

# **PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL**

## **Environment and Infrastructure Committee**

**20 March 2019**

### **City of Perth Winter Festival**

#### **Report by Depute Director (Housing & Environment) (Report No. 19/86)**

This report outlines the approach taken to the development and implementation of the 2018/19 City of Perth Winter Festival and its estimated impacts.

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 At its meeting of 21 March 2018, the Environment and Infrastructure Committee considered a report on the development and performance of the City of Perth Winter Festival (Report No 18/91 refers). The Committee was apprised of the approach taken to the development of the Festival with the report also including an extensive outline of the approach and methodology taken to the evaluation of the events, together with details on the estimated economic impacts. The Committee approved the approach to the development of the Festival in the future (with particular reference to the Christmas Lights event), and requested a report on the performance of the 2018/19 Festival to a future meeting of the Committee.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to outline the approach to the 2018/19 City of Perth Winter Festival.

## **2. PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT**

- 2.1 Now in its sixth season, the Winter Festival has evolved as an overarching programme of milestone events in the period from the end of October to mid-February embracing Hallowe'en, the Christmas Lights event and Riverside Light Nights. As such, each event requires its own programme, content plan and operational management arrangements. In devising the content, there is a focus on providing a platform for Perth and Kinross performers and enterprises including community based arts groups as well as food and drink producers.
- 2.2 A major feature of the Winter Festival programme is the Christmas Lights event which took place on Saturday 17 November 2018 (followed by the Perthshire Festive Feast on 18 November 2018). This event has been developed and refined over the years and requires significant planning to ensure the safe delivery of an event which attracts an audience of tens of thousands to the city centre. A number of entertainment zones were established and, given the visitor numbers to be accommodated, the principle focus for the switch on of the Christmas lights remained Tay Street which was the location of the Main Stage. Key changes in 2018 to the footprint of what is now a major festival was the accommodation of the funfair elements in a car

park in Mill Street, and the addition of a Santa's Grotto attraction in lieu of the ice rink in Horsecross Plaza. The first Chocolate and Gin Festival was established in 2017 and for 2018, this was relocated to George Street while the High Street contained the Christmas Market stalls.

- 2.3 Local businesses were consulted and informed of developments by the Council's City Development Team through the Perth City Traders' Association.
- 2.4 For 2018/19, the Winter Festival programme and marketing communications included Hallowe'en and the city's Bonfire Night, the latter being organised and hosted by the Perth Strathearn 200 Round Table as usual. The main events within the 2018/19 Winter Festival were:
- Hallowe'en Parade and Fun Night – Saturday, 27 October 2018
  - Fireworks and Bonfire Night (hosted by Perth and Strathearn Round Table) – Monday, 5 November 2018
  - Christmas Lights event – Saturday, 17 November 2018
  - Perthshire Festive Feast – Sunday, 18 November 2018
  - Churches Lantern and Nativity Parade – Saturday, 1 December 2018
  - St Andrew's Day celebrations – Sunday, 2 December 2018
  - Santa Run – Saturday 8 December 2018
  - Perth Riverside Light Nights – Saturday, 26 January to Sunday, 10 February 2019
- 2.5 The Riverside Light Nights were first staged in 2017 at the Norie Miller Walk on Perth's riverside and has quickly established itself as a major attraction in the Winter Festival Programme. For 2019, the event commenced with two themed evenings to mark Burns Night and the programme included Dinosaurs, Comic Con/Superheroes, Wizardry and Magic, Chinese New Year, and concluded with St Valentine's Day. The Burns Night events were supported by EventScotland as part of the Scotland's Winter Festivals initiative. The total attendance (as opposed to unique visits) for the 16 nights of the Riverside Light Nights Programme was 59,030.
- 2.6 The Council led programme for the Winter Festival is also complemented by a series of other events including Farmers' Markets, Craft Markets as well as the Perth Concert Hall and Theatre programme. Promotional material for the Winter Festival also highlighted the seasonal events that were taking place throughout Perth and Kinross.
- 2.7 The expenditure summary for the events which took place is as follows:

<b>Event</b>	<b>Gross Expenditure</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>Net Expenditure</b>
Hallowe'en Parade and Fun Night	£31,947	£300	£31,647
Christmas Lights event	£227,482	£42,450	£185,032
Festive Feast	£19,236	£2,450	£16,786
St Andrew's Day celebrations	£20,815	£612	£20,203

Churches Lantern and Nativity Event	£1,163	-	£1,163
Santa Run	£1,025	-	£1,025
Riverside Light Nights	£129,440	£22,300	£107,140
<b>Total</b>	<b>£431,108</b>	<b>£68,112</b>	<b>£362,996</b>

2.8 The key features of the Christmas Lights event included:

- Main stage acts including local band “Last Orders” as well as Stephen Mulhern, James Arthur and Pixie Lott.
- Horsecross Plaza children’s stage featuring tribute acts, clown shows
- Santa’s Grotto at Horsecross Plaza
- King Edward Street stage featuring a varied programme of acts
- Themed entertainment zones and street performers throughout the city (including funfair in Mill Street)
- Scotland’s Chocolate and Gin Festival in George Street
- Christmas Market within the High Street
- Ice sculptures & live ice carvings
- The switch on of the Christmas Lights by the Provost which featured a pyrotechnic display

The cost breakdown for the Christmas Lights event is as follows:

Staging and infrastructure	£68,908
Marketing	£8,250
Health & Safety/stewarding	£16,913
Entertainment (all stages and street entertainers etc)	£123,593
Miscellaneous (signs, power charges, etc)	£9,818
<b>Total</b>	<b>£227,482</b>

### 3. EVALUATION

3.1 A survey was undertaken by Perth College UHI of 428 visitors to Perth on the day of Christmas Lights event with an economic impact assessment undertaken based on the results of this survey, grossed to the estimated overall attendance on the day. It was estimated that there were 91,000 visitors to the city on 17 November (80,000 in 2017), with 97% day visitors and 3% overnight visitors (which is consistent with the profile in previous years’ visitor surveys).

3.2 Taking account of daily and overnight expenditure levels and average length of stay for overnight visitors, the estimated economic impact of the event was calculated as follows:

Day Visitor Numbers	88,270
Overnight Visitor Numbers	2,730
Gross expenditure: day visitors	£4,288,289

Gross expenditure: overnight visitors	£976,703
Total Gross Expenditure	£5,264,992
Displaced expenditure	£3,778,510
Net direct expenditure	£1,486,482
Multipliers	1.32
Net additional expenditure	£1,962,156

- 3.3 Displacement is a measure to the extent to which the Christmas Lights event has simply moved expenditure from one part of the economy to another. Displacement levels have been assessed using information from the survey on:
- Visitor origin
  - Importance of the event in the decision to visit the area
  - Counterfactual i.e. what the visitor would have done in the absence of the Christmas Lights event
- 3.4 The displacement figure therefore accounts for the proportion of the visitors by origin reporting that they would have been in Perth and Kinross irrespective of the event and whose expenditure is therefore displaced i.e. not included in the net calculations. In relation to multipliers, the expenditure generated as a result of the Christmas Lights event will have two types of wider impact on the economy:
- Supplier effect: an increase in sales in a business will require it to purchase more supplies than it would have otherwise. A proportion of this “knock on” effect will benefit suppliers in the local and national economies.
  - Income effect: an increase in sales in a business will usually lead to either an increase in employment or an increase in incomes for those already employed. A proportion of these increased incomes will be re-spent in the local and national economies.
- 3.5 The Scottish Tourism Multiplier Study provides standard supplier and income multipliers for the tourism sector. This estimates that the combined supplier and income multiplier for Perth and Kinross is 1.32. The total net additional economic impact generated is therefore estimated to be approximately £1.96 million.
- 3.6 An online survey was issued to 453 city businesses to gauge impacts and reactions to the Christmas Lights event. Replies were received from 31 businesses and of these responses:
- 61% indicated that the event had had a positive benefit on the business
  - 13% suggested that the event had had no impact on their business
  - 26% felt that the event had had a negative impact on their business
  - 95% provided written comments which included references to how busy the city was and the quality of the atmosphere and mentioning the number of visitors. There were also some comments and suggestions which were

generally favourable and related to timings and specific operational considerations.

- 3.7 The Perth Riverside Light Nights were established in 2017 to provide an event focus for the early part of the year and act as a strong finale to the Winter Festival programme. This year the Riverside Light Nights ran from 26 January to 10 February in 2019. Sponsorship of £8,800 was secured from Stagecoach together with grant support of £10,000 from EventScotland for the two themed Burns Nights there was also additional income of £3,500 from trade concessions.
- 3.8 This series of themed sound and light events attracted an estimated 59,030 visits over the 16 nights that it was held (average 3,689 visits per night). There were 53,518 visits over 19 nights in 2018 – an average of 2,817 visits per night. Visitors were surveyed on the two Burns Night themed evenings which opened this year's Light Nights programme and which attracted an estimated 7,585 unique visitors. 364 survey responses were received and, as with the Christmas Lights event, an economic impact assessment was undertaken based on the survey findings.
- 3.9 Taking into account the visitor numbers, expenditure levels and displacement factors, the estimated economic impact of the two burns Light Night evenings was calculated as follows:

Day Visitor Numbers	6,826
Overnight Visitor Numbers	759
Gross expenditure: day visitors	£267,077
Gross expenditure: overnight visitors	£115,194
Total Gross Expenditure	£382,271
Displaced expenditure	£207,691
Net direct expenditure	£174,580
Multipliers	1.32
Net additional expenditure	£230,446

- 3.10 The total net additional economic impact generated from the two Burns themed Light Nights is therefore estimated to be over £230,000.

### **FREE FESTIVE PARKING**

- 3.11 In parallel with the Winter Festival programme the Council has, for a number of years, introduced periods of free parking in Council car parks for part of the festive season.
- 3.12 Each year, the City Development team consult with businesses to try to establish the economic benefits of the "Free Festive Parking" scheme. Following a review of the impact of the scheme in 2016/17, the Free Festive Parking on Saturdays in any Council run car park in Perth and Kinross was run across December 2018. This request for Free Saturday Parking during December 2018 was approved by the Council's Environment and Infrastructure Committee on 7 November 2018 (Report No.18/365 refers).

3.13 Feedback on the Free Festive Parking scheme was requested from city centre businesses as well as businesses across Perthshire and Kinross-shire. 17 responses were received from businesses (13 within Perth and 4 outwith) ranging the St John's Shopping Centre to smaller independent retailers. A summary of the responses is provided below:

- 86% of businesses felt that the promotion encouraged people to stay longer
- 82% felt it was well advertised
- 83% of customers had mentioned using the free parking
- 80% felt it had a positive impact on their business
- 67% felt it brought additional footfall to their businesses
- 100% would be in favour of a similar promotion

#### **4. PROPOSAL**

- 4.1 The audience numbers for the Christmas Lights event have grown enormously since 2012 and as has been previously reported to the Committee the city centre is effectively now at capacity in terms of visitor numbers at the peak of the event. The Perth Riverside Lights Nights have quickly become a major feature of the Winter Festival and is proving a popular attraction to the City. Events of this scale require significant planning with input from across the Housing and Environment service and from colleagues in the emergency services. All operational considerations are addressed through the multi-agency Safety Advisory Group process and it is acknowledged that these events would not be possible without the significant input from a range of colleagues.
- 4.2 The Events Strategy is being revised and in line with this, it is proposed that there is due consideration of the resourcing requirements and revenue opportunities for the Winter Festival programme, in line with the budget review process. In addition, it is proposed that there is continued engagement with elected members on the design and delivery of the Winter Festival programme. There will also be continued engagement with the business community through the appropriate channels including meetings, on-line and written communications.
- 4.3 The Winter Festival will be the subject of reports to future meetings of the Environment and Infrastructure Committee.
- 4.4 Free festive season parking proposals for 2019 will be developed and submitted for consideration to a future meeting of the Environment and Infrastructure Committee.

## 5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 This report gives information on 2018/19 Winter Festival programme and an outline of the impact of key events, the Christmas Lights event and Riverside Light Nights.
- 5.2 It is recommended that the Committee:
- (i) notes the approach to the development of the Perth Winter Festival in 2018/19 and its performance
  - (ii) approves ongoing engagement with elected members on the development of the future Winter Festival programmes
  - (iii) notes the feedback on the 2018 Free Festive Parking initiative
  - (iv) receives a future report on proposals for free parking in Perth and Kinross Council car parks for the festive season 2019.

### Author

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### Approved

Name	Designation	Date
Keith McNamara	Depute Director (Housing & Environment)	18 February 2019

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## 1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

<b>Strategic Implications</b>	
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement /Perth City Plan	<b>Yes</b>
Corporate Plan	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Resource Implications</b>	
Financial	<b>None</b>
Workforce	<b>None</b>
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	<b>None</b>
<b>Assessments</b>	
Equality Impact Assessment	<b>None</b>
Strategic Environmental Assessment	<b>None</b>
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	<b>None</b>
Legal and Governance	<b>None</b>
Risk	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Consultation</b>	
Internal	<b>Yes</b>
External	<b>None</b>
<b>Communication</b>	
Communications Plan	<b>None</b>

### 1. Strategic Implications

#### Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement

- 1.1 The activities contribute to the Community Plan's strategic objectives of 'Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy', and a 'Safe Welcoming Environment' and the outcomes of 'a thriving, expanding economy' and 'employment opportunities for all'.

#### Corporate Plan

- 1.2 Perth and Kinross Council Corporate Plan 2018/22 sets out five strategic objectives:
- (i) Giving every child the best start in life;
  - (ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens;
  - (iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy;
  - (iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives; and
  - (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations.
- 1.3 This report relates to Objective No (iii) 'Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy' and the outcome of 'Thriving, expanding economy' by encouraging and supporting tourism.

## **2. Resource Implications**

### Financial

- 2.1 Costs associated with the Festival are outlined in the report.

### Workforce

- 2.2 There are no workforce implications as a result of this report.

### Asset Management

- 2.3 There are no asset management implications arising as a result of this report.

## **3. Assessments**

### Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for plans and policies allows the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties.
- 3.2 This section should reflect that the proposals have been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) with the following outcome:
- (i) Assessed as **not relevant** for the purposes of EqIA.

### Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.3 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals. No further action is required as it does not qualify as a PPS as defined by the Act and is therefore exempt.

### Sustainability

- 3.4 Under the provisions of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 the Council has to discharge its duties in a way which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. In terms of the Climate Change Act, the Council has a general duty to demonstrate its commitment to sustainability and the community, environmental and economic impacts of its actions. The activities in this report will contribute towards sustainable economic development in Perth and Kinross.

### Legal and Governance

- 3.5 The consideration of the report is in line with the Council's Scheme of Administration and specifically the role of the Enterprise and Infrastructure Committee in developing measures to support and promote economic activity and to plan key infrastructure. Legal Services has been consulted on these proposals.

### Risk

- 3.6 Risks and the controls required to mitigate any risks will be reported through the Council's risk management process.

## **4. Consultation**

### Internal

- 4.1 The Head of Legal Services and Finance has been consulted in preparation of this report.

## **5. Communication**

- 5.1 Any communications required will be undertaken by the Council.

## **2. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 2.1 Perth Winter Festival – Report to the Environment and Infrastructure Committee, 21 March 2018 (18/91); Free Festive Parking – Report to the Environment and Infrastructure Committee, 7 November 2018 (18/365).