

Policy and Sustainability Committee

10.00 am, Tuesday, 20 April 2021

COP 26 Events and Engagement Planning

Executive/routine
Wards
Council Commitments

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that the Policy and Sustainability Committee:
 - 1.1.1 Note that Liz McAreavey, Chief Executive of Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce will play a co-ordinating role on behalf of the Council to deliver a programme of Edinburgh events for COP26,
 - 1.1.2 Note the intention to establish a COP26 Edinburgh Events steering group to support this work, with members to include City of Edinburgh Council, University of Edinburgh, Festivals Edinburgh, Edinburgh business and other partners
 - 1.1.3 Agree that a fund of up to £106,000 will be allocated to the delivery of COP26 events. This fund will be comprised of £50,000 from budget previously allocated Council involvement in MIPIM, and £56,000 of the £300,000 earmarked in this year's Council budget to support Sustainability and Net Zero activity

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COP 26 Events and Engagement Planning

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report notes the intention for Liz McAreavey, Chief Executive of Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce, to take a co-ordinating role on behalf of the Council to deliver a programme of Edinburgh events for COP26.
- 2.2 To support this work, the report notes the establishment of a COP26 Edinburgh Events group to manage and co-ordinate the successful delivery of events and promotions by Edinburgh businesses and partners in the period leading up to COP26 in November 2021.
- 2.3 It is proposed that Council support for this programme comprises allocation of up to £100,000 for COP26 events, comprised of £50,000 from budgets previously allocated for Council involvement in MIPIM, and £56,000 to be taken from the £300,000 approved in this year's budget for Sustainability and Net Zero programme support.

3. Background

- 3.1 COP 26 is a major United Nations climate change summit taking place in Glasgow from 1-12 November 2021 under the presidency of the UK government.
- 3.2 The Conference of Parties, known as COP, is the decision-making body responsible for monitoring and reviewing the implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, whose objective is to "stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system".
- 3.3 This is the first time the UK will host the conference, which was originally scheduled for November 2020 but postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 3.4 Delegates from across the world are expected to attend formal events in the 'blue zone' where climate experts, campaigners, policy makers and world leaders debate how to make global progress on climate change.
- 3.5 The conference also incorporates side events in the 'green zone', a citizen meeting space where NGOs, organisations and national representatives engage with each

other and the general public on aspects of environmental awareness, social equality and reflections on proceedings at the COP.

- 3.6 COP 26 represents an important opportunity for Edinburgh to demonstrate the steps we are taking to tackle climate change, and build the partnerships we need to help deliver a net zero city.

4. Main report

- 4.1 In order to maximise opportunities for the City from participation and attendance at COP26 and associated events, it is proposed that a COP 26 Edinburgh Events steering group is established. This group will be comprised of city partners already active in planning COP26 related events and engagement (including City of Edinburgh Council, University of Edinburgh, Festivals Edinburgh, Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce and others), and will seek to:
- 4.1.1 Co-ordinate and support joint planning of COP26 events by Edinburgh partners
 - 4.1.2 Produce and manage a clear communications and activity plan to promote all Edinburgh events with COP26 branding
 - 4.1.3 Alongside this partner programme, deliver a specific, focused series of events and debates on key areas for Edinburgh's net zero journey, for example;
 - 4.1.3.1 Green Tourism
 - 4.1.3.2 Green Finance, and
 - 4.1.3.3 20 Minute Neighbourhoods
 - 4.1.4 Establish a programme to showcase Edinburgh businesses leading on sustainable and green economy actions
 - 4.1.5 Support community groups to host events to showcase and promote public engagement in COP26 discussions
 - 4.1.6 Provide a space and focus for cultural, festival organisations, musicians and performers to get involved in a celebration of Edinburgh and its net zero ambitions, and
 - 4.1.7 In doing so, seek appropriate sponsorship and business support for this programme of work.
- 4.2 Throughout this work, the steering group will liaise as appropriate with city colleagues working to manage the transport, and community impacts of events, demonstrations or other activities occurring in Edinburgh as a result of COP26.
- 4.3 In order to harness the power and buy in of the private sector in this work, Liz McAreavey, Chief Executive of Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce, will act as a city wide lead for this programme on behalf the Council, and chair of the COP26 Edinburgh Events Group.

- 4.4 It is further proposed that City of Edinburgh Council support for this work comprises commitment of:
- 4.4.1 Officer time and resources from within existing Strategy and Communications division budgets for management of International Relations activities, and
 - 4.4.2 A fund of up to £106,000 for COP26 events and promotions. This fund will be comprised of £50,000 from budgets previously allocated for Council involvement in MPIM, and £56,000 taken from the £300,000 allocated in this year's budget for Sustainability and Net Zero activity.
 - 4.4.3 This allocation will include expenditure of up to £6,000 to support community groups, including Transition Edinburgh, in the development and hosting of COP26 events which could include the temporary use of Council owned buildings, such as Tron Kirk.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 Next steps will involve formal establishment of the COP26 Edinburgh Events group, and development of a partnership programme for events and promotions in the period leading towards COP26.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 Actions outlined in this report can be taken forward within existing approved budgets. The proposal comprises an allocation of up to £100,000 for COP26 events and promotions, taken from the £300,000 allocated in this year's budget for Sustainability and Net Zero activity.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 The programme outlined in this report aims to ensure appropriate co-ordination of activities by city wide stakeholders, and arises from consultation and debate raised during meetings of the Edinburgh International Group.

8. Background reading/external references

- 8.1 None.

9. Appendices

None