with the first update due in May 2023.
- 5.3. Following the Summer Festivals 2023, debrief activities will be undertaken following the festivals and the scorecard will be updated.
- 5.4. In addition, alongside the preparation for the Summer Festivals 2023, Council officers are also taking forward the actions agreed by Committee on the Use of Public Spaces for Events and Filming and Amplification of Sound in Public Spaces.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1. The work being progressed to date by Council officers is being met from the current revenue allocation for the Place Directorate and capital funding allocations, where appropriate.
- 6.2. The actions identified in Appendix 3 are currently being progressed. Should there be any recommendations arising which have a financial impact, this will be quantified and reported to the relevant Committee when approval is sought.
- 6.3. External funding support will be sought, where appropriate, to keep costs to the Council to a minimum.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1. This report summarises the feedback received following the Summer Festivals 2022 and includes details of the stakeholder feedback received.
- 7.2. Stakeholder and community impact remains at the centre of event planning for the festivals. Council officers will continue to work closely with stakeholders (including Elected Members and residents) to implement the actions arising from the Summer Festivals 2022 and in preparing for 2023.

8. Background reading/external references

- 8.1 Culture and Communities Committee - Managing our Festival City: Progress Report – [26 March 2019](#)
- 8.2 Transport and Environment Committee - Summertime Streets Evaluation – [5 December 2019](#).
- 8.3 Policy and Sustainability Committee - Review of Event Management Operations in Edinburgh – Edinburgh's Christmas – [25 February 2020](#).

9. Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix 1 – Summary of Feedback on Summer Festivals 2022
- 9.2 Appendix 2 - Updated Scorecard for 2019-2022 festivals
- 9.3 Appendix 3 - Summer Festivals Action Plan

Summer Festivals 2022

Summary of Feedback



Facts & Figures – Summer Festivals

- Residents remain the lifeblood of the festivals: with around 40% of audiences being from Edinburgh, 20% from Scotland, 30% from the UK and 10% from overseas;
- The festivals' agility, supported by Omicron emergency funding, enabled them to successfully present a programme at 80% of previous capacity only six months after the winter lockdown;
- Local service businesses continue to highlight the importance of the festivals' strong return, especially to the 44,000 city jobs and livelihoods in arts, recreation and hospitality;
- Over 60,000 free tickets were made available to local residents, alongside community-led programming such as the Wester Hailes Community Wellbeing Collective, Citizen Writers' Group and Young Programmers takeover of Film in the City.
- Across the festivals, there was a strong return to international participation with over 70 countries represented in programmes (compared to 80 pre-pandemic);
- 13 international governments supported showcases at the Festival Fringe; and
- Overall observations on the August visitor economy from the Edinburgh Tourism Action Group include:
 - Airport passenger numbers of 1.2 million were 76% of the numbers in 2019;
 - Overall city centre performance was strong footfall wise;
 - City hotel occupancy was 86.5% - only 3.7% down on 2019, with average RevPAR of £180 (up 9% on 2019);
 - However, visitor spend was not recovering as quickly; and
 - Summer festivals performed strongly in line with their smaller programmes.

Facts & Figures – Edinburgh Jazz and Blues Festival

Edinburgh Jazz & Blues Festival 15 – 24 July

The UK's largest independently run jazz and blues festival

- 130 in person concerts (140 in 2019) and 20 online concerts
- 2,000 artists and participants
- Carnival international artists from 13 countries
- Activity in all 17 city wards
- Audience numbers of 54,500 were at 78% of 2019 levels



Facts & Figures – Edinburgh Art Festival

Edinburgh Art Festival 29 July – 29 August

The UK's largest annual festival of visual arts, including a programme of public realm commissions

- 20 partner galleries, 35 exhibitions, 120 artists and collectives represented
- Commissions programme involved 9 artists, plus 25 participants in community-led programming with WHALE, establishing Wester Hailes Community Wellbeing Collective
- 4 emerging artists showcased in Platform exhibition
- Major programme focus outside city centre along the Union Canal
- Audience of over 200,000, around 70% of 2019: 50% from Edinburgh, 53% first timers



Facts & Figures – Edinburgh International Festival

Edinburgh International Festival 5 – 28 August

The world's leading performing arts festival, featuring the finest performers in dance, opera, music and theatre



- 92 productions, nearly 300 performances, featuring 2,400 artists from 45 countries
- Two world-class residences by the Philadelphia Orchestra and Internationaal Theater Amsterdam successfully helped model lower carbon festival programming
- Over 150,000 tickets issued, 7% decrease on 2019
- 34,000 free tickets issued for four flagship free events, over 90% going to Edinburgh residents; and additional 27,000 programme tickets given to community groups and young people or discounted as concessions
- Audiences were 70% from Scotland, 20% rest of UK, 10% international - similar to 2019

Facts & Figures – Edinburgh Festival Fringe

Edinburgh Festival Fringe 5 – 29 August

One of the world's great celebrations of performing arts, with a purpose to give anyone a stage and everyone a seat

- Stronger return of artists than expected with 3,324 shows, 75% of 2019 - including first Edinburgh Deaf Festival and first ever Arts Council England showcase on the Fringe
- 63 countries represented, the same as 2019, with 13 international showcases
- 1,336 arts industry delegates, almost on a par with 2019
- 2.15 million tickets issued, 80% of 2019 levels – including 84% take up of Fringe Days Out vouchers distributed through 32 local community groups, and visits by over 900 school pupils
- 39% of attendances were from Edinburgh (up 4% on 2019), 16% from elsewhere in Scotland, around 35% from rest of UK, and around 10% from overseas



Facts & Figures – Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo

Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo 5 – 27 August

An iconic Edinburgh institution and one of Scotland's leading cultural brands

- 900-strong cast, with 13 nations represented
- After two years of absence, extra investment in lighting, projection and digital mapping paid off with refreshed format selling 92% of tickets, exceeding forecast of 85%
- Audience data still being analysed – international audience probably around 30%, lower than pre-pandemic norms of 40%-45% – and by contrast, domestic audience increased
- 8,000 half-price tickets on preview night went mostly to local residents, free tickets during the run also targeted to groups including Marie Curie, Western General Hospital and local schools
- UK TV broadcast peaked at 3.8million viewers and was the third most watched programme of the day, exceeded only by Coronation Street and Emmerdale



Facts & Figures – Edinburgh International Film Festival

Edinburgh International Film Festival 12 – 20 August

The world's longest continually running film festival, emphasising new talent, discovery and innovation

- 91 new feature films from 56 countries (including 32 international premieres and 13 features plus 31 short films with a connection to Scotland), with over 60% of features directed by women
- Excellent critical reception for the festival's three flagship gala events
- Over 700 press, industry delegates and industry guests
- Almost 29,000 admissions to a programme at 75% of 2019 scale
- Youth Programmers strand included takeover of Film Fest in the City at St Andrews Square



Facts & Figures – Edinburgh International Book Festival

Edinburgh International Book Festival 13 – 29 August

A world leading celebration of books and ideas



- 600 live events, 200 of which were hybrid with livestreaming watched in 65 countries (compared to 900 live events in 2019)
- Fringe First award won by This Is Memorial Device, on-site theatre piece adapted from a novel in collaboration with Royal Lyceum
- 200 online and 31 live events were 'Pay What You Can' and there were free outdoor event screenings in the garden courtyard of the new site at Edinburgh College of Art
- Author visits went to hospitals, libraries, schools, and prisons, and events designed by the Citizen Writers' Group took place in their own communities and at the Book Festival site
- 100,000 tickets were sold (on a par with 2019 relative to size of programme)

Operationally – What went well?

- Multi-agency working – in both planning and delivery;
- Dispersed venues (including Leith, Wester Hailes, Tollcross and Murrayfield);
- Working in partnership on crowd sensor trial, Hostile Vehicle Measures (HVM) trial and in response to local and national industrial action;
- The additional closures of Cockburn Street and Blair Street;
- Joint approach to busking;
- The High Street area, particularly removal of outdoor eating areas and refreshing of planters; and
- The city was buzzing, but not overly busy.

Operationally – what could be improved?

- Addressing pinch points and overcrowding on some pavements, including North Bridge and George IV Bridge;
- Defining clearly roles and responsibilities in respect of HVM;
- Extending the joint approach to busking into other areas;
- Resident engagement;
- Increased capacity on some bus routes to allow visitors to stay further afield;
- Noise issues between venues on Lothian Road;
- Wayfinding and signage could be improved to help people identify how to get to venues further afield; and
- Improve communication (e.g. to improve timeliness for submitting applications and information and reduce unforeseen issues).

Strategic Challenges Highlighted

- Financial challenges – due to rising costs, inflation, covid costs, increased production costs, tight labour markets and a decrease in audience spend;
- The cost of participation for artists and the cost for visitors;
- Late ticket sales – there was also a decline in the older demographic (20%) due to hesitancy of attending live events due to covid;
- International travel challenges for participants, such as higher costs, visa problems and longer processing times;
- Balancing environmental sustainability with feedback from audiences (e.g. fewer printed programmes received negative feedback and online audience numbers dropped);
- Recruitment of skilled staff was extremely difficult as many moved away from the industry during covid (30%) and the impact of COVID-19 on festival programmes means that young people have missed two years of valuable early-career experience; and
- Difficulties in procurement of technical kit and supplies, with both local and international supply chains affected which led to higher costs.

Operational Improvements for 2023

- Early preparation to identify and address potential pinch points;
- Develop a HVM /annual plan which provides clarity on roles and responsibilities for events and festivals;
- Busking working group established;
- Clear guidelines for resident engagement to be prepared to ensure consistency;
- Improving communications, both with partners and to encourage people to visit venues across the city;
- Review bus route capacities with local bus operators;
- Review of proximity of venues to identify potential noise issues;
- Arrange suitable and accessible power points in frequently used public realm locations (where possible); and
- Incorporate smart city initiatives where possible (e.g. crowd counting/traffic monitoring capabilities).

APPENDIX 2

MANAGING OUR FESTIVAL CITY – PEAK SEASON SCORECARD 2022

This year's scorecard includes, as far as possible, data from 2019 onwards (since the last report which included them held data up to and including 2018).

As in previous years, the scorecard is arranged under three themes of People, Environment and Economy, matching the three widely accepted strands to balancing the sustainability of places.

Whilst many indicators from previous years are reported on, some figures are no longer available. Where a new data point has been added, this is identified by an *. Data points which are no longer available and where there is no equivalent new data point available have been removed from the scorecard but historic scorecard data can be provided separately if required.

INDICATORS	VALUES									SOURCE
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	
PEOPLE										
Number of waste missed or full bin requests in month of August, <u>City Centre Ward</u> (Month of August)	234	200	404	207	284	335	230	267	198	City of Edinburgh Council NB. Bin Strike in 2022
Number of waste missed or full bin service requests in month of August, <u>City Wide</u> (Month of August)	3716	3699	5016	3177	3301	3358	2763	3776	2173	City of Edinburgh Council NB. Bin Strike in 2022
% of festival attendees that are Edinburgh residents based on live audience ticket sales	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	44% Av. Of 11 festivals	n/a	61% Av. Of 9 festivals	58% Av. Of 8 festivals	City of Edinburgh Council

INDICATORS	VALUES									SOURCE
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	
PEOPLE (cont.)										
Footfall for Princes Street in millions (August only)*	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1.83	0.94	1.28	1.59	Essential Edinburgh
Number of visitors to Royal Mile i-Centre during August* (thousands)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	40.1	5.5	8.7	23.9	Edinburgh Tourism Action Group (ETAG)
ENVIRONMENT										
Number of additional passengers per week city wide, during August (in thousands)	320	384	290	350	376	440	n/a	155	350	Lothian Buses
Number of tram passengers (August only, thousands)*	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	663	104	247	480	Edinburgh Trams
Number of passengers during August (millions)*	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1.58	0.32	0.38	1.2	Edinburgh Airport (via ETAG)
Number of entertainment noise complaints during August – city wide*	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	63	11	59	66	City of Edinburgh Council
ECONOMY										
Jobs generated by festivals (year average)	n/a	n/a	5660	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	4000	Festivals Edinburgh Impact study
Revenue per available room for August (£)*	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	165	43	92	180	Edinburgh Tourism Action Group

INDICATORS	VALUES									SOURCE
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	
Economy (cont.)										
Hotel Occupancy for August*	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	90%	53%	70%	87%	Edinburgh Tourism Action Group
Attendance at registered Fringe events (estimate in millions)	n/a	2.3	2.5	2.7	2.8	3.01	n/a	0.38	2.2	Edinburgh Festival Fringe

SUMMER FESTIVALS 2023 – ACTION PLAN – VERSION 3 – 28.02.23

Ref:	Description:	Action required:	Action for:	Deadline:
1	Improve communications with partners	Timescale tool developed by public safety to provide clarity on when applications and information is required	Event Management Group (Linked to public spaces report)	31 May 2023
2	Early preparation to identify pinch points and overcrowding on some pavements (including North Bridge and George IV Bridge), recognising the positive outcomes noted for Cockburn Street and Blair Street in 2022.	Summer Festival Mobility Working Group to be set up to provide recommendations to mitigate these and other related issues.	Summer Festival Mobility Working Group	31 March 2023
3	As above	Short (2023) and longer (2024) term actions to be agreed and recommendations collated.	Summer Festival Mobility Working Group	31 May 2023
4	Develop a Hostile Vehicle Mitigation (HVM) policy/annual plan which provides clarity on roles and responsibilities for events and festivals	Annual plan for 2023 to be investigated. All stakeholders including all relevant events, festivals and venues to be included in scoping exercise.	HVM City Centre Working Group	31 March 2023
5	Busking – joint approach worked well – other areas to be incorporated	Busking Working Group to be set up	Busking Working Group	Completed
6	As above	Busking Working Group to identify any short-term actions that could be beneficial for Summer Festivals 2023	Busking Working Group	31 March 2023
7	Noise issues between venues	Work with venues to make programming/scheduling changes	Event Management Group	Completed
8	Improve wayfinding, signage, and travel information to encourage visitors to visit venues across the city.	A communications and travel strategy will be developed with partners to	Summer Festivals City Wide Overview Group, Summer Festival Mobility Working Group	30 June 2023

		encourage visits to venues outwith city centre		
9	Review bus route capacities with local bus operators	Bus routes and capacities to be reviewed as trends have changed with more demand outwith the city centre	Summer Festival Mobility Working Group	31 May 2023
10	Develop clear guidelines for resident engagement	Resident and business engagement guidelines to be drawn up to ensure consistency	Event Management Group (Linked to public spaces report)	31 May 2023
12	As above, but related to public messaging	Multi-agency pre-event communications to be approved and FAQ's to be provided to the Council's Contact Centre	Summer Festivals City Wide Overview Group	30 June 2023
13	Use of generators to be minimised in phases and increased connectivity required in public realm	Upgrade existing power points within Council public realm areas used for events and investigate use of temporary 4g masts. Scoping and procurement exercise required to check feasibility	Public Safety Team / Procurement Team	31 March 2023
14	Smart Cities initiatives to be used to their full extent to inform future planning and delivery	Engage with CCTV City Operations to set up reports for duration of summer festivals on crowd and traffic movements	Summer Festival Mobility Working Group / Public Safety Team	30 June 2023
15	As above	Scope the feasibility of purchasing additional smart cameras and licences for temporary deployment at event sites not covered by current system	Public Safety Team / CCTV Team	31 March 2023
16	Following debrief comments and recent venue incidents across the UK relating to crowd safety a review of the standards applied to venues and events is required	Review and confirm best practice guidance to be used for venues. All festival partners and venues to be made aware of change	Public Safety Team / Summer Festivals City Wide Overview Group	31 March 2023