



Lewes
Town
Council

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Lewes Town Council appreciates the value of live events and their role in promoting goals and initiatives, providing entertainment, championing local culture, strengthening communities and supporting business and tourism.

The council has various statutory powers available to it in order to create and run events within the Town, including:

- Provision of entertainment and support of the arts – Local Government Act 1972, s.145
- Power to encourage tourism – Local Government Act 1972, s.144
- Power to facilitate a religious or similar event – Local Government Act 1972, s.138B
- Power to provide information – Local Government Act 1972, s.142
- Power to do anything calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of the council’s functions – Local Government Act 1972, s.111
- Power to incur miscellaneous expenditure not otherwise authorised – Local Government Act 1972, s.137

1. Introduction and Objectives

- 1.1. Lewes Town Council’s events programme will be curated and reviewed each year in line with its engagement and budget objectives. The programme will be facilitated by the Business Development and Events Officer in accord with the Council’s events priorities.
- 1.2. Events and the overall programme will be considered through the Communications and Events Committee and/or, where appropriate, the Mayoralty.
- 1.3. Ideas and suggestions for events can be made by individual councillors or by committees via the Town Clerk. The Business Development and Events Officer can offer advice and recommendations for ensuring that events are cost effective and meet the objectives of this policy.

- 1.4. The annual events programme should be designed with the following objectives in mind. Each event should aim to deliver against one, or several, objectives:
 - a) Encourage community spirit, participation, action and cohesion, including with minority and disadvantaged groups
 - b) Encourage pride in Lewes, the town's culture and traditions, including our civic commitments
 - c) Promote sustainability and environmental initiatives
 - d) Promote and encourage tourism
 - e) Support businesses and the local economy
 - f) Promote the council's corporate and strategic objectives as set out in the corporate and strategic plans (once agreed and adopted)
- 1.5. The council intends that the events it organises or supports, provide something different to existing community or commercial events in Lewes, or enhance or further develop existing events. This could be through increasing engagement or reach, targeting a different demographic, or creating a more accessible offer.
- 1.6. The council's events programme should, so far as is possible, be made up of events that are inclusive, rather than exclusive. This should include:
 - a) Creating events that target a broad audience
 - b) Avoiding events, except where necessary, that are restricted to an invite-only guest list
 - c) Hosting and supporting events that utilise publicly accessible spaces, and consider accessibility for people with limited mobility, including wheelchair users
 - d) Being mindful that events to promote a particular cause, campaign or occasion are most effective when reaching new audiences, and that this is rarely achieved through internal events with niche appeal
- 1.7. The council recognises that on occasion, there may be opportunities and ideas for events that do not fit into the pre-planned annual events programme. These should be considered on a case-by-case basis, on their own merit, against the criteria set out in section 1.3 to 1.6 above, and in consultation with the Business Development and Events Officer and the Town Clerk.
- 1.8. Any events not agreed as part of the annual events programme will be separately approved by the Communications and Events Committee or, the Mayoralty (when pertaining to the Mayor's budget) or, where there is not time for regular procedures regarding permissions, directly by Full Council.
- 1.9. Event information (date, time, location) will be communicated to all councillors, both as an annual calendar note and through invitations on Outlook. Events considered civic duties, including Armistice Day and Remembrance events, will include information regarding ceremonial expectations of councillors.

2. Staffing Arrangements and Ownership

- 2.1. Events in the Town Council's events programme will be split into three main categories: Civic/Mayoral, Community, and Partnership.
- 2.2. Delivery of the Town Council's events portfolio will be the responsibility of the Business Development and Events Officer.
- 2.3. Day-to-day planning for some civic/mayoral events may be delegated to the Civic Officer with the agreement of the Town Clerk.
- 2.4. The Business Development and Events Officer will lead on planning for all other Town Council events (community and partnership), working closely with other officers, for example, Venue Managers or the Town Ranger for location-specific events.
- 2.5. When planning staffing for events, consideration should be given to utilising the most cost-effective resources. This is likely to include the use of staff with flexible working hours and time off in lieu. Paid overtime should be used only where other staffing arrangements aren't available.
- 2.6. The council recognises that staff capacity is a finite resource, and that councillor participation should be encouraged where possible, and is key to the success of certain events.
- 2.7. When planning events, additional consideration should be given to avoiding unreasonable impact on staff capacity, available resources, and the day-to-day activities of the council and its officers.

3. Mayoral Events

- 3.1. Lewes Town Council has historically placed a significant importance on Mayoral and Civic events, especially receptions, gatherings, and fundraising events. The council recognises the cultural importance of the Mayor's role in the town and seeks to enable these activities within the scope of this policy.
- 3.2. It is anticipated that a small number of foreseeable Mayoral events will be included each year in the planned events programme.
- 3.3. The council notes, however, that the Mayor may wish to host a small number of additional events or receptions during their time in office, and that this won't be known until after May each year when the Mayor is elected. To accommodate this, the council may choose to set aside a budget for Mayoral Receptions each year.
- 3.4. It is important to note that the Mayor themselves can only incur or commit council spending or resources, or make decisions, through their (single) democratic vote as the Chair at council meetings
- 3.5. Use of the Mayoral Receptions budget will be reviewed and approved (or refused) by the Town Clerk under their delegated authority. The Mayor will be supported by the Town Clerk or delegated officer in presenting a business case for any events they wish to organise or host, including details of costs and likely impact on officer time, and ensure that they have identified a legal power under which the event can take

place. Small ad-hoc receptions may not require a business case at the discretion of the Town Clerk, but approval must still be sought.

- 3.6. Any events or receptions that the Mayor chooses to host or organise, or otherwise support (except for external engagements organised through the established Mayoral engagements process), should be subject to meeting the same objectives and criteria as Town Council events, set out in sections 1.3 to 1.6 of this policy, and consider staffing requirements in accordance with section 2 of this policy.
- 3.7. The Mayor may, in addition to the objectives set out in section 1.4, wish to host events that are designed to support a registered charity of their choice. Such events must be cost-neutral to the council and should also meet one or more of the objectives in section 1.4.
- 3.8. In the case of fundraising or charity events, careful consideration should be given to whether events are the most effective form of support the Mayor can offer, or whether alternative provisions from the Town Council would offer better value for money and benefit, for example, the council's Small Grants Scheme, Mayoral attendance at the Charity's own events or functions, etc.
- 3.9. The Mayor may, at their discretion (and with the Town Clerk's approval), provide 6 'free lets' of the Town Council's Community Venues (Lewes Town Hall, All Saints Centre, Malling Community Centre) to charitable or non-profit groups during the course of the Mayoral year, subject to the following conditions:
 - a) Free lets will usually be for a maximum of one room or space, for no-longer than one day or standard hire period, strictly at the discretion of the venue manager.
 - b) All lets must be discussed a minimum of 6 weeks in advance with the appropriate venue manager to ensure room and staff availability, suitability of the venue, and to collect booking details.
 - c) Free lets should only be offered for events and meetings that broadly seek to support the same objectives as Town Council events, as per section 1.4 of this policy.
 - d) The Town Clerk should be consulted on all free lets to ensure that use of any council venue doesn't pose any reputational risk to the council and that use is appropriate in line with council policy.
 - e) It should be noted and made clear to any user of any Town Council Venue, that the free let of a venue or space does not constitute Town Council endorsement of their activities.
 - f) All venue bookings, including free lets provided under the scope of this policy, will be subject to the usual Town Council and Community Venue policies on bookings, and their standard Terms and Conditions of hire.

4. Sustainable Events

- 4.1. Lewes Town Council seeks to ensure that all events it hosts have a minimal impact on the environment, and that sustainability is at the forefront of the council's event planning.

- 4.2. When sourcing event suppliers, officers should seek to work with suppliers and partners who have the same values on sustainability and use of environmentally friendly products and working practices.
- 4.3. Officers should seek to use local suppliers, where possible and cost effective, to minimise environmental impact from travel in relation to events.
- 4.4. The Council will aim to minimise and ultimately eliminate the use of single use plastics at events, including by restricting the use of single use plastic cups, food containers and associated items.
- 4.5. In alignment with section 6.5 of the Council's Animal Welfare, Safety and Responsibility Policy, the council will seek to ensure that vegetarian/vegan food options are available at any council events where catering provision exists.
- 4.6. When temporary events are hosted outdoors, consideration will be given to sourcing environmentally friendly temporary utilities, including renewable or environmentally friendly power and other fuels.
- 4.7. Consideration will be given to the location and venues for events to enable environmentally friendly travel options where practical, and event communications will encourage and promote environmentally friendly methods of travel.
- 4.8. The council will proactively encourage re-use and recycling at events, including through the provision of appropriate waste management and disposal facilities and plans for reusing resources and materials after an event.

5. Collaborative Working with Partners

- 5.1. Lewes Town Council recognises the value of working collaboratively with partners to deliver events, including other local authorities and third sector organisations (see Partnership Policy with Outside Bodies, forthcoming).
- 5.2. Events delivered in partnership with other organisations present unique opportunities, but also challenges and risks, and careful consideration must be given to issues around liability, responsibility and accountability. Clarity on ownership and liability should be sought in writing for events delivered in partnership with any other organisations.
- 5.3. The council will consider requests from partners to assist with the delivery of events that meet the criteria set out in section 1.3 to 1.6 of this policy.
- 5.4. The council is at liberty to support and work collaboratively with partners to deliver events that are consistent with other sections of this policy, including through:
 - a) Financial contributions (where pre-planned and agreed as part of the annual events programme, or separately agreed by the council)
 - b) In-kind contributions of staff time or resources (subject to council approval)
- 5.5. Requests from other organisations for event partnerships will be considered carefully to ensure that council support, whether financial or in-kind, is the most effective means of supporting partnership events, or whether alternative provisions from the

Town Council would offer better value for money and benefit, for example, the council's Small Grants Scheme.

6. Event Finances

- 6.1. The council will seek to deliver its events in a way which is cost effective and that ensures value for money.
- 6.2. It is recognised that whilst some events can be delivered without incurring additional or specific expense, others will require council investment.
- 6.3. Where financial investment in the delivery of an event is proposed, the council recognises that the impact of such events cannot be judged solely on financial expenditure or gain, but should be considered for the impact they have against the objectives set out in this policy.
- 6.4. The council will consider various funding models for events, including but not limited to:
 - Funding from council budgets and reserves
 - Grant funding from external sources
 - Business and commercial sponsorship
 - Event revenue generation (for example ticket revenue, exhibitor or participant fees).
- 6.5. The council intends that the majority of its annual event programme should consist of 'free to access' or very low-cost events.
- 6.6. Where an event cannot cost-effectively be delivered as 'free to access', consideration should be given to whether or not the event objectives can still be met by charging for admission/participation.
- 6.7. When making a charge for event admission or participation, consideration should be given to ensuring that these charges remain as affordable as possible, and consideration should be given to concessionary pricing if appropriate.

7. Use of Town Council Properties for Events

- 7.1. The council often receives requests for the use of its land and properties for events.
- 7.2. The council, may at its discretion, allow the use of land for events, either free-of-charge or by way of a hire fee.
- 7.3. The venue will be reported as occupied during all events even where no fee has been charged.
- 7.4. Established policies, procedures and hire fees are in place for the council's community venues.
- 7.5. Requests for the use of other council land and property will be considered by council officers and a recommendation made to the Buildings and Amenities Committee.

- 7.6. Requests will be assessed based on a number of factors, including:
- a) Safety, liability and access arrangements
 - b) Suitability of the land for proposed activities
 - c) Benefits in accordance with the objectives of this policy and the council's corporate and strategic aims
 - d) Financial benefit and risk to the council and the wider community
- 7.7. Any use of council land or property for events must be agreed by the council in writing, and have the appropriate legal permissions, including a premises license or Temporary Event Notice for any licensable activities. Such permissions should not be applied for until the council has approved a request for the use of the land or property for the proposed activities.
- 7.8. For the avoidance of doubt, clause 7.7 does not relate to the use of the council's Community Venues (Lewes Town Hall, All Saints Centre, Malling Community Centre), as these venues have existing protocols, policies and terms and conditions of hire in place separate to this policy.

8. Event Feedback, Review and Evaluation

- 8.1. The council intends to foster a culture of continuous improvement and expects that all events should be subject to review and evaluation.
- 8.2. All events should be subject to an internal post-event review and debrief, and information should be collected and retained for future reference on the number of attendees, format of the event, costs incurred and best practice.
- 8.3. Public events should aim to collect both quantitative and qualitative, first-hand feedback from event attendees and participants – using online surveys, feedback forms, and other suitable methods.
- 8.4. Internal and external feedback, debrief notes and event data should be shared with the Communications and Events Committee and used to inform future event planning and programming to ensure that events are delivering effectively against their intended objectives. Where these are major events, or new or newly formatted events, a written report by the relevant officer (Town Clerk, or Events, Civic or Communications officer) will be expected; verbal reports to the Committee may otherwise be accepted.

9. Other Policies

- 9.1. Attention should be given to other policies and procedures adopted by the council and their impact on council events, including:
- a) Communications Policy
 - b) Animal Welfare, Safety and Responsibility Policy
 - c) Climate Emergency Policy

- d) Health and Safety at Work Policy
 - e) Mayoral Policy
 - f) Lewes Town Council Community Venues - Venue Hire Policies and Terms and Conditions of Hire
 - g) Community Engagement Policy
 - h) Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
 - i) Landport Bottom Management Plan
 - j) Partnership Policy with Outside Bodies, forthcoming
- 9.2. If in doubt about policy or procedure relating to Town Council events or use of the Town Council's buildings or assets for events, advice should be sought from the Town Clerk.