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## SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL LOCAL FESTIVAL GRANT SCHEME REVIEW

Report by Director – Resilient Communities

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### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

14 November 2023

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#### 1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 **The purpose of this report is to advise Members on the outcomes of a review of the Local Festival Grant Scheme (LFGS) and seeks approval for an increase in funding to the Scheme from 2024/25 onwards.**
- 1.2 The paper provides feedback gathered from stakeholders as part of the review process.
- 1.3 This report requires Members to consider the proposed funding increase of the Scheme by £30,000 to be used for insurance, public protection and health and safety costs. The membership of the Scheme would be maintained and would not be extended to include new festivals or events.
- 1.4 Festivals whose annual support grant does not fully cover their insurance and public protection costs, can apply for an additional grant of up to 50% of their annual support grant, from 2024/25 onwards. All festivals within the Scheme can apply for funding to support health and safety costs. It is proposed that decision making should be made at Officer level with final approval and sign off by the Director, Resilient Communities.
- 1.5 This report also asks Members to consider proposals for in-kind support for festivals and events delivered across Scottish Borders.
- 1.6 The Scheme will be reviewed every three years with the next review due to take place in 2026/27.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **2.1 I recommend that the Executive Committee approves:-**

- (a) The recommendation that the total monies available in the Local Festival Grant Scheme be increased from £85,110 to £115,110.**
- (b) The recommendation that decision making for additional grant awards as detailed in Section 6 of the report be agreed at Officer level with final approval and sign off by the Director, Resilient Communities**
- (c) The recommendation for Officers to explore the opportunities for in-kind support from SBC for local festivals and events.**
- (d) The recommendation for festival and event organisers to have access to a digital SBC Community Events toolkit which will provide guidance and information for those hosting local events.**
- (e) The recommendation for Officers to strengthen grant evaluations to gather information on the economic and social benefits festivals bring to the local area.**

### **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;
  - The increased cost of insurance and
  - The increased costs of public protection measures for festivals with horse cavalcades
- 3.4 Subsequent amendments were made to the Scheme on 22 January 2013 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. In 2015/16 it was agreed to include Burnfoot Carnival and increase the total budget of the Scheme to £85,110.28 (see Appendix 1). There have been no additions to the Scheme since then.
- 3.5 The total value of LFGS grants claimed in 2022/23 was £78,875. Of this, £48,993.75 (63.73%) was spent on insurance and public protection. £28,796.67 was spent on other festival costs including venue hire, media, catering and decorations (see Appendix 2).
- 3.6 In June 2023, The Executive approved a review of the LFGS by an Elected Member/Officer Working Group in response to festivals highlighting increasing financial pressures in operating costs as well as festivals and events sitting outside the LFGS, requesting financial support (see Appendix 3).
- 3.7 As part of the review process, an online consultation was held using Citizenspace to engage with Festival Committees to seek their views on current challenges of organising and delivering an annual festival and what resource they considered necessary to support future delivery of their festival. The consultation was open from 28 July 2023 to 20 September 2023.
- 3.8 An online consultation was held using Citizenspace to engage with those who are involved in festivals and events but who do not receive an annual support grant as well as those who wished to share their views on how local festivals and events could be supported. The consultation was open from 06 September 2023 until 20 September 2023.
- 3.9 Information was shared by Police Scotland detailing the services they provide to festivals (see Appendix 4). Police Scotland has advised that their ongoing ability to support festivals is under review. There may be financial implications for festivals next year if Police Scotland are to reduce the support they provide to festivals.

- 3.10 SBC departments provide a significant range of in-kind services for festivals within the LFGS as well as festivals and events who sit out-with the Scheme. This includes deposit and collection of road barriers, signage and traffic cones. Additional services such as grass cutting, litter picks, road cleans etc are also undertaken during the festival period (see Appendix 5).
- 3.11 SBC's Festivals and Events Small Grant Scheme is providing grant funding in 2023/24 to support and develop small festivals and events in local communities. Awards of between £3,000 and £5,000 are available.

## **4 FESTIVAL COMMITTEE CONSULTATION OUTCOMES**

- 4.1 13 festival committees responded to the consultation and one additional response was received when the consultation period was extended providing a total of 14 responses (see Appendix 6). After review of the consultation responses, two further questions were posed by the Working Group and 8 out of the 14 committees provided a response. All of those who responded are involved in organising and delivering a local festival and receives a grant from the LFGS.
- 4.2 7 (50%) responders reported that their annual support grant is no longer sufficient in covering their insurance and public protection costs which includes toilets, security and first aid costs. The total value of their shortfall in funding is £25,176.87 (see Appendix 6).
- 4.3 10 (71%) responders have concerns about the financial viability of their festival due to increased operating costs and diminished ability to raise income due to cost of living pressures. Many activities are currently provided free of charge and there are concerns that charges will need to be introduced if running costs continue to increase.
- 4.4 6 responders (43%) reported that their annual support grant is sufficient in covering their insurance and public protection costs. 11 (79%) responders confirmed that their committee holds cash reserves of more than twice the value of their Local Festival Grant. Many committees anticipate having to use reserves to cover expenses in future if costs continue to rise. 6 responders (43%) do not have a reserves policy.
- 4.5 Committees found it difficult to quantify in hours the support provided by volunteers but reported a significant contribution with volunteers giving their time throughout the year to plan and deliver the annual festivals. Many committees estimate volunteer hours to run in to the thousands and some volunteers are supporting more than one festival.
- 4.6 No formal measure of economic benefit is taken by committees but responders reported that the festivals are one of the busiest times of the year for bringing locals together and attracting visitors which has a positive impact on local businesses and the local economy.
- 4.7 Of the 8 committees who responded to the two additional questions from the working group concerning any plans to review the delivery model of

their festival, one festival reported that they are considering a reduction in the number of events they stage to help manage expenditure. Most reported taking measures to try and reduce expenses by modifying the events they hold, securing sponsorship, introducing a patronage scheme or increasing fundraising efforts. There is however a shared concern amongst the festivals that increasing participation costs will exclude some residents and therefore there are limitations in how much can be raised through charges.

## **5 NON LFGS CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

- 5.1 29 responses were received in total, 19 (70%) of which were from volunteers who are involved in supporting a local festival or event. There appeared to be no responses from volunteers in the Tweeddale area.
- 5.2 The 19 responders involved in supporting a local festival or event reported a range of methods in securing income to host their festival or event including fundraising, grants, chargeable activities, donations and sponsorship.
- 5.3 Similar to the responses from festival committees within the LFGS, there is a sense that local festivals and events help to bring people together, improve the local economy by attracting visitors, encourage spend with local businesses and helps to create a sense of place and belonging.
- 5.4 Some festivals and events reported recording the economic impact of their event though this was mainly related to the costs of holding the event and the income generated.
- 5.5 As with LFGS festivals, there is a significant contribution by volunteers to ensure these festivals and events take place. Over 50% of those who responded have 10+ volunteers supporting their event with the majority of volunteers offering between 1-100 hours.
- 5.6 Volunteers had completed various training courses in their role including food hygiene, bike training for leaders, First Aid, Walk Leader training, marshalling and child protection.
- 5.7 23 (79%) responders said that a community events toolkit similar to the version developed in Dumfries and Galloway would be helpful.
- 5.8 When asked what criteria festivals and events should meet to be eligible for grant funding from public sector bodies, 28 (97%) responders felt community cohesion and involvement should be a factor. 24 (83%) felt the festival or event should be open to all, 23 (79%) thought it should be inclusive to all and support local business, 20 (69%) responders felt it should attract additional visitors and promote Scottish Borders to a wider audience.
- 5.9 When asked how festivals and events could be supported in Scottish Borders, suggestions included support with the publication of newsletters and posters, support for village halls including the provision of WiFi, a

reduction in bureaucracy and obstacles that make event organisation difficult, a more diverse approach to inclusion (and no funding for events promoting inequalities), help in understanding what funding is available from SBC and the criteria for accessing this funding and an increased focus on cultural creation and heritage (e.g. a writers festival or a history festival), affordable venues. There was also comment that it would be useful to understand the difference between direct costs of holding a festival or event and the income generated.

## **6 PROPOSAL**

- 6.1 When considering the financial pressures being experienced by LFGS festival committees the Working Group agreed that the level of grant should be increased. Mindful of the budget pressures faced by Scottish Borders Council the proposed increase has been set at £30,000. It was recognised that there has been no financial increase in grants awarded since 2005 and it is anticipated that an increase in grant will enable festivals to manage increased operating costs and satisfy safety requirements.
- 6.2 The additional grant of £30,000 will be available to LFGS festivals who have a shortfall in funding for their insurance and public protection costs. Festivals will can apply for up to 50% of their annual festival grant. Festivals will be required to submit an application for additional funding which will be assessed against a criteria which considers eligibility, financial need, inclusiveness and community involvement as well as the levels of in-kind support being provided. An equality policy or equalities statement will be required as part of the grant application process along with evidence of costs, annual accounts and constitution.
- 6.3 Approximately 7 LFGS festivals are known to have a shortfall in their funding for insurance and public protection costs and could potentially benefit from this proposal.
- 6.4 Festivals who do not have a shortfall in their insurance and public protection costs will be eligible to submit an application to fund health and safety costs. Joint applications from festivals will be considered for items of expenditure which could benefit more than one organisation such as volunteer training.
- 6.5 Officers will continue to seek opportunities to provide in-kind support for all local festivals and events in response to the suggestions provided in 5.9. This includes increasing awareness of the funding available from SBC and the Expressions of Interest process, supporting groups who would like to develop new festivals and events by providing a community events toolkit as requested, streamlining the process of event organisers contacting multiple SBC departments, work with partner organisations on the accessibility of community venues and the resources available as well as encouraging new volunteers and support groups to consider the environmental sustainability of their event.
- 6.6 Upon conclusion of this year's Community Festival and Events Small Grant Scheme, Officers will review the distribution of the fund to increase

our understanding and awareness of who is seeking financial assistance and what their ambitions are for the continued delivery of these events.

- 6.7 Officers will strengthen the evaluation process of the LFGS so that we are better informed of what social and economic benefits festival bring to the local area.

## **7 IMPLICATIONS**

### **7.1 Financial**

The financial implications contained in the report are:

- a) 35% increase in the Local Festival Grant Scheme (£30,000) with effect from 2024/25, to cover shortfalls in insurance and public protection costs as well as general health and safety costs.
- b) Review of the Scheme in three years' time.
- c) Increase to be included as part of the 2024/25 financial planning process.

### **7.2 Risk and Mitigations**

- a) To ensure good practice in grant making, Committees must submit their equalities statement in order to receive a LFGS grant along with up-to-date constitutions and annual accounts. For audit purposes, Council will state the purpose of the grant within the grants contract and monitor and evaluate the grant spend. This should be done in a proportionate way commensurate with the level of grant made.
- b) Good practice also suggests that risks can be further reduced (for both grant makers and grant recipients) through the provision of advice notes covering relevant legislation changes and signposting to support agencies, enabling the Council to evidence that we have informed the organisations we fund of key changes that may (or may not) impact on their risk levels.
- c) Services and support information will continue to be provided by the Safety Advisory Group and the Events Team. Festival Committees will be advised to review their risk assessments in line with this information.

### **7.3 Integrated Impact Assessment**

- a) In line with both Council policy and legislative requirement, the Local Festival Grant Scheme Review has been subjected to an Integrated Impact Assessment. The outcome of that assessment did not identify any concerns arising from the Scheme potentially adversely impacting on any of the equalities groups.
- b) Equalities statements will continue to be provided by Festival Committees as part of the grant award process.

#### 7.4 **Sustainable Development Goals**

The Council's approach to events will be consistent with UNSDGs that the Council is committed to ['Embedding Sustainable Development' Council, August 2019] which means a responsible approach to materials and resources used at events, the allocation of resources, taking an inclusive approach etc.

#### 7.5 **Climate Change**

The Council has a commitment to the delivery, funding and hosting of sustainable events which is consistent with the principles of SBC's Climate Change Route Map. SBC recognises it needs to play its part with event organisers on sustainability and develop a consistent approach with events of a certain size / scale. Council has an organisational target of net zero by 2045. In delivering support to community events, the Council is committed to ensuring that their events are consistent with organisational ambitions.

#### 7.6 **Rural Proofing**

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

#### 7.7 **Data Protection Impact Statement**

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

#### 7.8 **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.

### **8 CONSULTATION**

8.1 The Director (Finance & Procurement), 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 are being consulted and any comments received will be 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
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**Background Papers:** Review of Local Festival Grant Scheme support to festivals – survey responses. Review of festival and event support by those who sit out-with the LFGS.

**Previous Minute Reference: Executive Committee, 13 June 2023**

**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](mailto:communityengagement@scotborders.gov.uk)

## Appendix 1

### LOCAL FESTIVALS FUNDING

	Population in 2014	Max. Grant 2022/23
<b>GROUP 1</b>		
<b>Population over 10,000</b>		
Hawick Common Riding Committee	13,833	£9,300.00
Galashiels Braw Lads Committee	12,365	£9,300.00
<b>GROUP 2</b>		
<b>Population 3,500 - 10,000</b>		
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
<b>GROUP 3A</b>		
<b>Population 1,000 - 3,500 which have horse cavalcades</b>		
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
<b>GROUP 3B</b>		
<b>Population 1,000 - 3,500 without horse cavalcades</b>		
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
<b>GROUP 4A</b>		
<b>Population 500 - 1000 which have horse cavalcades</b>		
Yetholm Festival Week	552	£775.00
<b>GROUP 4B</b>		
<b>Population 500 - 1000 without horse cavalcades</b>		
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
<b>GROUP 5</b>		
<b>Population 300 - 500</b>		
Cockburnspath Gala Week		£375.00
Gordon Civic Week		£375.00
Eddleston Summer Festival		£375.00
<b>GROUP 6</b>		

**Population 100 - 300**

Burnmouth Village Hall Committee

£210.00

**GROUP 7**

**Professional Games**

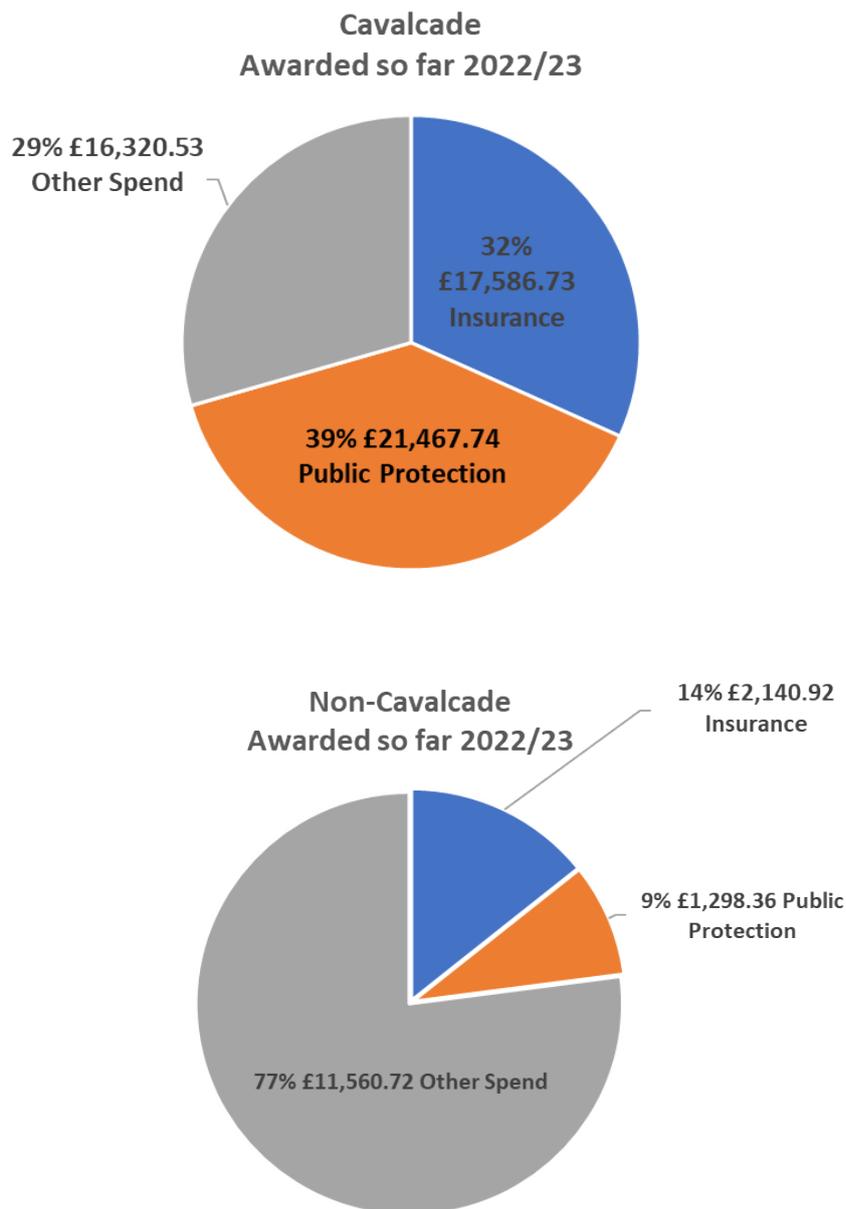
Morebattle Games Committee

£150.00

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**£85,110.00**

**Appendix 2**



- 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

**Appendix 3**

Annual festivals and events who have enquired about members of the LFGS or how they could secure annual grant funding includes:

- Hawick Reivers Festival
- Alchemy Art Film Festival
- Maroon'd
- Duns Play Fest
- Coldstream Riders Association

#### Appendix 4

<b>POLICE SCOTLAND FESTIVAL ATTENDACE HOURS</b>		<b>2023</b>
<b>Name of Town &amp; Event</b>	<b>Total hours</b>	
Burnfoot Carnival	16	
Chirnside Civic Week	4	
Coldstream	109	
Duns Summer Festival (DSM)	132	
Earlston Civic Week (ECW)	7	
Eyemouth Herring Queen (EHQ)	32	
Gala Braw Lads (GBL)	170	
Gordon	2	
Greenlaw	5	
Hawick Common Riding (HCR)	644	
Innerleithen - St Ronans (SR) Kirkin	116	
Jedburgh Callants Festival (JCF)	160.5	
Kelso Laddies (KL)	110	
Lauder Common Riding (LCR)	81	
Melrose Festival (MF)	56.5	
Peebles Beltane Festival (PBF)	133	
Selkirk Common Riding (SCR)	108	
Stow Sports Week (SSW)	8	
Tweedbank Fair (TF)	2	
Walkerburn Festival	10	
West Linton - Whipman Play (WP)	24	
Yetholm – Stobestanes	0	

<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>1,930</b>
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## **Appendix 5**

Support provided by SBC's Environments and Infrastructure Support department during festival period 2022/23:

<b>LFGS Festival</b>	<b>Value of services provided</b>
Coldstream	£1,444.88
Coldingham	£1,230.83
Duns	£517.23
Eyemouth Herring Queen	£1,658.62
Galashiels	£9,803.83
Gordon Civic Week	£6,733.50
Greenlaw Festival	£81.25
Hawick	£6,733.50
Jedburgh	£2,347.08
Kelso	£685.50
Lauder	£1,934.31
Peebles	£9,603.30
Selkirk	£4,818.70
St Ronan's Festival Week	£1,523.25
Stow Gala Day	£465.96
Tweedbank	£253.68
<b>£49,835.42</b>	

Support provided by SBC's Environments and Infrastructure Support department to festivals and events (out-with the LFGS) in 2022/23:

<b>Festival /Event</b>	<b>Value of services provided</b>
Currie Road Car Boot Sale	£542.98
Innerleithen Pipe Band Championships	£1,005.04
Peebles March Junior Ride	£77.60
Jedburgh Seasonal Market	£1,561.72
Galashiels Triathlon	£471.78
Border Counties Rally 2022	£621.08
Kelso 7s	£685.79
Tweedlove Cycle Events	£6,584.07
World Enduro Event (Tweeddale)	£1,073.52
Borders Book Festival	£748.75
Sir Jackie Stewart Classic, Thirlestane	£206.94
Queen's Platinum Jubilee Event - Blainslie	£202.18
Queen's Platinum Jubilee Event - Kelso	£419.72
Borders Vintage Automobile Club	£305.66
Queen's Platinum Jubilee Event - Denholm	£280.14
Queen's Platinum Jubilee Event - Lauder	£456.27
Queen's Platinum Jubilee Event - Tweedsmuir	£310.40
Queen's Platinum Jubilee Event - Coldingham, Chirnside, Burnmouth, St Abbs, Duns, Eyemouth	£617.87
Eyemouth Triathlon	£471.54
Tavern Car Park Event, Eyemouth	£64.67
Mountain bike Event, Satersykes Corner, Innerleithen	£315.88
Maroon'd, Galashiels	£1,853.84
Hawick 7s	£269.58
St. Abbs Gala Day	£686.55
Peebles Show	£277.07
Twilight Walk, Eyemouth	£67.40
Peebles Highland Games	£100.92
Langlee Carnival	£277.87
Eyemouth Remembrance Day Parade	£114.21
Coldstream Remembrance Day Parade	£41.53
Volunteer Hall Parking, Galashiels	£157.97
Selkirk Remembrance Day Parade	£206.94
Peebles Christmas Lights Event	£635.17
Lauder Christmas Lights Festival	£249.37
Halloween Event, Jedburgh	£103.48
Hawick Christmas Event 2022	£675.63
Scotts Selkirk	£437.78
Selkirk Farmers Market	£397.08
Jedburgh Winter Festival	£306.11

Christmas Lights Events, West Linto	£145.35
Doddie Weir Memorial Service, Melrose	£2,146.52
Jedburgh Hand Ba'	£219.48
Hawick Reiver Festival	£420.39
Car Boot Sale - Currie Road, Galashiels	£138.91
Melrose 7s	£3,571.74
Melrose 7s	£6,466.87
Tour Series 2022 - Cycle Event	£4,454.34
Summer Concerts - Floors Castle, Kelso	£496.83
Borders Union Agricultural Show 2022	£723.16
Scott Fest 2022	£366.80
Tour Of Britian 2022 - Cycle Event	£23,296.58
Royal Visit - Galashiels	£51.74
	£66,380.81

## **Appendix 6**

### **Festival Committee Consultation 2023**

Of the 14 committees who returned a consultation response, 7 said their annual support grant does not cover insurance and public protection costs. The responses are assumed to be based on their expenditure in 2023/24 financial year.

<b>Which Festival Committee are you responding on behalf of?</b>	<b>Shortfall in public protection and insurance</b>	<b>Reason</b>
Coldingham Gala Committee	£800	£650 for insurance and £650 for toilets leaves a shortfall of £800
Tweedbank fair		
Kelso Laddies' Association		
Jethart Callant's Festival	£3,000	Referenced increase cost of hiring venues, hiring horses for principles and medical cover
Selkirk Common Riding Trust		
Braw Lads' Gathering		
Hawick Common Riding Committee	£15,681.10	£28,305.32 spent on Insurance - £1709 Toilets - £8752.42 Security - £9384 Police - £3181.2 First Aid/Medical - £2675 Gritting / Bin Hire - £2603.70
Melrose Festival	£686.87	Insurance cover is £3,986.87
Lauder Common Riding		
Greenlaw festival	£200	Not specified
Stow Sports and Gala Day		
The Whipman Play Society	£3,609	Hire of a marquee (£6,909)

Presenting Coldstream Association	£1,200	Not specified
Eyemouth Children's Picnic and Herring Queen Association		
<b>Total</b>	<b>£25,176.97</b>	

