

Report to: **Overview & Scrutiny Panel**

Date: **6th October 2016**

Title: **Events Policy Principles**

Report of: **Events Task & Finish Group**
Cllr Ian Bramble

Wards Affected: **All**

Date next steps can be taken: After recommendation to Executive

Author: **Darren Arulvasagam** Role: **Business Development Group Manager**

Contact: Darren.Arulvasagam@swdevon.gov.uk
01803 861222

Recommendations:

1. That the panel review the event policy principles detailed in Appendix 3 and make recommendations to the Events Task & Finish Group on any changes the Panel concludes should be considered.
2. That the Events Task & Finish group prepare a Events policy based on these recommendations for approval at the next SHDC Executive
3. That the proposed fees and charges are reviewed as part of the wider SHDC fee & charge setting process, due to be completed in November

1. Executive summary

- 1.1. The Overview and Scrutiny Panel requested that a Task & Finish group be formed to review the Council's events policy.
- 1.2. This group has concluded its investigations and now recommends a set of guiding principles (Appendix 3) which would be used to form the basis of the new policy.
- 1.3. A public consultation was held and the feedback has been considered when preparing the principles.
- 1.4. The key change is to apply the new policy consistently. The emerging policy is not designed to generate profit for the Council, instead it is designed to remove ambiguity and ensure that officers can more easily support event organisers by having a clear policy and charging regime to follow.

- 1.5. The group recommend that the panel review the principles detailed in Appendix 3 and feedback any queries or comments, so that these can be incorporated into the policy, which will be presented to Executive for approval later this year.

2. Background

- 2.1. The Overview and Scrutiny panel recommended at its meeting on 19th November 2016 that a task and finish group was set up to review the events policy of the council.
- 2.2. The group was to be chaired by Cllr Bramble, who was joined by Cllrs Baldry and Brown. The scoping proposal form, highlighting what needed to be scrutinised and the group's objectives is shown in Appendix 1.
- 2.3. The existing SHDC events booking form is shown in Appendix 2. There is no specific events policy currently – the booking form is the only 'policy' in existence and this had led to deviations and inconsistencies in applying the current charging methodology.
- 2.4. A series of meetings between the members and key officers has been undertaken. A consultation with the public also took place between June and August this year. Based on the information shared throughout the events review, the principles on which to base a new SHDC events policy have been prepared. These are shown in Appendix 3.

3. Outcomes / Outputs

- 3.1. The events task and finish group have prepared a set of working principles which are detailed in Appendix 3.
- 3.2. Appendix 3A details a number of additional services which the Council can provide to event organisers for additional charge. Event organisers have the ability to purchase these services at their own discretion.
- 3.3. Appendix 3B detailed the proposed land / premises charges that would be levied to event organisers. It is important to note that this is not an exhaustive list and officers will work with the group to review and refine these ahead of finalising the policy for Council approval.
- 3.4. It is proposed that the fees and charges detailed are approved by members as part of the annual fees and charges process (due November 2016) and not specifically in relation to the approval of the emerging events policy. At present these are shown for indicative purposes only.
- 3.5. Once members have provided feedback on the principles, the task and finish group will prepare the events policy, for approval by Executive. It is also proposed that the group respond to each of the consultees directly, sharing the finalised principles and

charging tariff at the earliest opportunity.

4. Options available and consideration of risk

- 4.1. The events task and finish group was formed to review the events process and charging methodology.
- 4.2. Members could opt to leave the events policy as is (as shown in Appendix 2). However, legal advice suggests that the current charging methodology is not correct (See section 6 below and the note in Appendix 3).
- 4.3. The overview and scrutiny panel can make recommendations to the events task and finish group to make changes to the principles as detailed in Appendix 3.
- 4.4. The events task and finish group conducted a public consultation to aid the review of the council's events policy. This was held between June and August 2016 and was promoted by the Council's website, elected members, press coverage and proactive contact with previous event organisers. 26 responses were received during this period and the group reviewed these responses before compiling the principles detailed in Appendix 3.
- 4.5. The subject of charging for events is highly emotive and the group members have sought to achieve a practical solution which will limit impact on all groups, but which will achieve the aims of the Council to be consistent and fair in its dealings with event organisers.

5. Proposed Way Forward

- 5.1. The overview and scrutiny panel are requested to review the event policy principles detailed in Appendix 3 and make recommendations to the Events Task & Finish Group on any changes the Panel concludes should be considered.
- 5.2. In conjunction with officers, the Events Task & Finish group will then prepare an Events policy based on these recommendations for approval at a forthcoming SHDC Executive.
- 5.3. Officers will ensure that the proposed fees and charges detailed illustratively in Appendix 3 are reviewed as part of the wider SHDC fee & charge setting process, due to be completed in November 2016.

6. Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal / Governance	Y	The principles are not in themselves a policy. The policy will be reviewed when it is presented to Council later this year.

		Under current law, it is not acceptable to charge differing fees to Charity / Community events and Commercial events without justification. Fees for administration should be fair and charged on a cost recovery basis only.
Financial	Y	The aim of the events policy is not to make a profit from events, instead it aims to improve the financial position by more consistently applying the charging policy for events. The new events policy will remove some previous inconsistency in application of fees.
Risk	Y	<p>The events task and finish group conducted a public consultation to aid the review of the council's events policy. This was held between June and August 2016 and was promoted by the Council's website, elected members, press coverage and proactive contact with previous event organisers. 26 responses were received during this period and the group reviewed these responses before compiling the principles detailed in Appendix 3.</p> <p>The subject of charging for events is highly emotive and the group members have sought to achieve a practical solution which will limit impact on all groups, but which will achieve the aims of the Council to be consistent and fair in its dealings with event organisers.</p>
Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications		
Equality and Diversity	N	N/A
Safeguarding	N	N/A
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder	N	N/A
Health, Safety and Wellbeing	N	N/A
Other implications	N	N/A

Supporting Information

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Scrutiny Scope for Events T&F Group

Appendix 2: Current SHDC Event Booking Form

Appendix 3: Draft SHDC Event Policy Principles

Background Papers:

- None

Approval and clearance of report

Process checklist	Completed
Portfolio Holder briefed	Yes
SLT Rep briefed	Yes
Relevant Exec Director sign off	Yes
Data protection issues considered	Yes
If exempt information, public (part 1) report also drafted. (Cabinet/Scrutiny)	N/A