

## **WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **Report by the Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services**

**Community Safety and Environmental Services Committee : 3 May 2006**

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**Subject: Events Strategy**

#### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1** To seek Committee approval of the Events Strategy for West Dunbartonshire Council.

#### **2. Background**

- 2.1** The Events Strategy was presented to the Community Safety and Environmental Services Committee on 1 March 2006 by the Director of Development and Environmental Services. Following discussion, the Committee agreed to continue the report to the next meeting to allow consultation to take place with the Convener of Cultural Services. This consultation has now taken place to the Convener's satisfaction. The revised Events Strategy is therefore submitted for consideration by Committee.
- 2.2** 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.
- 2.3** There is growing acceptance of the positive impact that events can have 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.
- 2.4** The aim of this Events Strategy is to provide a framework for the Council and partner organisations to work together to develop the reputation and ability of the Council as a host for a wide variety of events, ranging from small events, to regional events and to major international events, each celebrating the area's unique culture, heritage and landscape.

#### **3. Main Issues**

- 3.1** Events are an integral part of the overall cultural delivery in West Dunbartonshire and are also important in attracting inward investment 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.

- 3.2** In 2002, the Scottish Executive launched Scotland's Major Events Strategy 2003-2015: "*Competing on an International Stage* " with the stated vision of Scotland becoming "*one of the world's foremost events destinations by 2015*". This strategy identifies objectives to deliver a viable portfolio of major events to attract visitors to Scotland.
- 3.3** *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 wide portfolio of events for Scotland. *VisitScotland* underwent a radical re-organisation in 2005 to enable it to deliver these shared, key objectives. Collaborative and partnership arrangements are already in place between the Council, EventScotland, Scottish Enterprise Dunbartonshire and VisitScotland concerning the development and promotion of key events.
- 3.4** Local cultural planning, incorporating events, is advocated increasingly as an effective way to maximise culture's contribution to wider priorities. Councils have a key role to ensure cultural provision in their respective areas, such as the Council's new *Cultural Events for 2006* programme, launched recently by the Convener of Education and Cultural Services. This programme introduces innovative art exhibitions, opera performances and a range of other new or improved events. This is an example of how the Executive intends that local authorities should build on their substantial current contribution to achieve more consistent delivery approaches and standards across Scotland.
- 3.5** The Executive advocates that the cultural planning process should feed directly into *Community Planning* – the system advocated for developing cultural provision and advancing community well-being in the 2003 "*Implementation of the National Cultural Strategy : Guidance for Scottish Local Authorities.*"
- 3.6** The Executive will introduce a new legislative provision requiring authorities to produce evidence of cultural planning as part of the strategic planning activity of Community Planning Partnerships. The Events Strategy addresses this form of partnership planning insofar as it relates to events staged by and within the authority, conforming to West Dunbartonshire's corporate Vision, Values and Objectives.
- 3.7** As well as exploring opportunities to incentivise local provision, the Executive believes that the provision of local event and cultural venues will secure greater opportunities for communities to enjoy touring and outreach activity, which will feature in the national performing companies' programmes.
- 3.8** In its *Model of the new Cultural Infrastructure*, the Executive notes:-
- local authorities being responsible for local premises, facilities and events;
  - local authorities providing premises accommodating 'works on tour'; and
  - local authorities being responsible for their premises, performing and touring venues, local cultural activity and access.

**3.9** By the end of June 2006, the Executive will start preparation of a draft Bill that includes a legal framework for delivering cultural rights and entitlements. Within the same timescale, the Executive will establish a group, including CoSLA, to develop guidance for local authorities on cultural planning. The group will also support initiatives and pilots to deliver entitlements and explore possible approaches to incentivise local provision. The Executive aim to publish a draft Culture Bill for consultation by the end of 2006.

**3.10** It is evident that the Executive will require local authorities and other public bodies to prepare their own cultural strategies to align with the Executive's cultural strategy and objectives. It is envisaged that each authority's overall cultural strategy will derive from specific strategies for cultural access, events, sports, arts etc. The Events Strategy in appendix 1 is intended to address the specific development of events within West Dunbartonshire, to contribute to an overall Cultural Strategy for the Council and to meet the expected requirements of the Scottish Executive's impending draft Cultural Bill.

#### **4. Financial Implications**

**4.1** Although there are no financial implications associated with this report, the economic impact of recent major events should be noted as significant economic drivers in the local and wider economy.

#### **5. Personnel Issues**

**5.1** There are no personnel issues.

#### **6. Recommendations**

**6.1** The Committee is invited to:-

- (a) approve the Events Strategy;**
- (b) instruct the Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services to take appropriate steps to consult with Community and Partner organisations; and**
- (c) agree to receive a further report on this matter once the consultation exercise has been completed.**

**David McMillan**

**Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services.**

**Date: 20 April 2006**

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**Wards Affected :** All

**Appendix 1:** Events Strategy

**Background Papers:** “Scotland’s Culture” – Scottish Executive, January 2006

“Our Next Major Enterprise” – Final Report of the Cultural Commission, June 2005

Implementation of the National Cultural Strategy; Guidance for Scottish Local Authorities, March 2003

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