

Late on Friday night, the council released the agenda (and relevant reports) for the **Culture & Communities Committee** meeting on **Thursday morning (16 May) at 10.00**.

After four months in which little has come to committee, this month's programme is extensive. Below is a summary of the agenda —including some notes.

Agenda Extracts: Culture and Communities Committee

6. Business Bulletin

Includes: tree management and flood mitigation, St Stephen's Clock update, Community Grants Fund and Neighbourhood Network Review, Thriving Greenspaces Strategy Action Plan, Parks Management rules, Nelson Monument Update, Sports Event Fund, Edinburgh Million Tree City Update etc.

7. Executive Decisions

7.1 Summer Festivals Scorecard 2023

41pp report of stats for the festivals.

7.2 Events in Public Spaces - Revised Charging Model

34pp report on charges to be introduced from 1 October.

7.3 Kings Theatre Refurbishment Update

Costs risen to £37.9million. Completion date July 2025. Council giving £12 million to Capital Theatres.

7.4 Community Centre Strategy

7.5 Future Libraries - Progress Update

Plans to proceed with a consultation with residents etc.

7.6 Proposals to End Library Overdue Fines

Agree to permanently end library overdue fines.

7.7 Use of West Princes Street Gardens and the Ross Bandstand

7pp report indicating a major change of policy. Previously use of WPSG was limited to four or five 'major' events that extended outside the 'curtilage' of the Ross Bandstand.

The Recommendations are as follows:

1.1.1 Approve the revised schedule for West Princes Street Gardens, as set out in paragraph 4.13, including the opportunity to create an August 'festival' programme for the Ross Bandstand, and two procured annual events in May and September;

1.1.2 Delegate authority to the Executive Director of Place in consultation with Group Spokespeople and Group Leaders to finalise plans for an August programme in 2024 if this is possible;

1.1.3 Note that officers are progressing with proposals for a mandatory major event ticket levy to support a Princes Street Gardens Development Fund, with these due to be reported to Finance and Resources Committee in August 2024; and

1.1.4 Note that officers are beginning to early feasibility of improvements to West Princes Street Gardens, including the Ross Bandstand, and will keep Committee updated on progress.

8. Routine Decisions

8.1 Busking Management

Another mini-step in the saga formerly known as 'Amplification of Sound in Public Spaces'. Committee is asked to note advisory signage and "legislative requirements to establish management rules".

8.2 Edinburgh's Christmas and Edinburgh's Hogmanay - Outcome Report

Key performance indicators (PPIs) for 2023/2024. The contractor lost £214,000. It cost CEC £812,456. Apparently CEC received back £336,000 in charges (site hire fees etc).

"Both events have an environmental impact through use of generators and some green spaces. Impacts are mitigated through use of recycled products; reduction of waste; no single-use plastics; use of existing power supplies wherever possible; minimising use of green spaces; tree protection measures; and use of local contractors and workforce. Some diesel generators are used within the sites due to lack of available power sources. New power points have been installed in Princes Street Gardens which will allow a reduction in generator use in future years."

8.3 Edinburgh 900 Update

3.6 "On 22 February 2024, the Council agreed a budget of £500,000 for the Edinburgh 900 programme."

8.5 Filming in Edinburgh 2023

"4.2 Within the City of Edinburgh alone, Film Edinburgh recorded 178 productions in 2023, with an estimated direct spend of £9.4million."

8.6 Park Lighting Project Update

85pp report for approval. Huge glossy appendices.

8.7 Women's Safety in Public Places - Action Update - Referral from the Policy and Sustainability Committee

10pp report, linking to Park Lighting Project report, noting other reports, workstreams etc

8.8 Temporary Toilet Facilities (In Parks)

"1.1.1 Notes the progress towards the provision of permanent public toilet facilities in Inverleith Park, the Meadows, and Leith Links; and . . . Notes the provision of temporary public toilets in the above three parks for the summer 2024 period."

9. Motions

9.2 Motion by Councillor Osler - WASPS Patriothall

*"Committee: . . . Understands that an issue has developed for the tenants at WASPS Patriothall with **greatly increased rental costs**, which for many of them jeopardises their ability to afford to continue leasing studio space.*

. . . Agrees that officers should seek to meet with the Management Board, or senior representatives, of WASPS, to understand the circumstances surrounding reported rent increases, with a view to understanding what further steps should be taken to ensure continued viable and equitable use of artist spaces in Patriothall."

9.3 Motion by Councillor Heap - WASPS Patriothall Studios

*" . . . Committee therefore requests . . . Officers contact WASPS and the resident artists to ascertain an overview of the **current issues at the studios**. . . . A report to the next Culture and Communities Committee summarising the current issues and highlighting any potential relevance for the Council"*

9.4 Motion by Councillor Heap - Firework Control Zones

*" . . . The Community Request Process does not allow residents/organisations to suggest that a **city-wide FCZ** is implemented, despite there being no restrictions on such a zone in the legislation . . . Officers have advised that residents can still e-mail a request for consideration of a city-wide Zone to be implemented, sending their request to fireworkscontrolzone@edinburgh.gov.uk . . . FCZs are an important way of ensuring fireworks are used safely in the city, but, ultimately, the best method is to place stricter controls on the purchase and sale of fireworks using powers contained in Part 2 of the Fireworks and Pyrotechnic Articles (Scotland) Act 2022 . . ."*

Simon Holledge

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