

Culture and Communities Committee

10.00am, Thursday, 5 December 2024

Sprint World Orienteering Championships 2024 Event Report

Executive/routine
Wards

Routine
All

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that Culture and Communities Committee note the event report for the Sprint World Orienteering Championships 2024.

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Report

Sprint World Orienteering Championships 2024 Event Report

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report provides an update on the outcomes of the [Sprint World Orienteering Championships 2024](#), held in Edinburgh from 12 to 16 July 2024. The Council supported the delivery of the event with £250,000 of funding from the Events budget.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Sprint World Orienteering Championships is a relatively new event, owned by the International Orienteering Federation. The first iteration of the event was held in Denmark in 2022. Athletes compete over an urban city centre course.
- 3.2 Edinburgh was awarded the Championships in 2019, originally scheduled to be delivered in 2022. However, Covid meant the 2020 (Denmark) and 2022 (Edinburgh) events were delayed to 2022 and 2024 respectively.
- 3.3 The event was delivered by the Scottish Six Day Company in partnership with Scottish Orienteering and the British Orienteering Federation. A Steering Group comprised of these organisations plus the Council and EventScotland oversaw the strategic development and delivery of the Championships.

4. Main report

- 4.1 The Sprint Orienteering World Championships were held across various sites in Edinburgh from 12 to 16 July 2024. The competition schedule and locations were:
- Friday 12 July AM – Sprint Qualifiers (Leith);
 - Friday 12 July PM – Sprint Finals (Old Town and Ross Bandstand);
 - Sunday 14 July – Team Relay (Riccarton/Heriot-Watt);
 - Tuesday 16 July AM – Knockout Sprint Qualifiers (Wester Hailes); and
 - Tuesday 16 July PM Knockout Sprint Finals (Old Town and St John Street).

- 4.2 The Championships attracted elite professional athletes who raced through the streets of Edinburgh to various checkpoints in the fastest possible time and in front of large crowds. Details of the locations, maps and venues used are available on the [Sprint World Orienteering Championships 2024](#) site.
- 4.3 Alongside the elite competition, a number of mass participation events called ‘WOC Tour’ were held, allowing amateur athletes and the general public to race similar routes to the elite athletes. These venues included Holyrood Park, Leith Links, Kings Buildings, Riccarton, the Old Town and Wester Hailes.

Participants and Visitors

- 4.4 The WOC Tour attracted 1,237 participants, many of whom also volunteered during the delivery of the Championships, with participants from 31 different countries (44% of participants being from outwith the UK).
- 4.5 The event attracted over 500 volunteers and 99% of participants rated the competitions as ‘good’ or ‘very good’; and 97% rated their overall visit to Edinburgh as ‘good’ or ‘very good’.
- 4.6 On the elite side, 45 national teams entered the Championships from across the world, totalling 254 athletes and 79 team officials. The athletes rated the competitions as ‘good’ or ‘very good’ (96%) and rated their overall visit to Edinburgh as ‘good’ or ‘very good’ (96%).

Media

- 4.7 The Championships were broadcast live on primetime free-to-view channels in a number of territories including Scandinavia, France and Switzerland. The full championships were streamed online, and highlights packages shared internationally.
- 4.8 In the UK, the BBC World Service produced several packages from the Championships with a reach of 84m. BBC Scotland commissioned an episode of [The Adventure Show](#) which presented highlights of the Championships in Edinburgh and gives an excellent overview of the Championships, showcasing the city and its geography.
- 4.9 The Championships generated 31 pieces of international media coverage and produced a further reach of 381,112. Social media reach was 273,233.

Economic Impact

- 4.10 An impact survey, commissioned by the organisers of the Championships, shows the economic impact of the event at a local and national level:

Edinburgh:

- Gross direct spend: £2.1m
- Net direct spend: £2.6m
- Net additional Gross Value Added (GVA): £1.3m
- Net additional jobs: 25 FTE (full time equivalent)

Scotland:

- Gross direct spend: £3.1m
- Net direct spend: £4.7m
- Net additional GVA: £2.3m
- Net additional jobs: 45 FTE

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 As a single event, there are no next steps anticipated.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 The Council contributed £250,000 in event funding from the Events budget to support the delivery of the Championships. This was matched by EventScotland.
- 6.2 The budget for this event was spread over three financial years (2019/20, 2023/24 and 2024/25) to reduce the impact on available funding in any one year.

7. Equality and Poverty Impact

- 7.1 There are no Equality or Poverty impacts expected to arise as a result of this report.

8. Climate and Nature Emergency Implications

- 8.1 There are no climate and nature emergency implications expected to arise as a result of this report.

9. Risk, policy, compliance, governance and community impact

- 9.1 None of the areas listed are expected to be impacted as a result of this report. Officers within Public Spaces and Events Operations have noted an increase in the number of orienteering events being held in Edinburgh with four competitions planned over the coming months in the city.

10. Background reading/external references

- 10.1 Sprint Orienteering World Championships – Budget Update – Culture and Communities Committee, [5 October 2023](#)

11. Appendices

None