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## **SCOTTISH BORDERS WALKING FESTIVAL 2018 TO 2020**

**Report by Service Director Regulatory Services**

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### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**7 March 2017**

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#### **1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1 To agree the location of the Scottish Borders Walking Festival in 2018, 2019 and 2020.**
- 1.2 The Scottish Borders Walking Festival (SBWF) is held during the first week of September and moves around the Border towns on an annual basis. The Department's Countryside Access Team is tasked with ensuring that the event takes place each year and has been held in the Scottish Borders since 1995.
- 1.3 The Walking Festival is due to take place in Peebles in September 2017.
- 1.4 All Community Councils were invited to tender an interest in hosting the event in 2018, 2019 and 2020 and expressions of interest were received from six communities.
- 1.5 Following an assessment it is proposed that the communities of Hawick, Ettrick and Yarrow (along with Selkirk) and Jedburgh (along with Ancrum) should host the event between 2018 and 2020.

#### **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Executive Committee agrees that the Scottish Borders Walking Festival should be hosted by Hawick in 2018, Ettrick & Yarrow & Selkirk in 2019 and Jedburgh & Ancrum in 2020.**

### 3 BACKGROUND

3.1 For forward planning purposes it is useful to determine the festival locations for the next 3 years. Criteria which need to be taken into consideration when determining the venue include the location of the most recent festivals, bed night provision within the community, how recently and how often the community has hosted the event. In view of the level of interest shown for the festivals in 2018 to 2020 it is considered appropriate in this instance that Members decide the venues.

3.2 The Scottish Borders Walking Festival is held annually during the first week of September. The event has traditionally moved around the main Border settlements since its inception in 1995, for the past 5 years it has been held in:

2012 Eyemouth and District  
2013 Innerleithen and District  
2014 Jedburgh and Denholm  
2015 Galashiels  
2016 Coldstream

See **Appendix A** for a list of all the previous venues.

3.3 All Community Councils were contacted and asked if they would be interested in hosting the SBWF in 2018, 2019 or 2020. Six community groups responded positively and the table below shows the years in which they preferred to host the event.

	<b>Year</b>		
<b>Community Council</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
Hawick	√	√	√
Jedburgh			√
Ancrum			√
Galashiels	√	√	√
Coldstream			√
Ettrick & Yarrow Tourism Association/ CC in partnership with Selkirk CC		√	√

3.4 The following criteria were used to determine the most appropriate venue:

- Where have recent festivals been held, noting that consecutive festivals should ideally be a good distance apart to spread the benefits across the Borders and to keep the walking programme interesting;
- The chosen community should be large enough to be able to provide sufficient accommodation/ bed nights for walkers attending from out-with the area and have facilities for registration and an events programme;
- When did the community last host the event; and
- How often has the community hosted the event.

The table below sets out these criteria for the 6 Community Councils which have intimated an interest in hosting the event over the next few years.

<b>Community Council</b>	<b>Year last hosted</b>	<b>No. of times hosted</b>	<b>Accommodation provision</b>
Hawick	2011	4	Good
Jedburgh (in partnership with Ancrum)*	2014	4	Good
Ancrum (in partnership with Jedburgh)*	Never	0	Poor
Galashiels	2015	2	Good
Coldstream	2016	1	Moderate
Ettrick & Yarrow Tourism Association/ CC in partnership with Selkirk CC	2006 (Selkirk)	2 (Selkirk)	Poor in valleys Good in Selkirk

\* Jedburgh and Ancrum Community Councils have expressed an interest in working together to host a festival over the next few years.

3.5 The results of the assessment based on the criteria indicated that:

- Hawick would be the best venue for 2018 as Galashiels had hosted the event in 2015;
- Ettrick and Yarrow Tourism Association working in partnership with Selkirk would be best placed to host the event in 2019 as it was a number of years since it was last held in that area; and
- Jedburgh and Ancrum would be best placed to stage the event in 2020 as Galashiels and Coldstream had recently acted as hosts.

## **4 IMPLICATIONS**

### **4.1 Financial**

The Countryside Access Team help to facilitate this event with costs met from existing budgets. External sponsorship from the South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SEStrans) has also been available over recent years and we would hope that this would continue.

### **4.2 Risk and Mitigations**

- (a) Since a number of communities wish to organise the 2018, 2019 and 2020 events it is important that communities see that a fair process has been applied.
- (b) Should any of the towns not accept to lead the event then the fall back position would be to offer it to Galashiels and then Coldstream.

#### 4.3 Equalities

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out on this proposal and it is anticipated that there are no adverse equality implications. The event is open to all and the programme of events caters for a range of abilities from short strolls led by Paths to Health leaders to strenuous hill walks. The organising committee make information available through a website and a printed booklet is published and bookings and payments can be made online or over the phone.

#### 4.4 Acting Sustainably

The event brings economic benefit to the Scottish Borders by promoting walking tourism in the area encouraging visitors to the area from the rest of the UK and Europe.

#### 4.5 Carbon Management

The carbon footprint generated by tourists visiting for the festival is mitigated by the walking activities themselves.

#### 4.6 Rural Proofing

It is anticipated that there will be no adverse impact on the rural area from the proposals contained in this report.

#### 4.7 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

There are no changes to be made to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation as a result of the proposals.

### 5 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The Chief Financial Officer, the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Chief Officer HR and the Clerk to the Council have been consulted on the content of this report.

#### Approved by

**Brian Frater**

**Service Director Regulatory Services Signature .....**

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**Background Papers:** None

**Previous Minute Reference:** None

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Contact us at Jacqueline Whitelaw, Environment and Infrastructure, Scottish Borders Council, Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose, TD6 0SA, Tel 01835 825431, Fax 01835 825071, email [e&translationrequest@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:e&translationrequest@scotborders.gov.uk).

## **Appendix A - Walking Festival Venues Since Inception in 1995**

1995	West Linton
1996	Hawick
1997	Jedburgh
1998	Lauderdale
1999	East Berwickshire (Coldingham)
2000	Selkirk
2001	West Linton- postponed to spring 2002 due to Foot & Mouth Disease
2002	Melrose
2003	Hawick
2004	Eyemouth
2005	Jedburgh
2006	Selkirk
2007	Kelso
2008	Galashiels
2009	Jedburgh and Hawick jointly
2010	Peebles
2011	Hawick
2012	Eyemouth and District
2013	Innerleithen and District
2014	Jedburgh and Denholm
2015	Galashiels
2016	Coldstream
2017	Peebles