

WANDSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCILCOMMUNITY SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE –
27TH NOVEMBER 2014EXECUTIVE – 1ST DECEMBER 2014

Report by the Director of Housing and Community Services on the proposed Events Policy for the Borough's parks, commons and open spaces (excluding Battersea Park).

SUMMARY

In July 2014 (Paper No. 14-365), the Executive approved a consultation exercise on proposals to introduce an Events Policy for the management of events in/on the Borough's parks, commons and open spaces, excluding Battersea Park which already has an agreed policy in place (Paper No. 11-850). This Paper contains the results of the consultation and the proposals for the introduction of the policy.

The Executive are recommended to approve the Events Policy for the Borough's parks, commons and open spaces.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to support the recommendation.

The Director of Finance comments that income generated by normal activities and events held in the open spaces will accrue to the planned Leisure and Culture Staff Mutual. If any new 'exceptional' events take place, income will be shared 30% to the Staff Mutual, 70% to the Council after taking account of any additional costs incurred by either party.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee are recommended to support the recommendation in paragraph 3.
2. If the Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee approve any views, comments or recommendations on this report, these will be submitted to the Executive for their consideration.
3. The Executive are recommended to approve the Events Policy for the Borough's parks, commons and open spaces as described in paragraphs 14 and 15.

INTRODUCTION

4. Whilst Battersea Park has been the principal venue in the Borough for outdoor events for many years, other parks, commons and open spaces have historically hosted a variety of events of differing sizes. These have ranged from very large events such as the Wandsworth Borough Show (Tooting Common, Putney Lower

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Common and King George's Park) and annual Fireworks Displays (Tooting Common, King George's Park and Wandsworth Park), to less extensive annual events such as funfairs, circuses, outdoor cinemas, community-based events, sporting events, and cultural or social events linked with the Tooting Bec Lido.

5. More recently, Tooting Common hosted the London 2012 Games Olympic Torch Relay Evening Celebration event which attracted a ticketed audience of 10,000 people, and a number of 'street parties' linked with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee took place in/on parks and open spaces across the Borough.
6. Whilst the hosting of small community events is possible in the vast majority of the Borough's parks and open spaces, only the following spaces have been, are or could be used to host events for more than 200 people. As such, this policy primarily relates to:-
 - (a) King George's Park, SW18 (Southfields);
 - (b) Tooting Common, SW17 (Bedford and Furzedown);
 - (c) Wandsworth Common, SW18 (Wandsworth Common and Northcote);
 - (d) Wandsworth Park, SW15 (Thamesfield); and
 - (e) Barn Elms Sports Centre, SW13 (London Borough of Richmond).

EXISTING DAY TO DAY MANAGEMENT OF EVENTS, COMPLIANCE MONITORING AND ENFORCEMENT

7. The responsibility for the day-to-day management of events in/on parks, commons and open spaces, including compliance with relevant legislation and the Terms and Conditions, rests with the Council's Events Team, which since 1st April 2014, operates within the Shadow Staff Mutual for Leisure and Culture Services.
8. The responsibility for policing events in/on parks, commons and open spaces, including the enforcement of relevant bye-laws, rests with the Attested Constables of the Council's Events Support Service (ESS). It should also be noted that it is the Head of the ESS who determines what level of policing is required for any given event, and this is non-negotiable by event organisers.
9. All event enquiries are subject to the submission of a formal application form by event organisers, and a requirement to submit both an event management plan and risk assessment for approval, before an event may go ahead.
10. For larger events, organisers are required to attend detailed planning meetings (Safety Advisory Groups) with the following agencies (where relevant):-
 - (a) The Council's Events Team;
 - (b) The Council's Events Support Service;
 - (c) The Council's Parks Service;
 - (d) The Council's Leisure and Sports Service;
 - (e) The Council's Environmental Services Division (Health and Safety, Licensing, Noise and Food Teams);
 - (f) The Council's Highways and On-street Service;
 - (g) Metropolitan Police Service;
 - (h) London Ambulance Service;
 - (i) London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority; and

- (j) Transport for London.

GENERAL CONTROLS AND EVENT RESTRICTIONS

11. A number of general controls and event restrictions apply to all events in/on parks, commons and open spaces, and these are as follows:-
- (a) specific park, common and open space legislation;
 - (b) Town and Country Planning Act 1990;
 - (c) Licensing Act 2003; and
 - (d) relevant Wandsworth and GLC park and open space bye-laws.

CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSED EVENTS POLICY

12. Officers have consulted with the following user groups and stakeholder organisations regarding these proposals and their full responses are attached as appendices. A breakdown of specific points that have been raised by each of the consultative groups is provided in Appendix 1, together with relevant officer comments and the following copies of the responses are provided:-
- (a) Tooting Common Management Advisory Committee (Appendix 2);
 - (b) Friends of Tooting Common (Appendix 3); and
 - (c) Wandsworth Common Management Advisory Committee (Appendix 4).
13. As part of their submission, the Friends of Tooting Common made a suggestion to change the original wording of the proposed Events Policy, relating to a proposed amendment to the paragraph on the frequency of different categories of events. The original wording is as follows in italics, and the suggested wording provided has been reflected in the Proposed Events Policy section (see paragraph 14 (i) below):

Frequency. Recognising that there needs to be a balance between the hosting of events and other uses of parks, commons and open spaces, no individual site shall be used for Category C events (between 5,000 and 10,000 people) on more than two consecutive weekends throughout the year or more than twice in any month.

PROPOSED EVENTS POLICY

14. A number of specific controls and event restrictions formed the basis for the proposed draft Events Policy for consultation, and would apply to all events in/on parks, commons and open spaces, as follows:-
- (a) The Council's Terms and Conditions for Events. The Council already has in place extensive Terms and Conditions (regulations) for the use of parks and open spaces for events.
 - (b) Premises Licences. For events involving the sale of alcohol or certain forms of entertainment, a separate licence would also be required via an application to the Council's Environmental Services Division.
 - (c) Grass Areas. Grass areas shall not be used for events over the winter months between 30th September and 1st April, with the exception of Barn Elms Sports Centre for events directly linked with winter sports or the annual Boat Race.

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- (d) Ecological Sites. Events shall not be located on any sites of specific ecological importance.
- (e) Sports Pitches. Events shall not be permitted to compromise the maintenance and operation of sports pitches.
- (f) Care of Grass, Trees and Infrastructure. Care of grass, trees and the general infrastructure of parks, commons and open spaces shall be subject to the rigorous enforcement of the Terms and Conditions.
- (g) Time Limits. A time limit of 10.00pm shall be imposed on all events. It should be noted that most events normally end by 8.00pm, but some sporting and public events may require an extension to the later time.
- (h) Maximum Audience Size. Events shall not exceed a maximum audience size of 10,000 people and event organisers shall be required to produce control measures for the Council's approval, to ensure this.
- (i) Frequency. Recognising that there needs to be a balance between the hosting of events and other uses of parks, commons and open spaces, the following restrictions on event frequencies shall apply for Category B (between 2500 and 5000 people) and Category C events (between 5,000 and 10,000 people):
- there will not be a Category C or B event at any site on the same park, common or open space on consecutive weekends;
 - there will not be more than four Category C events on the same park, common or open space in any six month period; and
 - there will not be more than six Category B events on the same park, common or open space in any 6 month period.
- (j) Noise Limits. Noise shall be regulated by the specific limitations contained within the Terms and Conditions, including but not limited to, noise shall not exceed 75 db (A), when 10 metres from an Event site.
- (k) Weekend Events. Weekend events shall be limited to those that are open to the general public including ticketed events (e.g. music events), or events to which there is an open application for participation (e.g. charity fun runs). Weekend events within stand alone facilities (e.g. Bowling Greens), or areas with existing fenced or gated access shall also be permitted, subject to there being minimal disruption of the primary purpose of the site.
- (l) Variations to Event Restrictions. Variations to the Events Policy shall only be possible if they have been consulted upon and approved by the Council's Executive.

PROPOSED PROCESSES FOR CONSULTATION ON EVENTS

15. In order to ensure the right balance between the use of parks and open spaces for events and normal use by members of the public, it is proposed that the following processes for routine consultation on events, are adopted:-

Category A Events up to 2,500 people

Events Team	Parks Service	MACS / Friends
<p>Events Team manage applications as per existing arrangements →</p> <p>Current level of applications = 14 / annum across all parks, commons and open spaces.</p>	<p>Notified of event enquiries to ensure no clashes with planned works and updated Events Diaries distributed to Parks Management →</p>	<p>Updated Events Diaries distributed to MACs / Friends groups.</p>

Category B Events from 2,500 – 5,000 people

Events Team	Parks Service	MACS / Friends
<p>Events Team consider application →</p> <p>Current level of applications = 1 / annum across all parks, commons and open spaces.</p>	<p>Event application discussed with Parks Service →</p>	<p>Relevant MACs / Friends groups consulted on event proposals.</p>

Category C Events from 5,000 – 10,000 people

Events Team	Parks Service	MACS / Friends
<p>Events Team consider application →</p> <p>Current level of applications = 0 / annum across all parks, commons and open spaces.</p>	<p>Event application discussed with Parks Service →</p>	<p>Relevant MACs / Friends groups consulted on event proposals.</p>

COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

16. The Director of Finance comments that income generated by normal activities and events held in the open spaces will accrue to the planned Leisure and Culture Staff Mutual. If any new 'exceptional' events take place, income will be shared 30% to the Staff Mutual, 70% to the Council after taking account of any additional costs incurred by either party. It is considered that this arrangement will incentivise the Staff Mutual and provide a fair return to the Council. These arrangements were outlined and agreed in Paper No. 14-152 to the Executive in February 2014.

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CONCLUSION

17. The current level of event applications across all parks, commons and open spaces (excluding Battersea Park) is extremely low and the above policy seeks to confirm and bring together existing arrangements and restrictions into a single document, with the added proposal for how events will be consulted upon in future. The policy is designed to give clarity to the public and stakeholders in respect of controls relating to events.

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BRIAN REILLY
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19th November 2014

Background papers

There are no background papers to this report.

All reports to Overview and Scrutiny Committees, regulatory and other committees, the Executive and the full Council can be viewed on the Council's website (www.wandsworth.gov.uk/moderngov) unless the report was published before May 2001, in which case the Committee Secretary (David Jones-Owen tel: 020 8871 7032 or email [djones-owen@ wandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:djones-owen@wandsworth.gov.uk)) can supply it if required.