

## **Update Report on Midfest 2013**

Report by Mary Smith, Director of Education, Communities and Economy

### **1. Purpose of Report**

On 27 August 2013 Cabinet noted the progress made for the planning of Midfest, a county-wide festival of arts, culture and music to be held during 21-28 September 2013.

In line with recommendations approved by Cabinet at this meeting, this report provides a summary of the outcomes from Midfest 2013.

### **2. Progress update**

Midfest ran from 21-29 September 2013, showcasing the wealth of artistic talent across the creative spectrum within Midlothian and from further afield. What started as a Council initiative became a cross-community endeavour in which local people helped shape and participate the programme of events.

Over 60 events were hosted under the Midfest programme, including music, art workshops and exhibitions, drama, comedy and storytelling. The programme avoided prescriptive rules on event types or themes, aiming to be as inclusive as possible and promote the involvement of local organisations and in some cases afforded communities the opportunity to host events that they would not normally have booked. The events covered a wide range of interests and skills and included:

- 38 musical performances including jazz, folk, blues, choral, soul and drumming
- 8 craft workshops which include arts, printmaking, feltmaking and weaving
- 10 talks/storytelling events including literature and cultural discussions and interactive sessions in schools and libraries with children, and a ghost tour of Dalkeith
- 11 art exhibitions with a range of exhibitors including sculptors, painters, weavers, glass makers
- 1 film night
- 1 comedy night

Over 20 of the events were undertaken on a voluntary basis from a range of community participants including local churches, village halls, folk groups, bands, artists and authors.

Over 35 venues were involved, including schools, libraries, village halls, care homes, Melville Castle and the National Mining Museum. 77% of events were provided by project partners and local organisations from within Midlothian.

Stakeholder engagement from across Midlothian communities remained strong throughout, including Dalkeith Country Park, Penicuik Arts Association, Rosslyn Chapel and the Pathhead Music Collective.

The full Evaluation Report is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

### **3. Midfest 2014**

It was agreed at Cabinet on 27<sup>th</sup> August 2013 that consideration would be made to hosting Midfest 2014 and to support an application to Creative Scotland. The Council has now met with Creative Scotland who recommended an appropriate funding stream to apply to and a work placement student from Queen Margaret University has volunteered to help support this activity.

On the basis of the feedback outlined in Appendix 1 it is recommended that, subject to appropriate funding being sourced, the Cabinet endorses Midfest 2014 and to continue to work with local communities to develop a varied programme. The Midlothian Tourism Forum, Dalkeith Country Park, Melville Castle and Rosslyn Chapel have all confirmed their desire to be involved in future art festivals – see Appendix 2.

### **4. Report Implications**

#### **4.1 Resource implications**

The Council contributed both in-kind and cash contributions to support the inaugural year. This was to facilitate:

- Branding, programming and promotional activity
- Hosting of events
- Developing partnerships
- Infrastructure costs
- Artist and professional fees

#### **Cash income and expenditure**

<b>Income</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>£</b>
Ticket Sales	4,397	Artist fees	7,710
Stalls	570	Opening event	4,012
Donations	500	Publicity	2,813
		Sundry expenses	156
Total	5,467		14,691

As previously documented, the residual difference amounting to £9,224 has been funded by a number of Councillor's Ward Environment Revenue funds.

When establishing this festival, the aim was to ensure as many communities as possible benefitted from arts events and equalities were assured in the outreach activity. The intention was not for the ticket sales to meet the artists' fees as some elements were subsidised or provided without charge to ensure this aim was met.

In addition, all of the self-managed events were provided utilising volunteer time and host venues did not charge Midfest: under 10% of the events were staffed by Council personnel and there was a significant contribution in time from all local communities where events took place. The financial contribution was therefore more than the sum of the cash costs outlined above.

#### **4.2 Risk**

Appropriate arrangements were made to mitigate risk.

#### **4.3 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation**

Partners of the Community Planning Partnership were engaged with Midfest. In addition support was provided by the Midlothian Tourism Forum and local businesses, in addition to Queen Margaret University who provided a number of opportunities for students to take part in a volunteering and performing capacity.

#### **4.4 Impact on Performance and Outcome**

The event was successful in raising the profile of Midlothian and attracted visitors from across the Lothians. Further details are contained in the evaluation report.

#### **4.5 Involving Communities and other Stakeholders**

Stakeholder engagement from across Midlothian communities remained strong throughout, including Dalkeith Country Park, Penicuik Arts Association, Rosslyn Chapel and the Pathhead Music Collective.

#### **4.6 Ensuring Equalities**

Appropriate arrangements were undertaken to promote equality.

#### **4.7 Supporting Sustainable Development**

This report does not impact on sustainable development.

### **5 IT issues**

There are no IT issues arising from this report.

## **6 Summary**

Cabinet is asked to note the evaluation of Midfest 2013.

## **7 Recommendations**

Cabinet is recommended to:-

- a) Note the evaluation of Midfest 2013 including the financial summary.
- b) Support Midfest 2014, subject to funding being secured.
- c) Provide an update to Cabinet on progress made by May 2014.

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Background Papers:

Report to Cabinet dated 28 May 2013

Report to Cabinet dated 27 August 2013