



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Major Events and Exhibitions Programme 2024-25

21 December 2023

Reference: SPCB (2023) Paper 82

Executive summary

1. This Paper seeks the SPCB's agreement to the proposed programme of major events and exhibitions for 2024-25.

Background

2. In October 2022, the SPCB agreed that all future major events and exhibitions held at the Scottish Parliament be reviewed and aligned with the Parliament's Public Engagement Strategy for Session 6. They further agreed that to ensure a balance between the delivery of Member-sponsored events and exhibitions and major events and exhibitions that makes the most effective use of resources and assists us to successfully achieve the Public Engagement Strategy that there would be no more than six major events and exhibitions annually (in addition to the Festival of Politics and Presiding Officer hosted receptions and dinners).
3. In February 2023, using this approach, the SPCB agreed the major events and exhibitions programme for 2023-24 and so far, this is working well with the overall programme delivering against the aims and objectives of the Parliament's Public Engagement Strategy. Two events that have already taken place this year - Scotland's Women GATHER in June and the recent Summit to mark International Day of Persons with Disabilities in November - have both delivered against and supported the Parliament's Public Engagement Strategy by breaking down barriers and increasing the knowledge and confidence of new audiences to engage with us. Under the previous arrangements, it would

not have been possible to deliver these new events in addition to the recurring annual events.

4. As agreed, once the SPCB had approved the major events and exhibitions programme for 2023-24, parliamentary officials met with all the organisations that had proposed events or exhibitions and for those that were not included in the programme, alternatives were offered where appropriate. For example, Scottish Environment Link were - with support from parliamentary officials - able to take forward their proposal as an outdoor exhibition showcasing the work undertaken by Members and committees to protect and restore threatened and iconic species and habitats; and the Deputy Presiding Officer participated on the judging panel for the Law Society of Scotland's 2023 Dewar Debate held outwith the Scottish Parliament. The Law Society of Scotland also partnered with the Festival of Politics on a panel session.
5. Over the year, parliamentary officials have met with all the previous unsuccessful and successful proposals for the 2023-24 programme and with a number of other organisations proposing a major event or exhibition as part of the 2024-25 major events and exhibitions programme. Following these discussions, five of the previous external organisers submitted proposals for consideration as part of the 2024-25 major events and exhibitions programme. Parliamentary officials have also received an additional four proposals for major events and two proposals for major exhibitions as part of the 2024-25 programme.
6. Running in parallel to the annual major events and exhibitions programmes there will be between 320 and 340 Member-sponsored events, briefings and exhibitions attended by over 25,000 guests annually.

Issues and options

7. Parliamentary officials reviewed ten proposals for major events and exhibitions for the 2024-25 programme. The ten proposals are set out below. When pulling together the overall programme of major events and exhibitions for 2024-25, parliamentary officials not only consider the individual proposals but also the overall programme to ensure individually and collectively the programme aligns with and delivers against the Parliament's Public Engagement Strategy. For the 2024-25 programme, parliamentary officials have also taken account of the resources already committed to support the Parliament's 25th anniversary programme of events and activities, including not hosting the World Press Photo exhibition in 2024.
8. As previously agreed by the SPCB the annual programme of major events and exhibitions will include two annual major events - the Carol Service and the Consular Corps' Burns Supper - as both these events are important dates in the Parliament's and Members' calendars.

9. As mentioned above we reviewed ten proposals for major events and exhibitions for the 2024-25 programme as follows. Some information on the proposals is included below.

Scottish Community Alliance (May/June 2024)
Business in the Parliament Conference (June 2024)
Euroquiz (June 2024)
Donald Dewar Memorial Debate (June 2024)
Eric Liddell 100 exhibition (July and August 2024)
The Gugging Artists from Austria exhibition (July and August 2024)
British Irish Parliamentary Assembly (September 2024)
Scottish Youth Parliament autumn sitting (October/November 2024)
Scottish Older People's Assembly (February 2025)
International Women's Day (March 2025)

Scottish Community Alliance (May/June 2024)

10. Proposal from the Scottish Community Alliance to hold a one-day event at the Scottish Parliament for up to 330 delegates from the Alliance's 26 networks along with representatives of various stakeholders who support and fund the community sector along similar lines as the event they held at the Parliament in 2013.

Business in the Parliament Conference (June 2024)

11. Proposal from the Parliament's Economy and Fair Work Committee in partnership with the Scottish Government for the 16th Business in the Parliament Conference to be held at the Scottish Parliament on Thursday 13 and Friday 14 June 2024.

Euroquiz (June 2024)

12. Proposal from Scottish European Educational Trust – an independent, non-political charity – to hold the national final of the annual Euroquiz competition for primary 6 pupils from across Scotland in the Debating Chamber on Monday 10 June 2024.

Donald Dewar Memorial Debate (June 2024)

13. Proposal from Law Society of Scotland to hold the 2024 Donald Dewar Memorial Debate Tournament Final in the Debating Chamber of the Scottish Parliament in June 2024. The annual debate is aimed at secondary pupils between S1 and S6 across Scotland.

Eric Liddell 100 (July and August 2024)

14. Proposal from The Eric Liddell Community for an exhibition in the Parliament's Main Hall to recognise and celebrate the life, sporting and community service achievements of one of Scotland's most iconic figures.

The Gugging Artists from Austria exhibition (July and August 2024)

15. Proposal from Falling Up Together for an exhibition in the Parliament's Main Hall that will explore how practising art and creativity can be a crucial part of a lifestyle or recovery from mental illness through displaying at least ten paintings from Museum Gugging in Austria, by Gugging artists.

British Irish Parliamentary Assembly (September 2024)

16. Proposal from the Deputy Presiding Officer to host the 2024 autumn plenary of the British Irish Parliamentary Assembly at the Scottish Parliament as part of the Parliament's 25th anniversary programme.

Scottish Youth Parliament autumn sitting (October/November 2024)

17. Proposal from the Scottish Youth Parliament – as part of the working partnership between the Scottish Parliament and the Scottish Youth Parliament – to hold their autumn 2024 sitting at the Parliament over two days at the end of October / beginning of November along similar lines to the last sitting in 2017.

Scottish Older People's Assembly (February 2025)

18. Proposal from the Scottish Older People's Assembly to hold their annual Assembly at the Scottish Parliament in the Debating Chamber in spring 2025. The Assembly - with over 50 membership organisations - exists to give a strong voice to older people about their experience of life in Scotland, their challenges and concerns, and to celebrate the positive contribution that older people make to society.

International Women's Day (March 2025)

19. Proposal from Scottish Women's Convention to hold an event at the Scottish Parliament on Saturday 8 March 2025 - International Women's Day 2025 - that

will engage with a diverse group of women of all ages and backgrounds from across Scotland with Members.

Major events and exhibitions programme 2024-25

20. When considering the individual proposals, parliamentary officials also consider the overall programme as well as timings for the major events and exhibitions before agreeing the programme for 2024-25. For this year, parliamentary officials are also cognisant of the 25th anniversary programme of events and activities. In addition, if the Carol Service and Burns Supper are included in the annual programme – for the reasons previously discussed and agreed with the SPCB – that only leaves four slots to be allocated across the ten proposals.
21. Hosting the British Irish Parliamentary Assembly supports the Parliament's International strategy by developing relationships with UK and Irish legislatures and will be part of the Parliament's 25th anniversary programme of events and activities. However, if the British Irish Parliamentary Assembly is approved as part of the overall programme, the Parliament's International Relations Office will provide support to the Events and Exhibitions Team to deliver this major event which on this occasion would release resources to support another major event towards the end of the 2024-25 programme.
22. The proposals all support the aims and objectives of the Parliament's Public Engagement Strategy to varying degrees either by increasing the reach of the Parliament's engagement or increasing the knowledge and confidence of people to engage with us. Whilst some of the proposals were not able to be accommodated as part of the major events and exhibitions programme for 2023-24, they have taken place at the Scottish Parliament for a number of years and as such we are not recommending them for the 2024-25 programme as we could look at accommodating them in future years, particularly where organisers have committed to ensuring more diversity and inclusion to help align with the Public Engagement Strategy.
23. Although there will be no major public exhibitions as part of the 2024-25 major events and exhibitions programme, parliamentary officials are currently exploring the possibility of borrowing part of an existing exhibition from the Fundació Enric Miralles for display in the Main Hall to mark the Scottish Parliament building's 20th anniversary in October 2024. The exhibition would explore the creative approach that Enric Miralles brought to designing the Scottish Parliament building, looking at the Parliament architectural design in the context of Miralles' architectural legacy. There would be long-term benefits of this partnership in terms of our knowledge and public interpretation – via tours and the Main Hall exhibition - of the Scottish Parliament building and of Miralles-designed furniture and architectural models owned by the SPCB.

24. Considering all the above, parliamentary officials propose that the 2024-25 major events and exhibitions programme include Business in the Parliament Conference (June 2024); British Irish Parliamentary Assembly (September 2024) on the basis outlined above; Scottish Youth Parliament autumn sitting (October/November 2024); Scottish Older People's Assembly (February 2025); and International Women's Day (March 2025). The overall programme will, we believe, deliver against the aims and objectives of the Public Engagement Strategy and importantly will assist us in breaking down barriers and increase the diversity of those engaging with us.
25. From past experience, the last couple of weeks of parliamentary business in the run-up to summer recess tend to very busy with the likelihood of late sittings which can mean Member-sponsored events have to be cancelled and rescheduled at short notice. In addition next year, a number of parliamentary teams will also be very busy at that time delivering the Business in the Parliament Conference in mid-June and the major event to mark the Parliament's 25th Anniversary we are therefore recommending that no Member-sponsored events or exhibitions take place the last fortnight of June.
26. If agreed by the SPCB, the programme of major events and exhibitions for 2024-25 will be as set out in **Annex A**. This programme still provides capacity overall for additional Presiding Officer receptions to be added to the programme as, and when, appropriate for example the annual PoppyScotland reception and the Scottish Public Service Awards.
27. In regards the other proposals, parliamentary officials will work with organisers to either suggest Member-sponsored events or exhibitions or look at incorporating some of their suggestions within the Festival of Politics programme, where appropriate, but also look at programming them in future years. Given the partnership working proposed for 2024 with the Law Society of Scotland in advance of the 25th anniversary of the Donald Dewar memorial debate in June 2025 we would recommend including this major event in the 2025-26 programme.

The SPCB is asked to consider this and to agree the proposed programme for major events and exhibitions for 2024-25 as set out in Annex A; and that no Member-sponsored events or exhibitions take place during the last fortnight of June.

Resource Implications

28. All of these events are budgeted for within the Corporate Events and Exhibitions budget for 2024-25 as part of the 2024-25 budgeting round.

29. The SPCB is asked to note that any event proposals that use the Debating Chamber are likely to involve disruption to the Public Guided Tours Programme and potentially public access although parliamentary events will work with colleagues to ensure impact is minimal.

Publication Scheme

30. This Paper and annex can be published once all major events and exhibitions have been publicised.

Next steps

31. If the SPCB approves the major events and exhibitions programme for 2024-25 - as set out in **Annex A** - parliamentary officials will take forward all the necessary planning and organisation, liaising with all external partners as necessary. Parliamentary officials will also work with the other proposals suggesting Member-sponsored events and exhibitions as appropriate.

Decision

32. The SPCB is asked to consider this Paper and Annex and agree the programme of major events and exhibitions for 2024-25 as set out in **Annex A** and that no Member-sponsored events or exhibitions take place the last fortnight of June 2024.

Events and Exhibitions Team

December 2023

Major Events and Exhibitions Programme 2024-25

This programme includes the Festival of Politics and Presiding Officer receptions.

<u>Date/Month</u>	<u>Event / Exhibition</u>	<u>Location</u>
Thursday 13 and Friday 14 June	Business in the Parliament Conference	DC
Saturday 29 June	25 th Anniversary event	Various
w/b 19 August	Festival of Politics 2024	Various
Sunday 15 to Tuesday 17 September	British Irish Parliamentary Assembly	DC/HR
Wednesday 30 October	PoppyScotland Reception	GL
Thursday 31 October to Saturday 2 November	Scottish Youth Parliament autumn sitting	DC
December	Scottish Public Service Awards	GL
Wednesday 18 December	Carol Service	GL/MH
Wednesday 22 January	Consular Corps' Burns Supper	GL/HR
February	Scottish Older People's Assembly	DC/CR
Saturday 8 March	International Women's Day	DC/GL