

Diversity impact assessment

TITLE
Adoption of Outdoor Events Policy
DATE
June 2023
LEAD OFFICER.
Paul Cowell, Head of Culture and Leisure
1 Summary description of the proposed change
<p>Outdoor events in Medway, positively contribute to celebrating diversity, un-tapping vast depths of potential talent, boosting the local economy, creating a strong sense of community and community cohesion, supporting children and young people by fostering a culture of innovation and imagination, and by providing activities for older people all contributing to a vibrant culture, environment and economy.</p> <p>The adoption of a new Outdoor Events Policy and proposes new standardised fees and charges will provide a singular clear framework for professional and community event organisers, to ensure events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comply with all appropriate counterterrorism, health and safety legislation and regulation including those set out in the proposed new Martyn’s Law. • Improve coordinated scrutiny of event management plans by health, safety and emergency partners and agencies • Support environmental and climate change priorities • Minimise and/or mitigate any negative impacts or disruption • Are charged according to transparent and standardised fees and charges that support local community, charity and not-for-profit organisations • Generate positive local economic impact • Generate income for the Medway Council <p>The policy is the foundation of a centralised Event Location Hire Service that will sit with the Festival and Events Team to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve efficiency with standardised policies, systems, procedures and fees for community and professional organisers • Improve coordination with health, safety and emergency partners and agencies • Provide new and professionalised external facing webpages and digital application process for residents and industry professionals. • Increase income generation <p>Currently outdoor events are managed by the services that manage areas of land across Medway e.g., Norse Greenspaces, Heritage Team, Town Centre Management Team. Each service has its own set of criteria for allowing an event to happen. Fees, charges, and processes vary significantly, and the support that event organisers receive differs depending on the skills and</p>

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experience of officers in each team.

This new policy will view all outdoor events under a single standardised framework that will support the coordinated growth of outdoor events across Medway.

The Outdoor Events Policy is intended to balance the interests of residents, park users, stakeholders, businesses and event organisers. It sets out procedures and processes with the aim of providing clear and transparent information to event organisers.

The objectives of the policy are to:

- Reflect the aims of the Council Plan and Creative Medway Cultural Strategy.
- Build a sustainable and varied programme of events for the people who live, work, learn and visit Medway.
- Provide a clear framework for how events must be managed and delivered.
- Minimise or mitigate any negative impacts or disruption which events may cause to residents and businesses.
- Maximise safety for those working at and attending events.
- Ensure the protection of the physical environment, nature and wildlife.
- Ensure considered pre-event consultation takes place.
- Ensure the effective planning and management of events.
- Increase the use of Medway's public spaces.
- Continue to build a positive reputation for Medway.
- Ensure that events create benefits for local areas and communities.
- Maximise the opportunity for increased spending that boosts the local economy.
- Ensure that events are accessible to all communities and individuals.

Medway Council wishes to support their creative, community and voluntary sectors of which the fees and charges might be an obstacle. The proposed criteria for who and how discounts on fees and charges can be applied is detailed in the report at Appendix 2.

2 Summary of evidence used to support this assessment

This policy has been developed with colleagues in Norse Greenspaces, Greenspaces Development, Heritage, Transport, Public Health, Highways, Climate Response and Town Centre Management.

Engagement to develop the policy has included Kent Police, SECAMBS, Kent Fire Service and NHS.

Medway Outdoor Events Safety Advisory Group are supportive of a centralised and standardised outdoor events policy, single digital application and planning

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process that streamlines their input, creates more structure and clarity to their advice and scrutiny of event management plans

When setting the proposed fees and charges a benchmarking exercise was undertaken with other Kent councils to ensure fees are competitive and attract event organisers.

A set of charging categories has been established that ensure that community, charity and not-for profit organisations are supported with minimised fees whilst commercial operations are charged appropriate rates.

A series of discount criteria has been established to ensure consistency and that no one is priced out of holding an event in Medway, and all income generation opportunities are maximized.

An Environment Impact Fee (EIF) has been created within the charging framework. This will be a dedicated income on top of the hire fee, to support projects in our green and heritage that encourage engagement and not on core maintenance.

3 What is the likely impact of the proposed change?

Is it likely to:

Adversely impact on one or more of the protected characteristic groups

Advance equality of opportunity for one or more of the protected characteristic groups

Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't

(insert Yes when there is an impact or No when there isn't)

Protected characteristic groups (Equality Act 2010)	Adverse impact	Advance equality	Foster good relations
Age	No	Yes	Yes
Disability	No	Yes	Yes
Gender reassignment	No	Yes	Yes
Marriage/civil partnership	No	Yes	Yes
Pregnancy/maternity	No	Yes	Yes
Race	No	Yes	Yes

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Protected characteristic groups (Equality Act 2010)	Adverse impact	Advance equality	Foster good relations
Religion/belief	No	Yes	Yes
Sex	No	Yes	Yes
Sexual orientation	No	Yes	Yes
Other (eg low income groups)	No	Yes	Yes

4 Summary of the likely impacts

Medway Council recognises the value and benefit that a varied and well managed outdoor events programme can deliver to support our ambition for Medway to be seen as a great place to live, to work, to learn and to visit.

This policy is designed to support the delivery of the council's Strategy and Plan, contributing towards the delivery of the following themes.

The policy is also strongly aligned to the Creative Medway Cultural Strategy that places culture and the creative industries at the heart of our priorities, shaping context and delivering a range of programmes that support our long-term ambition for Medway to be internationally recognised for its creativity and culture, exemplifying the positive impacts on everyone's lives. Diverse, collaborative and engaged, we will celebrate the strength and creativity of all our residents.

5 What actions can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impacts, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations?

- Events Uncovered, the council's free events management training course will support the delivery of the new policy to community organisations across Medway.
- The council's digital 'Planning and event' pages will be updated with useful and simple 'How to' guides reflecting the new policy.
- The specific officer from the Festivals and Events Team will be dedicated to each event that comes forward to support organisers.
- The delivery of the policy and fees and charges will be closely monitored and reviewed annually with any appropriate changes or amendments made in accordance with council governance.

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6 Action plan

Actions to mitigate adverse impact, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations and/or obtain new evidence

Action	Lead	Deadline or review date
New 'Planning an event' webpages are live	Claire Horan	January 2024
Events Uncovered training delivered	Claire Horan	January 2024

7 Recommendation

1. For Cabinet to agree the new Outdoor Events Policy and agree the new fees and charges can progress to Full Council in October 2023 for approval.
2. For officer to implement the action plan as set out above.

8 Authorisation

The authorising officer is consenting that the recommendation can be implemented, sufficient evidence has been obtained and appropriate mitigation is planned, the Action Plan will be incorporated into the relevant Service Plan and monitored

Assistant Director

Date of authorisation