

# Event Policy and Suitability of events Documents

Overview & Scrutiny Panel 26 October 2021

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<b>Portfolio Holder</b>	Cllr George Kup, Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Youth Engagement
<b>Status</b>	For Decision
<b>Classification:</b>	Unrestricted
<b>Key Decision</b>	No
<b>Ward:</b>	All wards

## Executive Summary:

This report looks at the current events policy and creates a streamlined process which enables event organisers to receive informed information when choosing to hold an event on council land.

The changes made to the policy and supporting documentation include:

- The policy is now a document which organisers will be required to read and sign to ensure that they understand all TDC terms and conditions when hiring council land.
- The policy now asks organisers to think about the impact their event is having on the environment and how they can reduce carbon emissions.
- There has been an update in fee and charges to ensure that a fair charging system is in place for all event sizes.
- The introduction of the suitability of events document which outlines how the council makes decisions on events.
- The inclusion of brand promotions on TDC land to go through the events process.
- A suggestion to change when events can take place on the beaches has been included. The reasoning behind this is to ensure the public are able to access the beaches during the summer time and that there are no disruptions to concessionaires.

Events help to contribute to the local economy in Thanet. There were over 230 events organised in Thanet over the last few years, the majority of which are community events (this is a reduced number due to the COVID 19 pandemic).

## Recommendations

The purpose of this report is for the Overview and Scrutiny panel to provide comments and recommendations for consideration by cabinet.

## Corporate Implications

## **Financial and Value for Money**

Events play a key role in providing economic benefits to the area of Thanet. Events help to boost the visitor economy. Over the last few years, events have helped to support the visitor economy and have attracted tourists to the area.

The tourism economy in Thanet as of 2018 was worth £319 million with a rise of 4.2 million tourists in 2017 (Thanet District Council, 2019). The total number of jobs rose to 7,950 with tourism accounting for 19% of all jobs in the Thanet District.

These documents will provide a clear framework of events processes and procedures for both event organisers and Thanet District Council.

Events incur costs to Thanet District Council in officer time, resources used and additional services provided. We offer a clear outline of the costs and organisers will be charged when using Thanet District Council Services. There will be the introduction of a new management system Event App which offers the organiser the chance to view how much each additional service will cost, they can also upload all documentation at the end of the application and make a payment. This system was recommended by a number of Kent councils. The system will reduce officer administration time and ensure a better customer experience where they can directly liaise with the Safety Advisory Group.

New land hire fees and charges will be put in place for the new budget year 2021/2022, after a benchmarking exercise was undertaken to compare Thanet District Council's land hire costs to other councils in Kent and the rest of England. It was identified that most councils charge by the size of event. This was adapted so that Thanet Council's land hire fees were fair to all event sizes.

## **Legal**

Thanet District Council has a duty of care to ensure that events are managed safely and that all the relevant departments and agencies are working effectively in partnership to achieve this.

Within the Events Policy it lists legislation and guidance that is relevant to the event process, however, this is not an exhaustive list.

Through the internal consultation of the Policy, Legal Services has reviewed and commented on the Draft Events Policy and suitability of events document.

Due regard must be had to the Public Sector Equality Duty generally and in relation to the implementation of changes to fees and charges

## **Corporate**

These documents are an updated version of the previous events policy to ensure it is now in line with new guidance and world issues.

The policy reflects Thanet District Council's core business objectives:

**Growth** - We will continue to ensure we work to consider new ways to generate income and invest our current resources. Delivering a Council that is financially strong to discharge its services and invest in the growth of the District.

Events encouraging communities, organisations and businesses to hold events in Thanet. These events encourage the growth of the local and visitor economy ensuring investment and growth within the district.

**Environment** - Having a clean and well-maintained environment remains important to us. We will be clear with our residents on what we will do and what our tasks of residents are – cultivating a shared responsibility approach. Delivering a clean and accessible living environment, maintaining an emphasis on prevention, but where necessary we will use an enforcement approach.

The events policy asks event organisers to think about their carbon emissions providing a template document (Climate Change Impact Assessment Form) within the events application pack. The policy aims to offer event organiser support and additional learning about their climate change responsibilities identifying how we can work together to create a better environment. The policy also outlines the organisers and TDC responsibilities to keep event sites clear.

**Communities** - Through effective partnership working with both the public sector agencies and the community, we will provide leadership and direction across the District and the region to ensure everyone is working to the same goal. Delivering high-quality housing, safer communities and enhancing the health and wellbeing of our residents.

Working with partners to help encourage events that benefit local communities. Permitting a variety of events that help people to make informed lifestyle choices by engaging in a broad range of sports, leisure and coastal activities within our communities and ensuring that they are organised safely.

### **Equality Act 2010 & Public Sector Equality Duty**

Members are reminded of the requirement, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard to the aims of the Duty at the time the decision is taken. The aims of the Duty are: (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it, and (iii) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Protected characteristics: age, sex, disability, race, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief and pregnancy & maternity. Only aim (i) of the Duty applies to Marriage & civil partnership.

This report relates to the following aim of the equality duty: -

- To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- To advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

- To foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The Council encourages diversity and equality in all events organised in Thanet through working with a diverse range of event organisers. The Council aims to ensure that those from a variety of cultures and backgrounds are given equal support so they can deliver a wider range of multicultural events that help to promote community cohesion and encourage equality.

The events policy will support events in Thanet ensuring that they contribute towards The Council's equality duties, which are; Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

TDC aims to do this by encouraging events that celebrate different cultures giving people a greater understanding. Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.

Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

## **CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

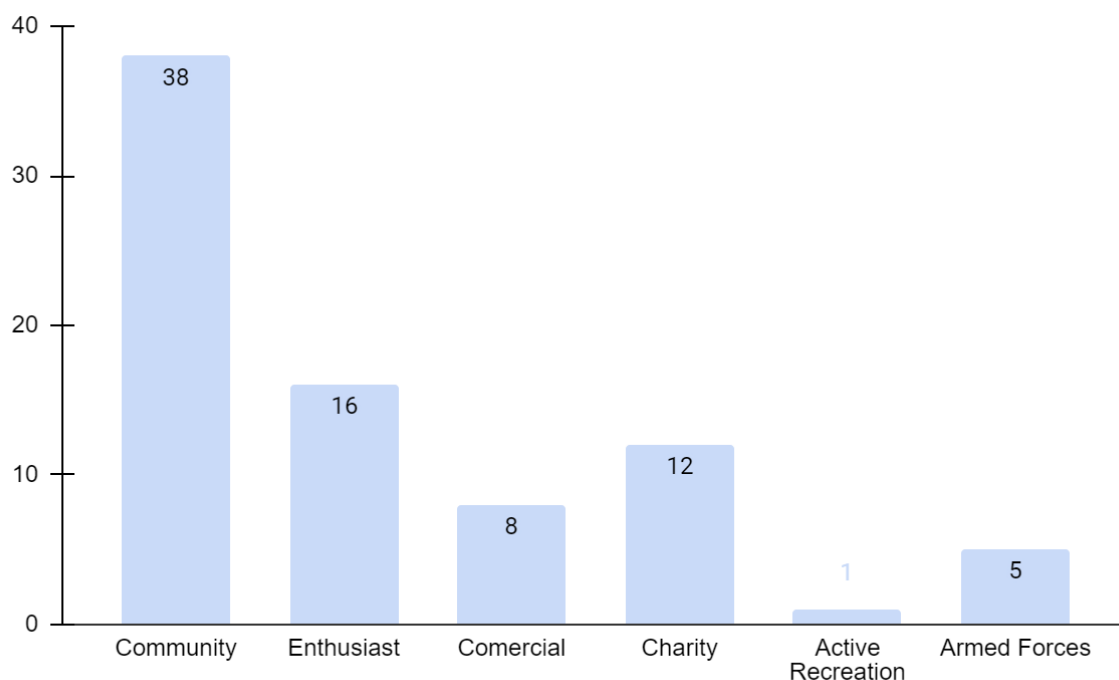
This report relates to the following corporate priorities: -

- *Growth*
- *Environment*
- *Communities*

### **1.0 Introduction and Background**

1.1 Events play an important part in attracting visitors to Thanet while helping communities to come together and building on community cohesion. Thanet has many events that run on an annual basis which contribute to the history of the area. Thanet has a popular events calendar with new events being introduced year on year. The events sector is an important part of the regeneration of Thanet with the introduction of larger events that give the area a higher profile i.e; Red Bull Quicksands and Turner Prize. This aims to be the start of changing the process for the better. We aim to introduce a refreshed events policy, supporting documentation and the implementation of a new online event process by 2022. We hope to boost the profile of events and encourage more people to want to organise events within their communities.

1.2 In 2019 there were 80 events 38 of those were community events:



These events help to promote culture, build community spirit, and contribute to increasing visitors to the area.

The updated policy will enable organisers to understand the events process, giving them guidance and support when organising events in Thanet. The policy outlines the importance of safety, identifying that events need to be covid-19 compliant and that organisers need to be thinking about reducing carbon emissions in line with the climate emergency called by TDC in 2019. There will be an introduction of updated fees and charges that establish a clear charging framework to ensure that the costs of hiring council land are transparent from the beginning of the process.

1.3 Thanet District Council aims to support events as they contribute to the culture and heritage of Thanet and positively impact the economy. We look to introduce additional learning opportunities for event organisers and work with partners and agencies to ensure that all events held in Thanet are safe for the public. TDC will provide documents that guide organisers from start to finish of event planning.

1.4 The updated documents hope to streamline the process and reduce the number of documents making the process more user friendly and efficient. After conducting a benchmarking exercise we were made aware that the prices for hiring land needed to be adjusted as TDC recognises that events do bring a cost. The event process includes land hire costs to help with the upkeep of the land as they are subject to wear and tear.

## 2.0 The changes that have been made

2.1 Two documents have been created to make improvements to support event organisers and ensure the process is easily understandable, the Events Policy and Suitability of Events. The documents have been revised to reflect feedback received

from; event organisers during debriefs, officers attending the Kent Safety Advisory Group and other Kent councils when discussing how their events processes work. It has been identified that Thanet District Councils event process is currently out of date and event organisers and officers would benefit from an updated process.

## 2.2 The new documents have had the following changes made:

- The policy is now a document in which organisers will be required to read and sign to ensure that they understand all of TDC terms and conditions when hiring council land.
- The policy now asks organisers to think about the impact their event is having on the environment and how they can reduce carbon emissions.
- There has been an update in fees and charges to ensure that a fair charging system is in place for all event sizes.
- The introduction of the Suitability of Events documents outlines how the council makes decisions on events.
- The inclusion of brand promotions on TDC land to go through the events process.
- A suggestion to change when events can take place on the beaches or removing them entirely has been included. The reasoning behind this is to ensure the public is able to access the beaches during the summertime and that there are no disruptions to concessionaires.
- Updated event sites identifying the areas owned by TDC that can be used for local events.

## 2.3

In order to support the policy we have reviewed and implemented a new events management system Event App, included new templates into the event application pack to give organisers further detailed information when planning an event. Organisers are now required to read the event policy document as Thanet District Council will be asking event organisers to sign and agree to the terms and conditions prior to granting them permission to hold their event..

It was important to include the recent climate change emergency that TDC called for in 2019. To encourage event organisers to think about how to offset their carbon emissions and encourage carbon zero events by 2030.

## 2.4 The revised fees and charges schedule is based upon everything that TDC will need to charge to cover costs, ensuring that they are not detracting from other services being provided. The charges will no longer be based on the type of site, and will now be based on the size and type of event to ensure fair charges are applied to both small and large events.

Here is an example of how the current charge system works;

- A community event was held in Ellington Park for one day in 2019 for 350 people and was charged £50
- A community event held at the Oval Bandstand for one day in 2019 for 4,000 people and the land hire charge was £50

The following examples show the change in costs of an event type currently vs those proposed:

*Event application fees and deposits are applied to all categories apart from Armed Forces events.*

<b>Example</b>	<b>Pre policy</b>	<b>Post Policy</b>
<i>Community 1 day event</i>	Standard site: £51 Premium site: £76	<b>Small:</b> 51 <b>Medium:</b> £76 <b>Large:</b> £152 <b>Major:</b> £304
<i>Commercial 1 day event</i>	<b>Premium Site:</b> £325 <b>Standard Site:</b> £225	<b>Small:</b> £225 per day <b>Medium:</b> £325 per day <b>Large:</b> £725 per day <b>Major:</b> £1025 per day
<i>Enthusiast 1 day event</i>	<b>Premium Site:</b> £155 per day <b>Standard Site:</b> £105 per day	<b>Small:</b> £155 per day <b>Medium:</b> £225 per day <b>Large:</b> £425 per day <b>Major:</b> £625 per day
<i>Charity 1 day event</i>	<b><u>National Charity</u></b> <b>Premium Site:</b> £ 155 <b>Standard Site:</b> £105  <b><u>Regional Charity</u></b> <b>Premium Site:</b> £102 <b>Standard Site:</b> £77	<b><u>National Charity</u></b> <b>Small:</b> £106 per day <b>Medium:</b> £156 per day <b>Large:</b> £206 per day <b>Major:</b> £306 per day  <b><u>Regional Charity</u></b> <b>Small:</b> £78 per day <b>Medium:</b> £103 per day <b>Large:</b> £153 per day <b>Major:</b> £253 per day
<i>Active Recreation</i>	No land hire charged	No land hire charged
<i>Armed Forces</i>	No fees charged	No fees charged

The introduction of the Suitability of Events document outlines how the council makes decisions on events. This document outlines the process of making brand promotion applications on TDC land. This will go through the events process as the team have experience in liaising with other departments on criteria suitable for activities on council land. The organiser will be required to provide relevant documentation and all promotions will be charged at the commercial rate.

An option for cabinet to make a decision on when events can take place on the beaches or removing them entirely has been included. The reasoning behind this is to ensure the public is able to access the beaches during the summertime and that there are no disruptions to concessionaires. It will also help to protect wildlife and the environment.

Within the Suitability of Events document it provides an updated list of event sites identifying the areas owned by TDC that can be used for local events. This will be removed and each event site will be listed on the TDC website so organisers have full information on where the site is located and the facilities it has to offer. This gives new organisers a great opportunity to choose the best location suitable for their event.

### **3.0 Next Steps**

- 3.1 The events policy and supporting documents will be going to cabinet for a decision on the 18th November 2021.

Contact Officer: *Elle Sutton (Community Officer)*

Reporting to: *Penny Button (Director of Neighbourhoods)*

#### **Annex List**

Annex 1: Draft Events Policy

Annex 2: Suitability of Events

Annex 3: Fees and Charges

Annex 4: End of Consultation Document

Annex 5: Equality Impact Assessment

#### **Background Papers**

None

#### **Corporate Consultation**

**Finance:** Greg Dungan (Finance Manager)

**Legal:** *Judith Woodward (Senior Lawyer, Contract and Procurement)*