



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Events and Exhibitions Review

27 October 2022

Reference: SPCB (2022) Paper 64

Executive summary

1. This Paper seeks the SPCB's agreement to revise the current Events and Exhibitions criteria and to consider the proposal for the appropriate balance between supporting and resourcing Member-sponsored and major events across the Holyrood campus.

Background

2. In 2005, the SPCB agreed the criteria for Events and Exhibitions held in the Parliament and its grounds that supported Members of the Scottish Parliament and delivered an annual programme of major events and exhibitions. All major events and exhibitions held at the Scottish Parliament must meet the agreed criteria for Events and Exhibitions (**Annex A**).
3. In 2011, the SPCB further agreed that a number of recurring major events and exhibitions be held annually or biennially without them requiring on-going approval from the SPCB with only exceptions coming to the SPCB for approval as part of the annual major events and exhibitions programme. **Annex B** lists the major events and exhibitions that the Events and Exhibitions Team lead-on, design, develop and deliver annually, biennially and once a session.
4. In Session 5, the SPCB agreed a Public Engagement Strategy as part of the wider Strategic Plan and this has since been reviewed to reflect changes in how the Scottish Parliament engages with the people of Scotland and wider societal changes. In November 2021, the SPCB agreed the Public Engagement Strategy for Session 6 (**Annex C**) which aims to increase the

reach of the Parliament's engagement and the diversity of those engaging with us by breaking down barriers.

Issues and options

Criteria for Events and Exhibitions

5. The current criteria for Events and Exhibitions were put in place at a time when the Parliament was still relatively new and there was a conscious effort to host larger events as a way of establishing the institution both in Scotland and its communities and on the international stage. The criteria were also agreed before we had anything resembling a Public Engagement Strategy.
6. Almost two decades on, it is essential that we revisit the purpose of our policy and criteria and ensure we look at how we can best use our resources to align with the agreed Public Engagement Strategy.
7. The current criteria are not aligned with the goals of the Public Engagement Strategy which is about breaking down barriers and engaging with as wide a range of people as possible.
8. Member-sponsored events helps us to meet the goals of our Public Engagement Strategy and are now a vital part of our engagement work. These events are valued by Members, there is a constant (and increasing) demand for these events and, as Parliament becomes more diverse, so do the events sponsored by parliamentarians. However, it is often less clear the value that some major events bring to the Parliament.
9. We recommend that major events and exhibitions are reviewed against and aligned with the Public Engagement Strategy for Session 6, replacing the current criteria with an amended Guidance for Member-sponsored Events. The current Guidance for Member-sponsored Events (**Annex D**) covers events, photocalls and book launches so will need amended to include Member-sponsored exhibitions (currently covered under the 2005 Criteria). In addition we would recommend that the amended Guidance also references the Public Engagement Strategy to ensure where appropriate Member-sponsored events and exhibitions align and support the Strategy.

The SPCB is asked to consider this and to agree that major events and exhibitions be reviewed against and aligned with the Public Engagement

Strategy for Session 6 and that the current Criteria for Events and Exhibitions be replaced with an amended Guidance for Member-sponsored Events to include Member-sponsored exhibitions and reference to the Public Engagement Strategy.

10. If the SPCB agrees this recommendation, the Events and Exhibitions Team will review all the recurring annual/biennial events and exhibitions and any proposals currently being considered, to ensure they align with and deliver the Public Engagement Strategy coming back to the SPCB before the end of the year with an updated programme of major events and exhibitions going forward.

Balance of Member-sponsored and major events

11. The Events and Exhibitions Team, with support from many other parliamentary teams, deliver all Member-sponsored events and exhibitions along with the major events and exhibitions programme including the annual Festival of Politics, as well as conserving and curating the Parliament's Art Collection. There are finite resources within the Events and Exhibitions Team and they need to balance the needs of Members through the Member-sponsored events and exhibitions programme and that of the SPCB in delivering the Session 6 Public Engagement Strategy.

12. The Parliament is first and foremost a working parliament not an events venue which means developing, designing and managing events at Holyrood can be more complex and demanding not only for external event organisers and partners but also for all the teams involved in delivering them. As we look at working and partnering with external organisations to manage, oversee and deliver more complex and diverse Member-sponsored and major events - that break down barriers and engage new audiences - the time and resources required to do so increases.

13. To balance the competing demands on the Events and Exhibitions Team, ensure we are making the best use of our resources in achieving the goals of the Public Engagement Strategy, including building in sufficient time to allow the Team to work with and develop new partnerships to increase the diversity and inclusion of our major events and ensuring Members are fully supported, we need to limit the overall number of Member-sponsored and major events and exhibitions accordingly.

14. The Team can either increase the number of Member-sponsored events by decreasing the number of major events or vice versa but cannot increase both.

15. Currently the Team is managing and delivering between 320 and 340 Member-sponsored events and exhibitions. Continuing at this level of activity for the Member-sponsored events and exhibitions programme throughout Session 6, would allow the Team to deliver the annual Festival of Politics, a number of other Presiding Officer hosted receptions/dinners as well as about six major events and exhibitions annually. This would give the Team the staff resource and capacity to continue to deliver the current programme of events and exhibitions but more importantly the capacity to design, develop and deliver additional major events and exhibitions that will support the Public Engagement Strategy.

16. Currently the demand for Member-sponsored events and exhibitions is being met and although demand may increase slightly as we come out of the pandemic we believe this can be managed within the current resources.

The SPCB is asked to consider this and to agree that we continue with the current number of Member-sponsored events and exhibitions of between 320 and 340 annually for the remainder of Session 6.

Publication Scheme

17. This Paper and annexes can be published.

Next steps

18. If the SPCB approves the changes to the Events and Exhibitions Criteria, the Events and Exhibitions Team will amend the current Guidance for Member-sponsored Events to include Member-sponsored exhibitions and reference to the Public Engagement Strategy; and review all major events and exhibitions accordingly coming back to the SPCB before the end of the year with an updated major events and exhibitions programme for 2023 that reflects and supports the Public Engagement Strategy.

19. The Head of the Events and Exhibitions Team will continue to monitor demand against resources ensuring the Team has the correct balance of Member-sponsored and major events and exhibitions that support both Members in their parliamentary role and the SPCB in successfully delivering the Public Engagement Strategy.

Decision

20. The SPCB is asked to agree that the major events and exhibitions be reviewed against and aligned with the Public Engagement Strategy for Session 6 instead of the current criteria; that the current Criteria for Events and Exhibitions be replaced with an amended Guidance for Member-sponsored Events to include Member-sponsored exhibitions and referencing the Public Engagement Strategy; and that to ensure a balance between Member-sponsored events and major events that makes the most effective use of resources and helps us to successfully achieve the Public Engagement Strategy that the level of Member-sponsored events and exhibitions should be set at between 320 and 340 annually with no more than six major annual events and exhibitions (in addition to the Festival of Politics and Presiding Officer hosted receptions and dinners).

Events and Exhibitions Team

October 2022

CURRENT EVENTS AND EXHIBITIONS CRITERIA

1. Events and exhibitions held in the Parliament and its grounds are closely aligned to achieving the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body's (SPCB) purpose, aim and core services, in particular: supporting Members of the Scottish Parliament, raising public awareness and engaging the public, as identified in the Strategic Plan. All events and exhibitions must either be sponsored by an MSP, a group of MSPs (e.g. Committee or Cross-Party Group) or by the SPCB – depending on the category of activity as set out in the remainder of this policy.

Categories of events and exhibitions

2. There are three main categories of events and exhibitions. These have been developed to take account of the different types of events and the size of the audience. In the main they use different spaces within the Parliament or the landscaped area.
3. The three categories are:
 - Member-focussed events / exhibitions - aimed primarily at raising awareness of MSPs. These will be mainly located in Garden Lobby / other Private Business areas / Committee Rooms / Members' Restaurant
 - Public events / exhibitions – aimed at the general public or people on a specific Parliament guest list. Exhibitions will be mainly located in the Main Hall, and major events may make use of the main spaces of the buildings, such as the Main Hall, Garden Lobby, and sometimes the Debating Chamber. The Debating Chamber is used only occasionally for those events that are deemed appropriate in the view of the Presiding Officer.
 - Landscape events / exhibitions - aimed at both the general public and MSPs. These will be located outside, mainly in the landscaped area at the front of the Parliament.

Planning Process

4. The Parliament's Events and Exhibitions Team has responsibility for advising on the planning and approval process for all events / exhibitions and managing successful delivery of any project. Public events / exhibitions, including those in the landscaped area, require the SPCB's approval.

5. The specific criteria to be considered in relation to each category of activity are set out below.

Member-Focussed events / exhibitions:

- Must be sponsored by an MSP, a group of MSPs, a Cross-Party Group, a Committee or the SPCB.
- May provide a specific perspective e.g. promoting a particular energy source, reflecting a sponsoring MSP's particular belief, interest or policy position, but must not be party political.
- Must clearly state the sponsoring MSP's name.
- Must meet the SPCB's operational terms and conditions for events/exhibitions.

In addition, the event/exhibition:

- must be related to parliamentary business (e.g. launch of a committee report)

or

- support MSPs in their parliamentary role (e.g. by helping inform/brief MSPs on a specific issue).

Public events / exhibitions:

- Must be sponsored by the SPCB as part of its annual Major Events and Exhibition Programme.
- Must be politically impartial and represent a balanced view.
- Must meet the SPCB's operational terms and conditions for events / exhibitions. The intention is that they would allow for individual MSPs or for a Committee to suggest a public event. These would be factored into the Events and Exhibitions Team advice to the SPCB.

In addition, a public event / exhibition must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- encourage and develop public awareness of and engagement with the Parliament and/or parliamentary processes (e.g. exhibition on parliamentary activity over a year, Festival of Politics, Doors Open Day)

or

- provide a platform for Scottish influence at home and abroad (e.g. Scotland Week Exhibition, Microsoft Government Leaders Forum and Carnegie events, Highland Year of Culture)

or

- promote significant historical, constitutional or cultural events / anniversaries with a clear link to democracy and / or the Scottish Parliament's history, role or work (e.g. Declaration of Arbroath, and Suffrage Movement Exhibitions, Treaty of Union exhibition).

Landscape events and exhibitions:

- Must be sponsored by the SPCB as part of its annual Major Events and Exhibition Programme.
- Must meet the Parliament's operational terms and conditions for events / exhibitions.
- Should by their nature / content be more suitable for the external landscaped area.

In addition, the landscaped event / exhibition:

- must meet at least one of the criteria for the public events / exhibitions category (above)

or

- support MSPs in their parliamentary role

or

- must offer an opportunity for Parliament to engage in and celebrate significant cultural, historical or tourism initiatives where these further support the parliamentary purpose of engaging audiences with the Parliament, and our role in Scottish national life.

Major Events and Exhibitions Programme

<u>Event</u>	<u>Venue</u>	<u>Host/Sponsor</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
Consular Corps' Burns Supper	The Holyrood Room	Presiding Officers	Annual
Business in the Parliament Dinner and Conference	Garden Lobby / Chamber	Presiding Officers	Annual
International Women's Day	Chamber	Presiding Officers	Annual
SEET Euroquiz	Chamber	Presiding Officers	Annual
Dewar Debate	Chamber	Presiding Officers	Annual
WPP Exhibition	Main Hall	SPCB	Annual
Festival of Politics	Various	SPCB	Annual
Edinburgh International Culture Summit	Various	SPCB	Biennial
Poppyscotland Reception	Garden Lobby	Presiding Officers	Annual
Scottish Older People's Assembly	Chamber	Presiding Officers	Session
Scottish Youth Parliament Sitting	Various	Presiding Officers	Biennial
Remembrance Day Commemorations	Garden Lobby	Presiding Officers and Party Leaders	When it falls on a business day
St Andrew's Weekend	Various	SPCB	Annual
Scottish Public Sector Awards	Garden Lobby	Presiding Officers	Annual
Hanukkah Lighting Ceremony and Reception	Main Hall or Garden Lobby	Presiding Officers	Annual
Carol Service	Garden Lobby	Presiding Officers	Annual

In addition to the above the Events and Exhibitions Team also develop and deliver a number of Family Days throughout the year in partnership with external organisations for example Edinburgh Science Festival.

[Public Engagement Strategy – Session 6](#)

CURRENT GUIDANCE FOR MEMBER-SPONSORED EVENTS

General

1. The following is a guide to Members, their staff and external organisations involved in the organisation of a Member-sponsored event or photo call at the Scottish Parliament.

2. An event is a meeting or gathering of people that is not a meeting of the full parliament, a committee meeting or an ordinary internal or private meeting, but that uses the committee rooms, meeting rooms, any of the public spaces, the Garden Lobby, Members' Lobby, the Members' Room, the Chamber Conference Room or the Landscaped Gardens and requires the services of the Events and Exhibitions Team to facilitate it for example visitor registration, booking audio visual equipment, hospitality etc. All Members will be invited to attend a Member-sponsored event.

3. Member-sponsored events must be related to parliamentary business e.g. launch of a Committee report or support Members in their parliamentary role by, for example helping inform/brief Members on a specific issue. They may provide a specific perspective e.g. promoting a particular energy source, reflecting a sponsoring Member's interest or policy position, but must not be party political e.g. a constituency Branch meeting of a political party could not be held in the Scottish Parliament.

4. The Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016 came into force on 12 March 2018. Host organisations and event guests should check if the organisation they represent is, or needs to be, registered on the Scottish Parliament's Lobbying Register prior to attendance. Any regulated lobbying (as defined under the Act) is legally required to be recorded through the submission of online Information Return(s) on the Lobbying Register. Organisations can examine and search this public register; check eligibility requirements; consult guidance and register their organisation where required, all at www.lobbying.scot. The Lobbying Register Team can also help you with any further questions. Please email lobbying@parliament.scot or call 0131 348 5408.

5. No Member-sponsored events can take place at the same time as plenary or during parliamentary recesses.

6. However, in the instances where business is running late, guests attending events in the Members' Room or committee rooms can attend their events with refreshments being served as planned but no speeches can take place until parliamentary business has concluded. Guests attending an event in the Garden Lobby will remain in the Main Hall where refreshments can be served if agreed until parliamentary business has concluded when they will be accompanied through to the Garden Lobby for the start of the event and speeches.

7. This guidance should be read alongside the general policy for booking meeting accommodation on the intranet.

Members' responsibilities as the event sponsor

8. An Event and Exhibition Request Form must be agreed and checked by Members or a nominated member of their staff on their behalf before it is submitted to the Events and Exhibitions Team thus ensuring that all parties are signed up to the event request before parliamentary resources are committed to the planning process.

9. By signing the Event and Exhibition Request Form, Members are confirming that they consider that the event fits the agreed criteria and conditions for events in the parliament, and that they will be in attendance for the duration of the event. It will continue to be possible for an event to be sponsored by more than one Member. Such events will require only one of those Members to be present.

10. Members or a nominated member of their staff authorised by them will be responsible for issuing invitations to other Members to attend the event.

11. Members or a nominated member of their staff authorised by them will be responsible for signing off the completed Event Plan and agreeing the guest list for the event in consultation with the external organisations to ensure that they are happy with the content and proposed balance of those invited to the event they are sponsoring in the Parliament.

Book launches

12. Accommodation may be booked to launch any book written by a Member. Members may also book accommodation to launch books written by other authors, provided they fall within the following categories:

- anthologies of Members' speeches and extracts from their diaries authorised by the Member or their family
- biographies of former Members of the Parliament authorised by the Member or their family
- books commissioned by or on behalf of the SPCB

and that the sale of books at any of the above launches is permitted.

Photocalls

13. There are two slots available for photocalls one on Wednesday lunchtime and one on Thursday lunchtime. Photocalls can take place either on the right hand side of the Garden Lobby stairs (as you descend) or in the Members' Garden.

14. Information about the photocalls will appear in the weekly Events and Exhibitions Bulletin so all Members would be aware of what is happening when.

15. All organisations wishing to hold a Member-sponsored photocall should complete the current Event and Exhibition Request Form, securing Member sponsorship and making sure that the photocall meets criteria for Member-sponsored events and exhibitions in that they seek to raise awareness of a particular organisation or its work and engage with Members. Members would be invited to attend the photocall by the sponsoring Member as they are for Member-sponsored events. The Events and Exhibitions Team will then liaise with the organisation on your behalf and take forward the arrangements.

Events and Exhibitions Team

16. The completed Event and Exhibition Request Form should be submitted to the Events and Exhibitions Team for approval. Once approved the Events and Exhibitions Team will inform the Member(s) directly and will allocate a dedicated Events Officer to manage all aspects of the organisation directly with the external organisations keeping Members updated as necessary. The Events Officer will act as a single point of contact for Members and the external organisations.

17. The Events Officer will make the necessary room bookings, send an Events Pack to the external organisations which contains an organiser's guide, hospitality options, Information for Guests and information on each of the venues and invite them to attend a site visit. All the documents can be found on the Events and Exhibitions pages on the Scottish Parliament's website.

18. Once the site visit is agreed the Events Officer will inform the Member so they can attend the meeting if they wish. Following the site visit and receipt of the booking forms the Events Officer will draft an Event Plan which will be sent to both the Member and the external organisation to be agreed.

External organisations' responsibilities

19. For general queries and guidance on events, the Events and Exhibitions Team will be the main contact for external organisations. However, before the Team can discuss the event in detail the external organisation must secure a Member to sponsor their event.

20. No external organisation apart from the Scottish Government may be sponsored by Members for more than two events in any 12 month period.

21. External organisations will meet the costs in full for all services contracted from the Scottish Parliament and its suppliers within 30 days of the date of the invoice. The Events Officer will notify external organisations of these costs prior to the event and agree them. If the external organisations dispute part of an invoice, they must still pay the undisputed part within the 30 days.

22. External organisations will also be responsible for liaising with the sponsoring Member on the guest list and agreeing it with their sponsor. All external invitations that are issued must clearly state that the event is being hosted/sponsored by a named Member in the opening paragraph. External organisations should not invite other Members directly, these invitations should be issued by the sponsoring Member or a nominated member of their staff authorised by them.

23. External organisations should be aware that by nature of the fact that the event is being held in Scottish Parliament it will be open for all Members to attend if they so wish.

Lead in times for events

24. The Events and Exhibitions Team will where possible always endeavour to deliver events on the first choice of date however owing to the high level of demand we recommend that Members and external organisations should be planning between four and six months ahead.

25. Events will be allocated up to 12 months in advance.