
SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL LOCAL FESTIVAL GRANT SCHEME

Report by Director – Resilient Communities

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

13 June 2023

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report seeks approval for a review of the Local Festival Grant Scheme to consider future provision of the Scheme from 2024/25 onwards.**
- 1.2 Currently, 29 Festivals across the Borders are provided with an annual grant to support insurance costs and public protection measures.
- 1.3 To ensure the continuity of grants while the review is undertaken, it is proposed that grants are issued as normal for 2023/24.
- 1.4 The review will involve stakeholders of the Scheme to ensure the options presented are reflective of the needs of local communities.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 I recommend that the Executive Committee:-**
 - (a) Approve the review of the Local Festival Grant Scheme which will be carried out in advance of 2024/25 budget planning.**
 - (b) Approve the establishment of a short-life Member/Officer Working Group to undertake the review and report back to the Executive Committee. The Working Group will include an Elected Member from each of the five localities.**

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 On 29 March 2005, the Executive Committee agreed recommendations made by a Working Group which was established to put forward proposals for the provision of grants to Community Councils, Local Festivals etc.
- 3.2 New levels of funding for 30 Local Festivals, based on populations and the inclusion of horse cavalcades for the larger festivals (populations to 3,500), were approved and automatic grant allocations were put in place.
- 3.3 The approved grant levels reflected;
 - o The increased cost of insurance' and
 - o The increased costs of public protection measures for festivals with horse cavalcades
- 3.4 The approved scheme had no eligibility criteria within its rules. It was agreed that grants be approved on a three yearly basis irrespective of governance, financial need or equality issues.
- 3.5 On 22 January 2013 the Council agreed recommendations to continue funding each of the local festivals at 2005 levels, to remove Reston which was no longer operating and to create a Grouping 4a to provide an enhancement to the Yetholm Festival Week in recognition of it having a horse cavalcade.
- 3.6 As part of the three yearly review, it was recommended that Burnfoot Carnival be included in the Local Festival Grant Scheme from 2015/16. This resulted in a budget growth of £2,750 and a total budget request of £85,110.28 (see Appendix 1). There have been no additions to the Scheme since then.
- 3.7 The current scheme was due for renewal in 2017 but it was agreed to extend the existing scheme whilst further work was undertaken in relation to public liability and insurance

4 CURRENT POSITION

- 4.1 While it's hard to quantify in hours or in a monetary value, local festivals are supported and run by local volunteers who provide a significant number of hours of support to make each festival a success.

Cavalcade festivals have experienced an increase in their public liability and insurance costs and as a result, some committees have requested that additional funding assistance be provided from SBC to help them cover costs.

- 4.2 Police Scotland has advised that their ability to support festivals is under review and there will likely be financial implications for festivals next year if they need to cover additional public protection requirements.

- 4.3 Each festival is required to submit an equality policy or provide an equalities statement before any grants can be awarded
- 4.4 Each festival is required to submit an application form along with annual accounts, constitution and any relevant invoices/receipts before funds can be released
- 4.5 A summary of grant claims for 2022/23 is detailed in Appendix 2. Whilst there are still some claims to be submitted, the expenditure submitted is in line with previous analysis undertaken and there is on average a surplus of 25% of grants used to support festival costs other than insurance and public liability.
- 4.6 Some existing festivals have been able to build up their reserves over a number of years.

There are examples of current festivals providing economic benefits to local towns and villages which includes increase in visitors and busier high streets. Currently no economic benefit analysis is asked for as part of a festival grant evaluation.

- 4.7 There are a number of festivals and events across the Borders currently sitting out-with the Local Festival Grant Scheme who have requested financial support to cover operational costs.
- 4.8 A one-off SBC Community Festivals and Events Small Grants Scheme of £70k has been made available in 2023/24 to support and develop local festivals and events. Grants of between £3k and £5k are available to enhance existing events, develop new ideas and help attract visitors to the area. As this is administered by Economic Development all successful applications must demonstrate a positive impact on visitor numbers and promote tourism.

5 PROPOSED REVIEW AND CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 It must be recognised how important these local festivals are to communities and the local economy and that they need support from the Council as part of a wider package of resources to enable them to take place.

As one of the oldest equestrian festivals in the world, the unique history of the Borders festivals and the customs that continue to be upheld and celebrated are a source of pride for local residents and play an important role in promoting the region and encouraging visitors. Analysis of the economic impact of festivals and the opportunities for tourism growth should be explored.

The festivals are linked in to Scottish Borders Council Event Strategy 2022-27 which aims to maximise the benefits derived from events delivered across the region - [Event strategy 2022-27 | Scottish Borders Council \(scotborders.gov.uk\)](https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/event-strategy-2022-27).

Research and Evaluation is key to understanding progress within the events industry, and what events achieve for local communities and the Scottish Borders. Strengthening the evaluation of festivals and outcomes achieved will provide greater transparency of spend and impact that festivals achieve.

- 5.2 A review of the current scheme is well overdue and because of the increased challenges that some festivals are highlighting, as well as some newer festivals requesting support, it is proposed that a review is carried out over the summer months to consider changes to the scheme from April 2024. This will allow full consideration of the findings of the review as part of the budget setting process for 2024/25.
- 5.3 It is proposed that a short-life Member/Officer Working Group is set up to carry out the review which will report back to Executive Committee later in the year. In agreeing the membership it is proposed that there should be an elected member from each of the five localities.
- 5.4 In carrying out the review there will be wide engagement with all stakeholders

5.5 A key part of the review and the support going forward will be focussed on the economic, environmental and social sustainability of local festivals. Festivals create opportunities for communities to come together, build social capital and support a sense of wellbeing, much of which is generated through the role volunteers play in the success of festivals. Ideas of how festivals can strengthen their economic, environmental and social sustainability will be sought through the engagement process.

The review will seek to explore opportunities on how to increase and support volunteering. Key to this will be engagement with the new Third Sector Interface Borders Community Action.

- 5.5 Future arrangements will require consideration of eligibility criteria including appropriate governance, financial need and compliance with equality obligations.

Consideration also needs to be given to the current economic climate and the challenges this presents for community funding allocations.

6 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Financial

There are no further financial implications relating to this report but the provision of funding for local festivals would be considered under a review of the Scheme and any financial implications would be considered as part of the budget setting process for 2024/25.

6.2 Risk and Mitigations

- a) As the Local Festival Grant Scheme has no control measures this, in itself, represents a risk to the Council at this very early stage. As the Scheme has no control measures, limited evidence is therefore held to assure the Council that its duty to have due regard to the need to

eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between protected groups and others is being met in accordance with the Equality Act 2010

- b) Within the Equality Impact Assessment (Appendix 3) all the protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010 are therefore categorised as high risk at this initial stage. However, this is purely based on the Council holding limited information on the Local Festivals it currently funds and it is expected that early in the review the risks will significantly diminish
- c) The risks will be mitigated by the proposal to undertake an in-depth review of the Scheme and report to Members before budgets are set for 2024/25 on the options available that will more adequately manage the risks.

6.3 Integrated Impact Assessment

The purpose of the proposal is to carry out an in-depth review of the Scheme and assess the options for the Scheme from 2024/25, primarily to ensure that the Council is meeting its statutory obligations in relation to the Equality Act 2010 and how it makes grants to the voluntary sector.

6.4 Sustainable Development Goals

There are no direct economic, social or environmental issues with this report which would affect the Council's sustainability policy.

6.5 Climate Change

There are no direct carbon emissions impacts as a result of this report

6.6 Rural Proofing

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

6.7 Data Protection Impact Statement

There are no personal data implications arising from the proposals contained in this report

6.8 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

No changes to the Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation are required as a result of this report

6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The Acting Chief Financial Officer, the Monitoring Officer/Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Director (People Performance & Change), the Clerk to the Council and Corporate Communications have been consulted and the comments received have been incorporated into the final report.

Approved by

Name

Jenni Craig

Title

Director – Resilient Communities

Author(s)

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Jenni Craig	Director, Resilient Communities
Gillian Jardine	Community Co-ordinator

Background Papers:**Previous Minute Reference:**

Note – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. The Communities and Partnership team can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact us at Communities and Partnership -
communityengagement@scotborders.gov.uk

Appendix 1

LOCAL FESTIVALS FUNDING

	Population in 2014	Max. Grant 2022/23
GROUP 1		
Population over 10,000		
Hawick Common Riding Committee	13,833	£9,300.00
Galashiels Braw Lads Committee	12,365	£9,300.00
GROUP 2		
Population 3,500 - 10,000		
Peebles Beltane Festival	7,853	£6,500.00
Kelso Laddies Association	6,192	£6,500.00
Selkirk Common Riding Trust	5,640	£6,500.00
Jethart Callants Festival	3,946	£6,500.00
GROUP 3A		
Population 1,000 - 3,500 which have horse cavalcades		
Duns Summer Festival	2,479	£3,300.00
Melrose Festival Committee	2,007	£3,300.00
Presenting Coldstream Association	1,839	£3,300.00
West Linton Whipman Play Society	1,457	£3,300.00
Lauder Common Riding Committee	1,109	£3,300.00
GROUP 3B		
Population 1,000 - 3,500 without horse cavalcades		
Eyemouth Herring Queen	3,155	£2,750.00
St. Ronan's Festival Week	3,004	£2,750.00
Burnfoot Community Carnival	2,954	£2,750.00
Tweedbank Fair Committee	2,097	£2,750.00
Earlston Civic Week	1,793	£2,750.00
Chirnside Civic Week	1,244	£2,750.00
St. Boswells Village Committee	1,058	£2,750.00
GROUP 4A		
Population 500 - 1000 which have horse cavalcades		
Yetholm Festival Week	552	£775.00
GROUP 4B		
Population 500 - 1000 without horse cavalcades		
Newcastleton Music Festival	762	£500.00
Walkerburn Summer Festival	720	£500.00
Greenlaw Festival	639	£500.00
Stow Gala Day and Sports Committee	630	£500.00
Coldingham Gala Committee	572	£500.00
GROUP 5		
Population 300 - 500		
Cockburnspath Gala Week		£375.00
Gordon Civic Week		£375.00
Eddleston Summer Festival		£375.00
GROUP 6		

Population 100 - 300

Burnmouth Village Hall Committee

£210.00

GROUP 7

Professional Games

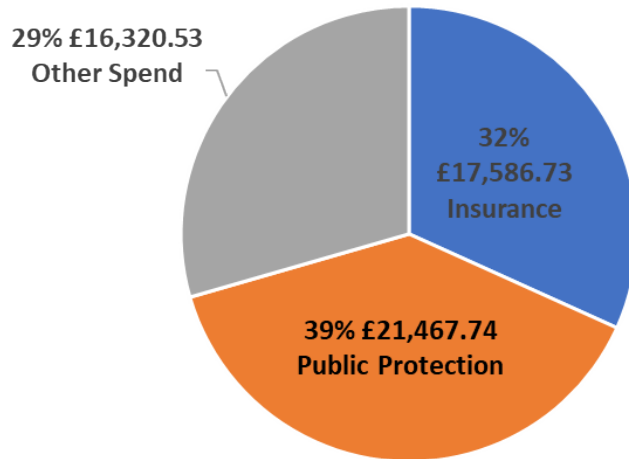
Morebattle Games Committee

£150.00

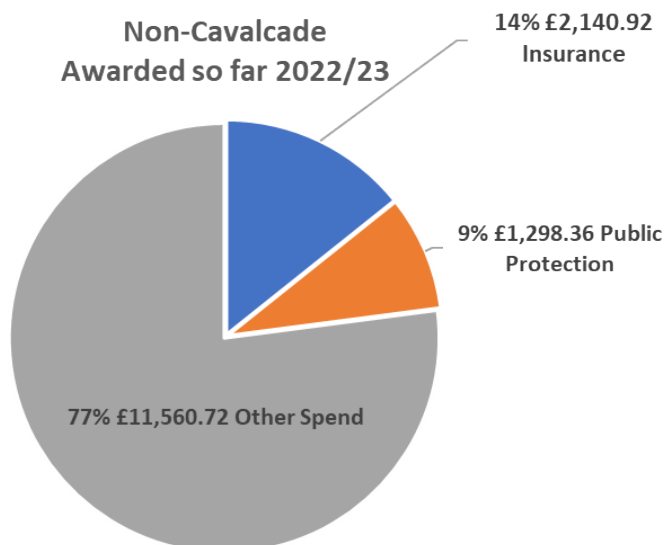
£85,110.00

Appendix 2

**Cavalcade
Awarded so far 2022/23**



**Non-Cavalcade
Awarded so far 2022/23**



Total Awarded to date for 2022/23: £76,875

Spent on Insurance/Public Protection: £48,993.75 (63.73%)

Spent on Other: £28,796.67

