

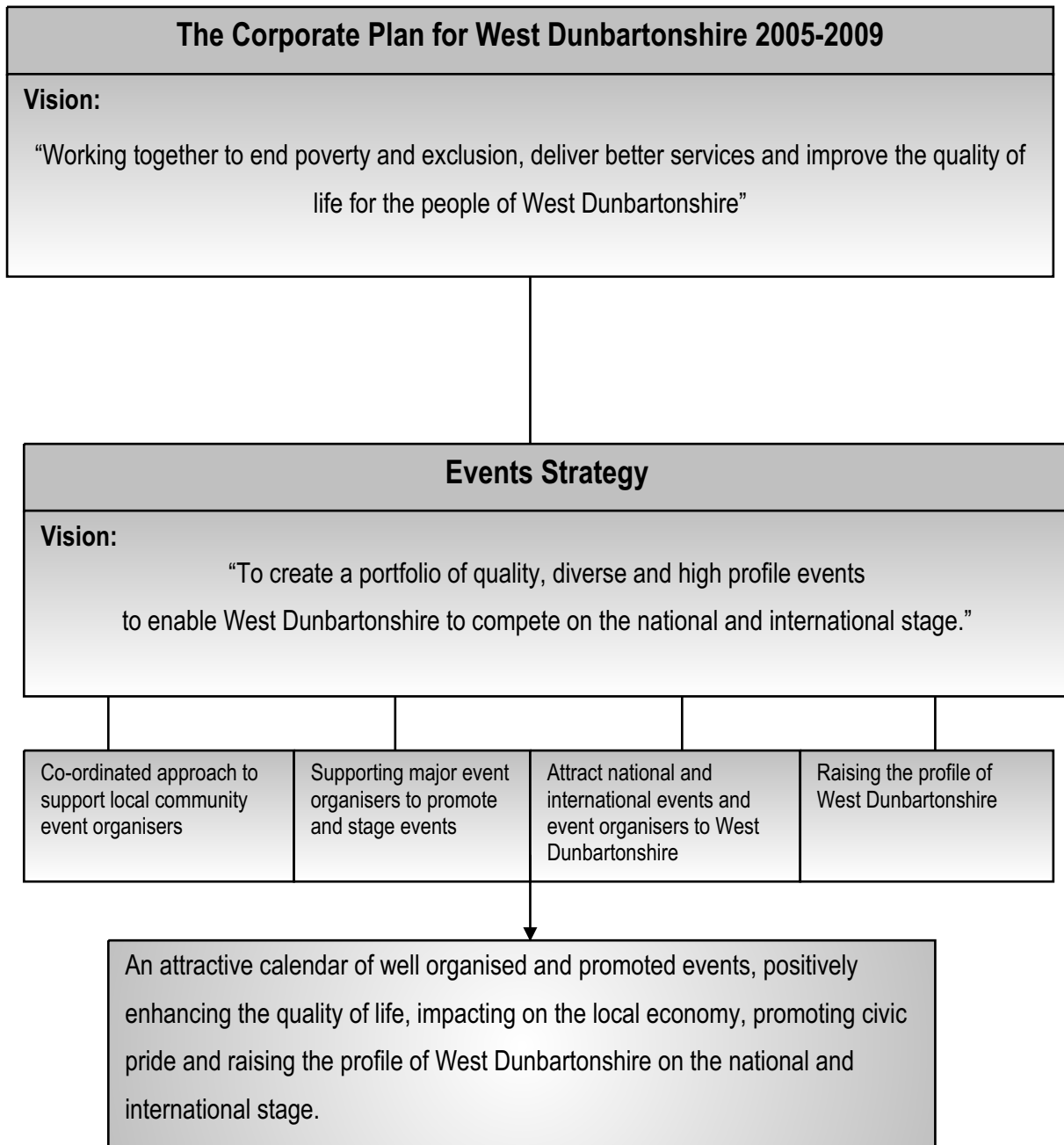


**Events  
Strategy**



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**Date: April 2006**

# An Events Strategy for West Dunbartonshire



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## **Introduction**

Events are acknowledged as an important part of social, cultural and economic life, having the potential to enrich the lives of the community whilst promoting the area to visitors. Events are part of the wider programme of engagement with communities, groups and individuals and include for example, school concerts, area wide events such as the West Dunbartonshire Festival through to events with national and international standing including the Scottish Pipe Band Championships, the Loch Lomond Highland Games and major music events at Balloch Castle.

The aim of this Event Strategy is to provide a framework for the Council and partner organisations to work together to develop the reputation of West Dunbartonshire as a host for a wide variety of events, from small events, to regional events and to major international events, celebrating the area's unique culture, heritage and landscape.

## **Vision**

Our vision is of a West Dunbartonshire in 2009 that is ambitious, highly skilled, creative, caring and able to make and take advantage of opportunities. We not only want to help each individual achieve what is best for him or her, but also to improve our environment, health, services, products and infrastructure. Our vision sees West Dunbartonshire's profile raised on the national and international stage and it is in recognition of the role events can play in supporting this vision that this Events has been developed. This Strategy will work to ensure the provision of a varied and attractive calendar of well organised and promoted events to positively enhance the quality of life, impact on the local economy and promote civic pride.

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## Policy Context

### West Dunbartonshire's Corporate Plan 2005 - 2009

West Dunbartonshire's key document provides the overarching framework for every strategy we put in place. The objectives of West Dunbartonshire's Corporate Plan are to:

- Regenerate and Develop the Local Economy
- Promote Health and Wellbeing
- Promote Lifelong Learning
- Create a Better Environment
- Develop our Children and Young People
- Provide High Quality, Best Value Services

Within the context of the Council's corporate objectives, the Events Strategy will emphasise;

- Promoting a strong sense of identity and civic pride and delivering a range of high quality community, sports, arts and cultural events.
- The importance of leadership and vision to make the most of West Dunbartonshire's strengths and opportunities. This applies also to the promotion of West Dunbartonshire in terms of its heritage, tourism and leisure.
- Making the most of West Dunbartonshire's inherent assets and town centre re-development to support the contribution of tourism to the local economy
- Focusing on developing civic pride and active participation in creating strong and thriving communities.

### Departmental Strategic Plan 2005 – 2009:

The Department's mission statement is that "We will work towards making West Dunbartonshire the community where people feel safe, enjoy living, working and visiting. Through regeneration and development of the economy, we will create a better environment to enrich the lives of residents and visitors" The attainment, development and delivery of quality, high profile events is entirely in line with departmental strategy and vision. Specific objectives from the departmental strategy relating to the procurement and staging of events are contained within the Council's Action Planning Database and progress towards fulfilling these objectives is reported on a quarterly basis.

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## Events & Halls Service Plan 2005 – 2009

The Events and Halls Section Service Plan includes the following *events specific* objectives.

### *High Quality, Best Value Services*

- To continue to develop partnerships with key agencies to ensure the development and delivery of co-ordinated services and the most efficient use of resources.

### *Business Development*

- To stage more and larger events to promote the area and draw in income from event area leasing fees.

### *Tourism*

- To encourage greater numbers of tourists and visitors to the area by staging popular, large scale events that are economically accessible yet income generating.

### *Promoting Social Inclusion - a Caring Society*

- To ensure that the Events and Halls services are economically accessible to all sectors of the community and provide services and events that are of value to and are enjoyed by the community.

## Events Management Guide

Produced by the Events and Halls Section and adopted by Council in 2000, the Events Management Guide provides clear advice and instruction to organisers of events of all sizes in the procedures to be followed in safely and efficiently organising, staging and managing events on Council land and premises.

## Regeneration through Culture Strategy

Launched in May 2004, this strategy recognises and promotes the vital importance that a strong cultural identity, outlook and focus can have on the social, cultural and economic health of the smaller and wider community. The 2004 strategy was revitalised by the launch of the 2006 Cultural Events Programme, this new programme of events guided by the Convenor of Culture and Education Services. The 2006 Cultural Events are designed so that our aim is “through Culture, stimulate economic development, tourism, creativity, sense of community, health, partnership, well-being, regeneration, equality and diversity.” As the provision of Cultural Services is delivered via two main delivery mechanisms,

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economic/ development/tourist based and education/curriculum based, the Event Strategy must work in harmony with the Regeneration through Culture Strategy in order to maximise the benefit and success of both strategies.

### Community Planning Partnership

Community Planning brings together key West Dunbartonshire organisations with the communities they serve to deliver a shared vision for improving the quality of life in West Dunbartonshire. This commits all partners to working together to ensure that our activities are co-ordinated to achieve our aims of best value, sustainability and reducing inequality. The community planning partners are; West Dunbartonshire Council, WD Community Planning Partnership, Town Centre Management, Strathclyde Police, Scottish Enterprise Dunbartonshire, Clydebank Rebuilt, West Dunbartonshire Economic Forum, West Dunbartonshire's Further & Higher Education Sector and Communities Scotland.

### Scotland's Major Events Strategy 2003-2015: "Competing on an international stage"

The Scottish Executive launched this strategy in 2002 with a vision of Scotland becoming "one of the world's foremost events destinations by 2015". The strategy identifies objectives to deliver a viable portfolio of major events to attract visitors to Scotland, to enhance Scotland's international profile, to strengthen our sporting and cultural infrastructure and to maximise the economic, social and environmental benefits to all parts of the country.

EventScotland was established in 2002 to deliver these objectives with a main task of working in partnership with public and private sector event organisers to deliver a portfolio of events for Scotland. This presents an opportunity for West Dunbartonshire to enhance the development of a programme of major events and festivals in the context of the national strategy.

### **Background**

There is a growing acceptance of the positive impact that events can have on the area in social, cultural, economic and financial terms. This view is supported by the outcomes of the economic impact studies carried out at the 2005 Royal Scottish Pipe Band Championships and the R.E.M. Concert at Balloch Castle 2005. As there is almost always a cost element for the Council in staging, promoting, and/or supporting events, the events strategy should therefore incorporate an assessment of events and

their outcomes in order to evaluate future worth. A simple assessment criterion has been drawn up as follows.

**Class A** - an event that provides social and/or cultural value;

**Class B** – an event that generates positive economic impact in the Authority;

**Class C** - an event that has a net profit outcome for the Council;

**Class D** - an event that has a net loss outcome for the Council;

Events are an integral part of the overall service delivery in West Dunbartonshire and are important in attracting inward investment to West Dunbartonshire through tourism and in widening the appeal of the area as a destination to grow or locate a business and as a place to live and raise a family. Events are part of a wider programme of involvement with communities, groups and individuals and many very valuable events are organised directly or indirectly by the Council. ,

The development of the Events Strategy will entail dialogue and consultation with Community Planning Partners, Scottish Enterprise Dunbartonshire, VisitScotland and EventScotland. This Strategy aims to develop a structure for events in West Dunbartonshire and provide a pathway to delivering an enhanced cohesive structure for events.

### **Current Provision**

There exists within the Council there a diversity of roles and functions related to the provision and support for events e.g. licensing, traffic, roads, land services, health & safety, environmental health, building control, public relations, staffing and equipment resources etc. Several departments deliver a range of services to events on behalf of West Dunbartonshire Council. The knowledge and experience in event management within the Council is of a high level and each most departments have access to key individuals and staff to deliver specific contributions to events.

A number of significant annual events take place in West Dunbartonshire such as the Royal Scottish Pipe Band Championships, the Loch Lomond Highland Games and the Lomond Folk Festival.

Community Planning Partners should strive to maximise the opportunity to support or associate with these events to raise the profile of the work of the West Dunbartonshire Partnership and of West Dunbartonshire.



At present West Dunbartonshire does not actively pursue opportunities to host major events. Opportunities exist to capitalise on the unique geographical spread and characteristics of West Dunbartonshire as opposed to the 'city' status of Glasgow, Edinburgh, Perth and Dundee.

Currently, there is no co-ordinated approach to the promotion of events staged in West Dunbartonshire and as a result there is no single pathway to present a full events calendar for West Dunbartonshire. Residents and visitors are faced with a number of differing publications producing a varied level of quality and content of information. This impacts on forward planning, affecting the ability to exploit tourism opportunities, identifying gaps in the calendar for developing or introducing new events and the risk of events competing with each other.

There is no strategic framework for the planning and management of events in West Dunbartonshire and a perspective is required on the role of not only the Council but also its public and private sector partners and community organisations. The Events Strategy is two-fold in that there is a priority and a commitment to community development and to raise West Dunbartonshire's profile on the national and international stage.

## **The Way Forward**

### **Organisational Framework**

It is essential that the strategic approach to the provision of events in West Dunbartonshire enhances current delivery and builds on the high level of work previously carried out. Those organising events should see West Dunbartonshire's Events Strategy as strengthening their role as organisers and not in any way inhibiting initiative.

### **Major Independent Events**

Major events attract a wide audience to West Dunbartonshire and therefore provide a vital boost to the profile of the area. West Dunbartonshire Council, including its Community Planning Partners and Town Centre Managers, should use these opportunities more pro-actively to enhance their image and;

- To strengthen and develop links with major event organisers in West Dunbartonshire through providing support.

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- To create promotional opportunities for the Community Planning Partners at high profile events.
  - To develop strong and collaborative links with agencies such as Scottish Enterprise Dumbartonshire, VisitScotland, EventScotland and Scottish Arts Council to act as catalysts in attracting national and international events and event organisers into West Dunbartonshire.
  - To work in harmony with the economic development strategies of partner organisations
  - To work together to attract event funding and event support from national organisations

### **Council Events**

It is recognised that the expertise in organising events is spread throughout many Council services and this is coupled with the need to ensure compatibility with ongoing programmes. Recent experience of the organisation of major events indicates that the level of experience and organisation of time-bound officer event groups, reporting to Members and Directors, is a most effective and efficient way of organising events. There is a need however to ensure consistency and cohesion in the assignment of and delivery on specialist tasks e.g. preparation of licences, traffic management planning, promotion planning etc. Further development of the overall Event Strategy can produce a template which Council and external services can work to, allowing the possibility for each event to;

- Ensure wherever possible that every effort is made to maximise opportunities to secure external sources of funding and build relationships with the commercial sector and provide additional resources which add extra value to an event.
- Maximise every opportunity to promote and market the event through local, national and international media
- Establish guidelines for a consistent approach for direct delivery by Council Services
- Ensure events are part of the wider programmes and delivery mechanisms of West Dunbartonshire Council and are not simply events for their own sake.
- Develop a consistent approach to management of Health & Safety at events managed, delivered and support by West Dunbartonshire Council.

### **The Voluntary Sector**

Events have a direct social and cultural impact on their participants and wider host communities. Several of the events staged in West Dunbartonshire are organised, promoted and delivered by the

voluntary sector through community groups, organisations and committed individuals. The unique contribution made by the voluntary sector in relation to events and the assistance they provide towards meeting the aims set out in West Dunbartonshire's Community Plan is extremely valuable and warmly acknowledged.

It is through the role of volunteers that events are held for the benefit of local residents and the wider community. An enhanced system of support will be developed to enable voluntary organisations and community event organisers deliver safe, well run and enjoyable events. This will require that the Events Strategy develops systems to ensure a consistent level of financial and 'in kind' support from the Council through access to resources, information, advice and funding opportunities.

### **Promotion**

Successful promotion of events can showcase the environment and its characteristics, promote an area, strengthen the economy and increase community cohesion and quality of life. A co-ordinated approach to event promotion with therefore will be achieved by:

- Developing a process to ensure events are an integrated part of the work undertaken by the Council's Public Relations and link to the Community Plan.
- Developing strong and collaborative partnerships with Scottish Enterprise Dunbartonshire and the Argyll, the Isles, Loch Lomond and Stirling Tourist Board, VisitScotland, EventScotland and the Scottish Arts Council for the support, development and promotion of major events.
  
- Developing a portfolio of West Dunbartonshire, outlining its assets, potential and capabilities of staging or hosting specific events to capture the attention of national and international organisations and event organisers.
- Establishing an internal and external mechanism to collate, produce and distribute cohesive information on West Dunbartonshire events.
- Establishing a system of free distribution of promotional material through West Dunbartonshire Council establishments.

### **Event Planning Calendar**

A full audit/review of the complete range of all events for the coming year, including cultural events, should be undertaken. This should also include non-council staged events e.g. Town Hall/Denny productions, Lomond Folk Festival etc. This exercise should be time bound with the aim of producing a comprehensive database of all events by the middle of March 2006.

This database would form the basis of the April to September programme of Council events or Events Calendar. Each contributor would be expected to update this programme as the year unfolds, both for the existing programme and for future calendars e.g. winter/spring calendar from October to March. Importantly, members of the public, arts and charity organisations would also be able to populate both the event database and calendar. The calendar will contain details of all major events to help event organisers at all levels to plan ahead, avoiding clashes, strain on support resources and also to provide the opportunity for event collaboration. The event calendar will also provide the opportunity for West Dunbartonshire to develop a growth model to assess and develop the potential of existing events to steadily evolve into larger scale events and introduce new events of national and international significance.

### **Promoting the product -1**

The Event Calendar is promoted by two main routes. The first is a "What's on" brochure for delivery to visitor and community focal points e.g. libraries, TIC's, shopping centres, community centres, events etc. The second route is through the Council's website. A corporate "banner" for events, as well as a strapline/mission statement, should be devised to present all events under the same Council corporate brand.

It is proposed that the Council produce a "Whats on" guide on a twice yearly basis, similar to that as produced by other councils. Renfrewshire Council is an appropriate model in that they have two centres of cultural activity, Paisley Town Hall and Paisley Arts Centre which are broadly synonymous with Clydebank Town Hall and the Denny Civic Theatre.

The Renfrewshire "What's On" lists and advertises the following events;

Comedy,

Community, Drama,

Family, Music,

Young People,  
Arts and Culture  
Outdoor Events.

It is proposed that we take this a step further and include headline Sports events and Leisure events being staged and promoted by HaTS so that our definition of Events includes sporting events.

### **Promoting the product - 2**

Greater use should be made of the Council website. Currently, not enough emphasis is placed on promoting events on the front page of the website. For a visitor to the website to find out what's involves going through a list of links under "Leisure and Tourism". Website visitors then have to trawl through each department's/section's calendar to build up a picture of what's going on. We should be clearly presenting a summary of what's on and create a simple pathway to access this information. A "What's on" portal should therefore be placed prominently and permanently on the Council's website. A visitor to the Council's website could then easily access a comprehensive "What's on" portal, calendar and subsequent links to contributing departments/sections for further information, if required

The basic information to form this "What's on" portal is already on the website. What is required is to set up the portal, set up the calendar and then form the links to departments/section for further information. Links would also be required to external organisations participating in the what's on and more comprehensive and valuable links could then be formed with cultural organisations, sponsors, tourist board, Visitscotland, EventScotland etc.

### **Elected Members/Officers Events Strategy Group**

The Events Strategy Group, chaired by the Convenor for Cultural Services, will advise on the development of West Dunbartonshire's Events Strategy. The Officers Group, chaired by the Director of

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Development and Environmental Services will take a strategic approach to the development and implementation of the Strategy priorities and determine actions, targets and performance indicators.

### **Events Co-ordination**

It is recognised that expertise in organising events is spread throughout several Council departments. The proposed events delivery mechanism is presented as the most efficient and effective way of organising events. However, there is a need to ensure that there is a cohesive view taken regarding advice, funding, corporate events, standard and quality.

The Events and Halls Section will ensure cohesion and co-ordination of all aspects of West Dunbartonshire's Events Strategy and play the lead role in developing a range of appropriate additional events in West Dunbartonshire. It is essential that this strategic approach to the organisation of events in West Dunbartonshire enhances current delivery and builds on the high level of work currently being carried out.

The role of the Events Co-ordination in delivering West Dunbartonshire's Events Strategy will include:

- Pursuing an enhanced programme of events in West Dunbartonshire with a local, national or international profile.
- Working closely with Elected Members ensuring a strategic approach to the organisation of events in West Dunbartonshire and support the work of the Events Strategy Group in developing priorities and initiatives.
- Develop a co-ordinated approach to event promotion and management across the Community Planning Partners.
- Developing strong and collaborative partnerships and supportive links with all relevant Council Departments, External Agencies, Voluntary Sector and others for the support and development of major events.
- Creating a portfolio of West Dunbartonshire event sites, outlining assets, potential and capability of staging or hosting specific events.
- Establish a West Dunbartonshire wide approach for the support and resources available to community event organisers.

- Strengthening and developing links with event organisers in West Dunbartonshire.
- Maximising opportunities to secure external funding.
- Ensuring enhanced links between Services in the delivery of events and linkage to all Council strategies.
- Establish and implement monitoring procedures.
- Communication at all levels and across all partnerships.
- Developing a network of contacts relating to West Dunbartonshire's Events Strategy throughout Scotland collating information and strategies e.g. Best Practice, Benchmarking, Information Sharing.

### **Financial Framework**

Existing funds for events organised through West Dunbartonshire Council are largely held within departmental mainstream revenue budgets. In order to support the principles of the Events Strategy a sound financial framework should be established including;

#### **1. Attracting and Developing New Events**

Financial resource to provide the opportunity to maximise opportunities for attracting and investing in new events to West Dunbartonshire of national and international status. This may include attendance at events elsewhere to evaluate suitability as a future event.

#### **2. Growing and Developing Existing Events**

Investment to grow existing events, be this through developing site infrastructure, access, promotion of the event or providing additional support.

#### **3. Supporting Community Events**

Review the level and distribution of funding available through the Grant Schemes for Community Organisations to assist with running costs of events to provide opportunities to raise the level of quality of content and delivery of events.

#### 4. Raising the Profile of West Dunbartonshire

Externally arranged major events attract a wide audience to West Dunbartonshire and therefore provide valuable promotion of the area. West Dunbartonshire Council and the Community Planning Partners will use these opportunities more pro-actively to enhance its image through improved marketing resources.

#### **Events Funding Programme**

Evaluation Criteria -: Applications will be considered for events which demonstrate the following:

- How the event contributes to adding value, improving quality and raising the profile of the event and West Dunbartonshire.
- Potential of the event to attract visitors to the area and generate economic benefits.
- Potential to attract national media coverage.
- Potential benefits to and involvement of local communities.
- Impact on the local environment.
- Suitability of the event to the area and the timing of the event.
- Extent to which the event diversifies the portfolio of West Dunbartonshire's major events.
- Description of event, title, duration, location & type.
- Aims and objectives of staging the event.
- The structure and operating entity that will organise, manage and deliver the event.
- Experience of event organisers.
- Clarity of ownership, liability and viability of event project plan.
- Level of other funding secured and pursued and sources and outcomes identified.
- Level of in-kind support and resources secured and sources identified.
- Compliance with health & safety and risk management, monitoring & evaluation procedures and relevant legislation relating to Acts of Parliament.
- Details of insurance and confirmation all premiums are paid and confirmation that all necessary licences and/or consents obtained.
  
- Viability of projected expenditure/revenue budget, business and marketing plans.
- Ability to conduct and report on monitoring & evaluation procedures.

#### **Event Assessment Framework**



Each event should be assessed according to the following criteria:

1. Social/Cultural Benefits : Extent to which the event will contribute to the social and cultural landscape of West Dunbartonshire and advance the wellbeing of it's community and visitors to the area
2. Economic Benefits: Extent to which the event will generate a positive economic impact for West Dunbartonshire. This will depend on factors such as the duration of the event and the extent to which it will attract additional visitors.
3. Financial Benefit : Extent to which the event will have a positive financial impact on the Council's accounts
4. Financial Disbenefit : Extent to which the event will have a negative financial impact on the Council's accounts
5. Funding: Extent to which the event is not reliant on consistent additional public funding and the capacity of current financial resources.
6. Image: Extent to which the event can make a positive contribution to the overall image of West Dunbartonshire.
7. Infrastructure: Extent to which the required infrastructure (facilities, venue, staff etc) is already in place.
8. Consistency with Events Strategy: Extent to which the event demonstrates the ability to meet the objectives in the Events Strategy outlined in the Evaluation Criteria.

### **Monitoring Progress and Review**

The Council should commit to regularly assessing the progress of key priorities for each event in relation to achieving objectives and identifying areas where achievements fall short of targets. The Council should develop performance indicators to monitor progress of the Strategy's implementation and success and publish the results in an annual report.

It is important to retain an element of flexibility in developing the Strategy, given the dynamic nature of the events industry, the changing environment and being in a position to advantage of opportunities as they are presented.

The Strategy will be developed in an ongoing process of discussion and collaboration with Community Planning Partners and other stakeholders.

For further information relating to the Events Strategy for West Dunbartonshire, please contact:

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