

Events Scrutiny Commission Draft Report

October 2019

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Foreword by the Chair of the Commission

Commissions are one of the tools that councillors can use to examine a problem in depth. These are often policy or service development issues. They allow us to read research, gather evidence and take time to make recommendations.

The use of Lambeth's parks and open spaces for commercial gain needed a more considered examination from different perspectives and the commission has allowed us to do that.

In scoping the commission, I found there was much discussion about the criticisms of commercial activity but none of the possible and, in some cases, realised benefits of having events in local communities.

These recommendations are the result of mine and my fellow councillors' research and discussions. I am very thankful to them for their time, the input of their ideas and valuable experience.

Similarly, to the members of the community and commercial organisers who gave us their ideas and time.

Finally thanks to Democratic Services and in particular Gary O'Key whose research skills and focus supported the commission to reach timely conclusions.



Mary Atkins

Councillor, Tulse Hill ward and Commission Chair

List of Recommendations

CLARITY, TRANSPARENCY AND CONSISTENCY

Recommendation 1

The Council's Events Strategy should include a clear statement of intended outcomes in relation to both the public and commercial event operators

Recommendation 2

There should be a clear link between the Events Strategy and other relevant council policies including on economic development, environmental impact, equalities, health and wellbeing, culture, parks and tourism

Recommendation 3

The process by which event organisers apply to the Council to hold major commercial events in the borough should be simple and transparent, and should encourage long term relationships

Recommendation 4

Every major event should have a published benefits statement. This should include details of financial benefits to the Council and how this is to be spent; employment/apprenticeship/work experience opportunities created; economic benefits for local businesses; grants to community groups or other such local organisations; benefits to local schools/young people; details of free or concessionary ticket arrangements and any other benefits. These should be auditable and reviewed after the event to ascertain the degree to which planned benefits have been realised

Recommendation 5

Every major event should have a corresponding impact statement (including environmental and community impact) published within four months of the event, in order that these can be analysed and actions taken to reduce impacts for future events

HEALTH, WELLBEING AND CULTURE

Recommendation 6

Event organisers should be encouraged to open up event sites outside the main event schedule to enable target groups such as young and economically disadvantaged residents to stage performances or gain other positive experiences using the event infrastructure. It is suggested this is organised via appropriate organisations such as the Lambeth Music Service

Recommendation 7

Event organisers should be urged to make grants available to community groups as part of their benefits packages in order to offset the damage and lack of access to parks. Any such grants should have robust and transparent governance processes and grants should be paid in full within three months of the event. Consideration should be given to the Council establishing a single funding pot and for grants to be made by an appropriate grant giver rather than the event providers themselves

ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS BENEFITS

Recommendation 8

The Council should seek to maximise employment, apprenticeship and work experience opportunities via benefits packages negotiated with event providers. It is suggested that key stakeholders such as Business Improvement Districts, schools and higher education institutions in the borough be invited to contribute to developing a model to achieve this, taking into account the Council's employment and skills strategies and initiatives

Recommendation 9

The Council should encourage event organisers to work closely with businesses to maximise local trading around major events, via such mechanisms as Business Improvement Districts and/or other business forums

ACCESSIBILITY, EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Recommendation 10

The Council should conduct accessibility audits of the borough's parks and use these to produce corresponding action plans. Revenue from major events should then be used to improve accessibility by undertaking actions identified

Recommendation 11

Every effort should be made to ensure major events held in Lambeth are as culturally and financially inclusive as possible. This could include both the event programmes themselves and mechanisms to allow economically disadvantaged residents to attend by way of free or concessionary ticket schemes

REDUCING ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Recommendation 12

Environmental audits should be carried out and published in relation to all major events

Recommendation 13

Event providers should adhere to the highest environmental standards (e.g. in relation to recycling, single-use plastics and carbon emissions). In particular providers should act in accordance with Lambeth's corporate environmental aims as set out in the report [Lambeth's Response to the Climate Emergency](#) (and associated Carbon Reduction Action Plan), as well as demonstrating their commitment to the principle of a low carbon circular economy, as per the Mayor of London's [Draft London Plan \(July 2019\)](#). Consideration should be given to an organiser's track record and willingness to draw upon best practice examples in this regard when deciding which events to approve

COMMUNICATION AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Recommendation 14

Clear communication strategies should be published in advance of major events, detailing how communications with all stakeholders are to be managed

Recommendation 15

A flow chart outlining the various steps in the event application procedure should be produced and published for all major events. This should include key dates and explanatory notes on procedures where required (e.g. licensing and planning)

Recommendation 16

A guide should be produced setting out the role of local councillors in the events process

Introduction

- 1.1 The Events Scrutiny Commission was established in autumn 2018 following the submission of a proposal by Councillor Mary Atkins, who chaired the commission. This was approved by the Overview & Scrutiny chair and vice chairs soon after, whereupon three more Members – Councillors Nigel Haselden, Philip Normal and Becca Thackray – were appointed.
- 1.2 The commission's key aims were to consider the context of major commercial events in parks and open spaces, investigate the community benefits that are, or could be, delivered via such events held in the borough, and explore how these can be maximised and made more inclusive.
- 1.3 The commission scope, which outlines the core questions Members were seeking to answer and the resultant terms of reference, is attached at Annex B.
- 1.4 The commission held seven meetings over an eight month period. This began with a briefing with officers and the Cabinet Member to explore the plans for a refresh of the Council's Events Strategy, how the benefits realisation process worked currently and how the commission could best add value. Members then went on to consider a range of research evidence including regional and national reports on parks and events, as well as information from officers on the events held in Lambeth since the introduction of the current Events Strategy in 2016, before planning and staging a consultation session to which a variety of key external stakeholders were invited to give their views on current procedures and potential improvements. Finally the commission met to draw together the evidence received and consider its findings.
- 1.5 Throughout the process Members aimed to provide scrutiny and challenge while also influencing the direction of policy development by working collaboratively with officers. The commission wishes to put on record its gratitude to the officers involved, as well as the Cabinet Member, whose time, expertise and constructive engagement were crucial to the outputs described below.
- 1.6 In response to the evidence gathered, the commission has formulated a set of recommendations. These are included in the appropriate sections of the main body of the report below and are also compiled above, for ease of reference.

Background

- 2.1 Lambeth is recognised as having some of the best green spaces in London, with 16 of the borough's parks, open spaces and cemeteries having received Green Flag awards in July 2019 – ranging from Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens in the north, through Clapham Common and Brockwell Park, to West Norwood Cemetery in the south. The borough achieved similar success at the London in Bloom Awards in September 2019, where it picked up five Gold awards, including three for Brockwell Park. Lambeth was also the third highest scoring of all London boroughs in the *Good Parks for London 2018* report, which assesses parks across a variety of criteria, including public satisfaction; events;

health, fitness and wellbeing; and supporting nature. As well as such national and regional recognition they are also a big hit with locals, with parks and open spaces being third on the list of issues that matter most to residents – behind only public transport and clean streets – in the most recent Residents' Survey.

- 2.2 As well as being much-needed natural havens from the bustling city streets, parks play a vital role in both physical and mental health and wellbeing. A 2018 report from Fields in Trust attempts to quantify this across the UK and concludes that *“the wellbeing value associated with the frequent use of local parks and green spaces is worth £34.2bn a year to the entire adult population”*. What's more, it goes on to explain how this positive impact is spread across demographics, helping to reduce health inequalities as well as increasing social cohesion.
- 2.3 These are uncertain times for park lovers, however, with sustained cuts to local authority budgets inevitably having an impact on the resources available to maintain green spaces to the standards to which residents have become accustomed. In a May 2019 press release, the Centre for London stated that London's local authority budgets had dropped by nearly a fifth (17%) per head over the last eight years, with inner London boroughs hit hardest. Furthermore, cultural activity budgets were among those worst affected, due in part, no doubt, to the fact that councils do not have a statutory duty to provide such services.
- 2.4 As well as the excellence of its parks and open spaces, Lambeth also has a rich cultural heritage, from the world famous South Bank Centre to Brixton Academy, and has a long tradition of staging music events and festivals. A report by the House of Commons Digital, Culture, Media & Sport [DCMS] Select Committee entitled *Live Music*, produced in 2019, stresses the impact of this sector on the local economy, stating that *“in 2017, 29.1m people attended concerts and festivals in the UK, a c.17% increase on the previous year. Moreover, the live music industry generated almost £1bn Gross Value Added for the UK economy and employed more than 28,000 people”*. It goes on to explain that, in addition to these economic benefits, it is important to acknowledge the social and cultural value that live music offers. It quotes the Mayor of London in highlighting that live music *“has the power to bring people close together and transform communities”* and opines: *“As an inherently social activity, live music offers unique benefits, especially for young people... in this way, live music offers a social alternative to the digital age”*.
- 2.5 Against this backdrop, commercial events in parks and open spaces have become increasingly important for local authorities across the country. Accordingly, such events have increased in number and scale in recent years. The Greater London Assembly Environment Committee's *Park Life* report (2017) sums this up, stating that *“commercial activity has become an increasingly important way of funding London's green spaces. The most visible increase has been in major events”*. It quotes London and Partners as saying that *“Commercial events have increased by over 20% in the last two years, with the fastest growth being in major events attended by 5,000 to 50,000 people”*. The Housing, Communities & Local Government [HCLG] Select Committee also touches on this in its *Public Parks* report, produced the same year – the committee, it says, *“understand(s) the importance of such events for income generation for local authorities,*

and for the local economy...[by contributing to] local culture, tourism, job creation, and supply chain benefits for local businesses”.

- 2.6 The circumstances described above have given rise to certain tensions, not just between different park users but around the concept of public assets being used for commercial gain. This has become particularly apparent in the last few years, with an increase in major events leading to a certain amount of criticism from some stakeholder groups. Such a situation is not confined to Lambeth; the aforementioned Public Parks report acknowledges that *“as with any shared asset, tensions can sometimes arise between different groups of park users or between different uses to which parks are put... [including] the impact on community access to parks, disruption or nuisance to local communities, and damage to the park during or after the event”*. However, it goes on to state that while striking the right balance between open access to parks and revenue-raising activities is challenging: *“it is necessary... Local Authorities are best placed to hold the ring against the demands of sectional interests”*. This position is also neatly summarised in *Park Life*: *“While these events may bring in much-needed income, [and] they can divide public opinion... we expect commercial activity in London’s green spaces is now here to stay”*.
- 2.7 It is for these reasons that the commission was established. Accepting, for the reasons outlined, that major commercial events in parks and open spaces are now a part of the landscape, and recognising the cultural and economic value they can bring, the commission seeks to explore how best to leverage maximum positive outcomes from such events in order that all sections of the community benefit from them.

The Local Policy Context: Lambeth Events Strategy and Borough Plan

- 2.8 Lambeth’s current Events Strategy dates from 2016 and covers the four year period to 2020. The strategy sets out a series of core aims including: to generate income; to protect local parks; to keep the Lambeth Country Show free; to support a diverse range of activities from small community events to major events; and to provide some certainty about the number of events residents and organisers could expect (including a cap on the number of major event days). In 2019 a review of the strategy was announced and a consultation was carried out to inform this. The commission’s work is designed to dovetail with, and complement, this review.
- 2.9 The commission chose to restrict its scope to major commercial events, since these are the ones that not only create the most public interest but also generate the most revenue – and therefore provide the greatest opportunity for benefits realisation. It should be noted that the definition of a major event can vary between authorities – the Lambeth Events Strategy classifies a “major event day” as one where the licensable capacity is more than 20,000 people at one time, but elsewhere the equivalent threshold is 10,000. Other approaches consider cumulative attendance as a factor. Given the context of the work, it is Lambeth’s definition that is used here, though the findings presented would apply equally should a different definition be chosen. There are two event spaces in the borough which have the capacity to host major events – Clapham Common and Brockwell Park. Eight events classified as ‘major’ have taken place since the approval of the 2016 strategy (as at October 2019).

- 2.10 The 2016 strategy saw the introduction of a Parks Investment Levy (PIL), charged on a per person per day basis. For major events the PIL stands at 50p. As the name suggests, this revenue stream goes towards upkeep and enhancement of the borough's parks and open spaces, including planting, refurbishment of existing furniture, new fencing or benches. The commission was advised that non-PIL income received by the Events service covers the costs of the team and creates a surplus for the General Fund – which in turn part funds the Lambeth Country Show and the Parks service. A recent departmental restructure has created a single Assistant Director post (Neighbourhoods) covering both the Parks and Events teams, aimed at achieving an appropriate balance between parks and income generation.
- 2.11 This work operates within the wider context of the Lambeth Borough Plan, which sets the Council and partners' overarching vision and priorities. The first iteration of the Plan, approved by Cabinet in 2016, has three core strategic priorities under which around 60 individual outcomes sit. These strategic priorities are: Inclusive Growth, Reducing Inequality, and Strong & Sustainable Neighbourhoods. The commission very much seeks to promote these outcomes by ensuring that income and benefits generated from events are spread across all sections of the community.
- 2.12 In July 2019, Cabinet approved a report outlining a review of the Borough Plan, reflecting the changing context in which the public sector operates. This put forward 20 new goals to replace the 60-plus previously used, in an effort to streamline and focus the number of outcomes. These include a number of goals which are aligned with the commission's aims, such as: *"We will encourage sustainable development and grow Lambeth's presence as a location for creative and digital industries, health and life sciences, business and financial services, and tourism"*; *"We will maintain attractive neighbourhoods with high quality leisure and cultural facilities that support and encourage healthier lifestyles"* (including increasing local leisure and cultural offers); and *"We will maintain Lambeth's award winning parks, and invest in a wider network of green spaces to support community activity and wellbeing"*.
- 2.13 In scoping its work, the commission sought information on the process by which benefits are currently determined and delivered and were told that these are largely down to negotiation on an event by event basis. This process has certainly yielded successes – for example, the £23,000 raised by donations to the community fund from Field Day/Mighty Hoopla in 2018, the work experience placements and employment or apprenticeship opportunities for local residents in the cultural and digital sector across a number of events, and the many free or discounted tickets made available for events such as Sunfall and Winterville.
- 2.14 What became clear, though, was that while there are pockets of good practice which have given rise to comprehensive benefits packages being delivered, equally there are cases where opportunities have been missed. The commission therefore seeks to provide a framework which enables a consistent and transparent approach under which benefits can be systematically maximised.

Consultation

- 2.15 In April 2019, following its initial desk-based research, the commission organised a consultation session to solicit the views of a variety of stakeholders as to how they believed the aims set out above could be best achieved. Invitees were selected by commission members, using their knowledge of the communities and organisations in the borough likely to have an interest in this area, and sought to ensure a variety of viewpoints were reflected. Around 60 invites were issued – ranging from Friends of Parks groups, Residents' Associations and schools' representatives, to employment organisations and those representing the interests of local businesses, as well as local councillors – and 36 people attended.
- 2.16 The session began with keynote speeches from Tony Leach, Chief Executive of Parks for London, who explained the context in which the commission was operating; Cllr Sonia Winifred, Cabinet Member for Equalities & Culture, on current practice in Lambeth and potential areas for improvement; and Dan Craig from Loudsound Ltd, who gave an insight into the perspective of event organisers and explained how his company approached community benefits. These were then followed by a series of round table group discussions focused on participants' personal experiences and their views on how Lambeth could improve the way in which it deals with benefits.
- 2.17 The commission was impressed by the breadth and depth of the stakeholder contributions at this consultation session, which offered considerable food for thought and were extremely valuable in shaping the final recommendations, and wishes to express its sincere gratitude to everyone who gave up their Saturday morning to contribute to the debate, as well as those officers without whose support the event would not have been possible. Key learning points from the session are reflected in the sections below as appropriate.

Section 1: Clarity, Transparency and Consistency

- 3.1 One of the key messages arising from the stakeholder session was the need for greater clarity, transparency and consistency in the way major events are dealt with in Lambeth. If all parties – residents, businesses, interest groups, event organisers – can be clear at the outset about what to expect and how the process will unfold, the commission believes this will help to reduce some of the tensions described above. This can also provide a well-defined basis for negotiations around benefits packages and how these are to be managed, removing some of the reliance on active ward councillor involvement and event-by-event negotiation which can give rise to inconsistent outcomes currently.
- 3.2 There will of course be circumstances where, for reasons of commercial confidentiality, full transparency is neither possible nor appropriate; however the commission believes that as a principle, clarity, transparency and consistency is a vital starting point. Documents such as the *Enfield Park Events Strategy 2017-2022* and Parks for London's *Outdoor Events Policy template for London boroughs* – which the commission understands Lambeth is considering adopting – provide examples as to how clear statements of the principles and vision of the strategy might be framed.
- 3.3 As noted in the introductory section, major events in parks and open spaces do not exist in a bubble. The interdependencies with areas such as health and wellbeing, economic development, environmental impact, equalities, culture, parks and tourism are many and varied. It is therefore important that the new Events Strategy not only explicitly recognises this but makes every attempt to align itself with related council strategies in these areas. Only in this way can a coherent and consistent approach to benefits realisation be achieved which supports, rather than working against, the council's overarching priorities.
- 3.4 One area in which clarity could be improved is in how the events application and approval process works from the organiser's perspective. The commission heard that Lambeth could be considered quite bureaucratic in this regard, and this could lead to frustrations and uncertainties in how to navigate the process. While understanding that a robust process needs to be followed, the commission believes there could be greater clarity and streamlining around this, and would again point to the Enfield Strategy as an example of good practice. This includes (as an appendix) a flow chart setting out the application process, which is clear and easy to follow.
- 3.5 In the evidence we heard there was a broadly consistent message from a variety of stakeholder perspectives that encouraging long term relationships between major event organisers and the council could be beneficial for a number of reasons. First, this would help organisers build relationships not only with the council officers and members who oversee and administer the application and approval process, but also with the local community, thereby encouraging responsible events which contribute to the local area. As well as building trust, such long term arrangements would be likely to give rise to cost savings for both the council and organiser. All of this would create an environment which would enable iterative improvements in how events are run to take place over several years, reflecting on learning and feedback from past events

and ensuring they are increasingly tailored for, and integrated into, the particular locality. This could be a major factor in tailoring benefits packages to maximise positive outcomes (for example, enabling sustained investment in local communities or bringing business benefits by way of synergies with smaller local venues). There would of course have to be appropriate safeguards, such as break clauses, to enable such long term arrangements to be terminated should they cease to be constructive (for example, if event organisers fail to adhere to agreements).

3.6 It follows from the above that if benefits packages are to evolve over time under long term agreements with event providers, each event requires a clear benefits statement setting out the financial and community benefits it provides, and how these are apportioned. This should be as comprehensive as possible and include measurable outcomes, such as the number of employment opportunities created for local residents, the amount of money pledged in community grants, or the number of free or discounted tickets made available (and how these are targeted). Publishing such a benefits statement would open up the process to public scrutiny and be a clear demonstration of the event's commitment to Lambeth (and, in particular, the community local to the park in question). Benefits statement audits can then provide a basis for how well managed and delivered such benefits packages have been, and how they might be improved for the next year.

3.7 Similarly, the commission recommends that impact statements are produced for each event in order that the overall impact can be properly assessed and, again, improvements can be made for future events.

Recommendation 1

The Council's Events Strategy should include a clear statement of intended outcomes in relation to both the public and commercial event operators

Recommendation 2

There should be a clear link between the Events Strategy and other relevant council policies including on economic development, environmental impact, equalities, health and wellbeing, culture, parks and tourism

Recommendation 3

The process by which event organisers apply to the Council to hold major commercial events in the borough should be simple and transparent, and should encourage long term relationships

Recommendation 4

Every major event should have a published benefits statement. This should include details of financial benefits to the Council and how this is to be spent; employment/apprenticeship/work experience opportunities created; economic benefits for local businesses; grants to community groups or other such local organisations; benefits to local schools/young people; details of free or concessionary ticket arrangements and any other benefits. These should be auditable and reviewed after the event to ascertain the degree to which planned benefits have been realised

Recommendation 5

Every major event should have a corresponding impact statement (including environmental and community impact) published within four months of the event, in order that these can be analysed and actions taken to reduce impacts for future events

Section 2: Health, Wellbeing and Culture

- 4.1 As noted above, one key driver of the commission was to try to spread benefits derived from major events more evenly. This includes opening up cultural and wellbeing opportunities to those who may feel they are not the target of – or even worse, that they are excluded from – the current programme of major events Lambeth offers (Section 4 explores these and related themes in more detail).
- 4.2 One particular initiative which caught the imagination of the commission was to establish some sort of mechanism to enable local residents – particularly young people and those who may feel ‘priced out’ of major events – to be able to make use of event infrastructure outside the main event schedule to gain positive cultural experiences (for example, to stage performances). This is something which was touched on by Dan Craig in his presentation at the stakeholder event, and the commission understands has operated previously in Hyde Park. Regrettably it has not been possible to establish further details as to exactly how this has worked in practice despite the commission’s efforts, but we are keen to see something similar attempted in Lambeth, perhaps via such specialist organisations as Lambeth Music Service and potentially involving educational establishments. This is something which could boost participants’ wellbeing and self-esteem, and is another measure which could help major events forge valuable links with the local community.
- 4.3 On top of this, the commission firmly supports the principle of event organisers being encouraged to operate a grant scheme as referenced in paragraph 2.13 above, not only to act as a form of compensation for the loss of amenity and the inconvenience caused by major events but once again as a means to ensure event providers invest in the local community, and wishes to see this become a key plank of benefits packages for all major events. However, while the principle of community grants is widely supported, the commission heard evidence at the stakeholder consultation session that there have been instances in the past where such grants, despite being promised, have not materialised. Clearly this is damaging for trust and only serves to exacerbate tensions.
- 4.4 For these reasons the commission recommends that any such grant schemes have robust governance processes (including being part of the benefits statement referred to in Recommendation 4) and are paid within a reasonable timescale (three months is suggested). In addition, the commission believes that grant schemes should be administered by an appropriate grant giver who can objectively assess applications, rather than event providers interfacing directly with local community groups, in order to ensure a layer of independence in the process.

Recommendation 6

Event organisers should be encouraged to open up event sites outside the main event schedule to enable target groups such as young and economically disadvantaged residents to stage performances or gain other positive experiences using the event infrastructure. It is suggested this is organised via appropriate organisations such as the Lambeth Music Service

Recommendation 7

Event organisers should be urged to make grants available to community groups as part of their benefits packages in order to offset the damage and lack of access to parks. Any such grants should have robust and transparent governance processes and grants should be paid in full within three months of the event. Consideration should be given to the Council establishing a single funding pot and for grants to be made by an appropriate grant giver rather than the event providers themselves

Section 3: Economic and Business Benefits

- 5.1 The potential for major events to contribute to the local economy is well recognised, as explored in the Background section above. That said, evidence we received from local business representatives at the stakeholder session painted a mixed picture, with some businesses saying their takings had increased when major events were being held locally, while others spoke – for various reasons, including the need for extra security and the effects of measures such as traffic management – of a detrimental effect. The commission believes local businesses can, and should, benefit from major events on their doorstep but it seems there is more to do to ensure the appropriate conditions are in place for this to happen consistently.
- 5.2 The starting point for this has to be closer working between event organisers and local businesses, including representative groups such as Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), to explore how to maximise the opportunities presented by an influx of thousands of potential patrons. This might include linked promotions, opportunities for traders to run stalls at events, or ticket selling arrangements with local businesses. The commission therefore recommends that the Council seeks to instigate mechanisms to ensure systematic engagement between event organisers and businesses in order that these potential benefits may be realised and spread as widely as possible.
- 5.3 Also, it is noted elsewhere in this report that the provision of employment, work experience and apprenticeship opportunities is one area where benefits packages derived from major events have borne fruit in the past. This is also a key plank of the council's social value aspirations. The commission endorses this but is keen to see more done in this regard, and again would like links to be established between event providers and local stakeholders such as education establishments and BIDs to enable this to happen systematically. Indeed, we understand one idea under consideration from a local BID is to establish an employment agency to link local people to employment opportunities at events, and very much support such efforts.

Recommendation 8

The Council should seek to maximise employment, apprenticeship and work experience opportunities via benefits packages negotiated with event providers. It is suggested that key stakeholders such as Business Improvement Districts, schools and higher education institutions in the borough be invited to contribute to developing a model to achieve this, taking into account the Council's employment and skills strategies and initiatives

Recommendation 9

The Council should encourage event organisers to work closely with businesses to maximise local trading around major events, via such mechanisms as Business Improvement Districts and/or other business forums

Section 4: Accessibility, Equality and Diversity

- 6.1 As alluded to above, accessibility was a particular theme of the feedback received by the commission at its consultation session. Given the high regard in which Lambeth's parks are held by the borough's residents, and the importance of green infrastructure to health, wellbeing and nature, it is little wonder that one of the main tensions caused by major events in parks centres on the lack of public access to parts of the park (or common) during the event, including set up and take down.
- 6.2 While the starting point for the commission – that major events in parks are here to stay – means that this issue will remain live, the commission believes that using revenue from events to make accessibility improvements to parks is a simple way in which such access issues could be offset. As a key aim of the commission's work is to explore how benefits from events can be more evenly spread to tackle inequality in the borough, this should focus particularly on meeting the needs of park users across equalities strands; if measures can be taken which will widen access to parks by encouraging those who do not normally use them to do so, the significant positive effect of park use on health and wellbeing described in paragraph 2.2 could be unlocked for many more residents. This might take a variety of forms, such as the creation of 'quiet corners', additional park gates, or adjustments such as tracking for wheelchairs.
- 6.3 In order to ascertain how revenue could be best spent for maximum effect in this area, the commission recommends that accessibility audits are carried out in relation to the borough's parks and open spaces which can lead to recommendations on the most appropriate measures to take. We understand that such audits have taken place on occasion in the past; however it may be necessary to update and widen these in order that decisions can be made based on the best possible evidence.
- 6.4 As well as physical access to parks, there have also been some concerns raised about economic accessibility (essentially, that ticket prices for major events exclude many people from being able to afford them). While recognising the commercial considerations that will guide decisions on price points, there are a number of instances where event organisers have made a certain amount of free or concessionary tickets available to local residents, such as Field Day/Mighty Hoopla, Sunfall and Winterville.
- 6.5 The commission applauds this concept but would like to see it rolled out to all major events in the borough, and better targeted towards particular groups such as young people, students and/or economically disadvantaged residents (we understand Winterville has made great strides in this area and would like to see others follow this example), in order that it becomes a staple of community benefits packages. Such offers would of course need to be properly thought out in terms of targeting and scheduling, particularly where schools are concerned, to make sure those targeted are likely to be able to attend the event (or part thereof) in question.
- 6.6 In addition to physical and economic accessibility, there is also a feeling that the events programme currently commissioned by the council tends to appeal to certain

demographics and may therefore attract particular groups more so than others, leading some residents to feel 'culturally excluded'. The commission would therefore like to see Lambeth make every effort to diversify the range of events it hosts, whilst appreciating the commercial environment in which promoters operate. We agree that major events can be a benefit in their own right to those who attend, often offering the opportunity to see artists of national importance perform in the local area, bringing communities together and offering "a social alternative to the digital age", as recognised in paragraph 2.4. Therefore we would like to see such benefits spread as widely as possible.

Recommendation 10

The Council should conduct accessibility audits of the borough's parks and use these to produce corresponding action plans. Revenue from major events should then be used to improve accessibility by undertaking actions identified

Recommendation 11

Every effort should be made to ensure major events held in Lambeth are as culturally and financially inclusive as possible. This could include both the event programmes themselves and mechanisms to allow economically disadvantaged residents to attend by way of free or concessionary ticket schemes

Section 5: Reducing Environmental Impacts

7.1 In January 2019, Lambeth became the first local authority in London to declare a climate emergency, in recognition of the growing evidence of the urgency of the existential threat to the planet posed by global warming, including the 2018 report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [IPCC]. This included a pledge to make the borough carbon neutral, or 'net zero', by 2030, taking into account both production and consumption emissions.

7.2 This pledge was followed by a July 2019 council report outlining *Lambeth's Response to the Climate Emergency*, which included a corporate carbon reduction plan for the authority's own operations together with plans to develop a similar strategy for the borough as a whole, including the establishment of a Citizens' Assembly. The Borough Plan refresh, announced the same month, set out as one of its goals: "*We will reduce our carbon emissions, significantly cut waste and encourage reuse by residents and businesses.*"

7.3 In light of this it is imperative that all work undertaken by the council takes account of the 2030 net zero target and works to support it. This includes the Events Scrutiny Commission. Such aspirations around environmental sustainability were strongly supported by the stakeholders we heard from.

7.4 If major events are to contribute to these efforts, the first step is ensuring environmental audits are produced and published in relation to each event, showing the environmental impacts and measures taken to mitigate or offset them. In the same way as the benefits and impact statements described in Section 1, this will provide a crucial evidence base to be able to assess how well (or otherwise) the major events taking place in Lambeth's parks and open spaces contribute to the borough's climate change aspirations.

7.5 There are many ways in which events can help to reinforce these efforts and provide environmental benefits, including eliminating single use plastics by making sure water fountains and reusable drinking vessels are available, generating power from cleaner sources, and working to ensure waste is not contaminated. Monmouthshire's *Green Gathering* sets a particularly good example in terms of the lengths the festival goes to in order to ensure environmental responsibility as outlined in its sustainability policy. Also, in addition to the *Lambeth's Response to the Climate Emergency* report referred to above, the Draft London Plan produced by the Mayor of London in July 2019 makes a number of references to the need to move to a circular economy where waste is minimised and the Council should pay regard to this emerging Plan when commissioning major events.

<p>Recommendation 12 Environmental audits should be carried out and published in relation to all major events</p>

Recommendation 13

Event providers should adhere to the highest environmental standards (e.g. in relation to recycling, single-use plastics and carbon emissions). In particular providers should act in accordance with Lambeth's corporate environmental aims as set out in the report [Lambeth's Response to the Climate Emergency](#) (and associated Carbon Reduction Action Plan), as well as demonstrating their commitment to the principle of a low carbon circular economy, as per the Mayor of London's [Draft London Plan \(July 2019\)](#). Consideration should be given to an organiser's track record and willingness to draw upon best practice examples in this regard when deciding which events to approve

Section 6: Communication and Stakeholder Engagement

- 8.1 The final section of our report in some senses comes full circle in that it reinforces the themes explored in Section 1 – in particular clarity and transparency – applying this specifically to communication and stakeholder engagement. A consistent theme of the feedback we received is that residents and local community groups sometimes feel they are not adequately consulted or informed at an appropriate level of detail when a proposed major event is making its way through the application process, and this risks breeding suspicion and animosity.
- 8.2 In order to counter this, the commission recommends that clear communication strategies be published in advance of major events in order that commitments and processes around communication can be well understood by all parties. The Parks for London *Outdoor Events Policy template for London Boroughs* sets out a clear set of steps that should be taken during the consultation process, including who should be involved at each stage, and it is suggested this could be adapted to suit local circumstances. The commission also endorses the flow chart approach used in the *Enfield Park Events Strategy* appendices as a clear and easy to understand way of setting out the various steps in the application process.
- 8.3 Finally, we come to the role of elected representatives and the need for democratic accountability. Local ward councillors have a key role to play throughout the event application and approval process, acting as an interface between their constituents and event organisers, balancing competing interests and reflecting back the views and concerns of residents and businesses (this also applies to post-event assessments). Securing their active engagement at an early stage, therefore, is crucial. As noted in the Background section, committed ward councillor involvement can make a huge difference when it comes to securing comprehensive benefits packages tailored to the needs of the local area; however it is clear that there are varying approaches taken by councillors in terms of engaging with the events process, and the commission therefore recommends that a guide be produced setting out the expectations of their role.

Recommendation 14

Clear communication strategies should be published in advance of major events, detailing how communications with all stakeholders are to be managed

Recommendation 15

A flow chart outlining the various steps in the event application procedure should be produced and published for all major events. This should include key dates and explanatory notes on procedures where required (e.g. licensing and planning)

Recommendation 16

A guide should be produced setting out the role of local councillors in the events process

Annex A: Acknowledgements

The Commission would like to thank all those who have contributed to its work, in particular the local residents and expert witnesses who have given up their time to attend meetings and provide evidence:

Jane Abraham (Lambeth Learning Disability Forum)
Maya Acevedo (Local resident)
Cllr Liz Atkins (Streatham Hill ward councillor / Overview & Scrutiny Committee Chair)
Dr Iain Boulton (Environmental Compliance Officer LBL)
Peter Bradley (Friends of Brockwell Park)
Cllr Linda Bray (Clapham Town ward councillor)
Maggie Brennan (Lambeth Learning Disability Forum)
Cllr Tim Briggs (Clapham Common ward councillor)
Cllr Marcia Cameron (Tulse Hill ward councillor/Brockwell Park Strategic Partnership Board)
Wayne Chandai (Democratic Services Manager LBL)
Jane Christofi (Clapham Manor School)
Dan Craig (Loudsound Ltd)
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Bayo Dosunmu (Strategic Director, Resident Services LBL)
Lara Edwards (Democratic Services Officer LBL)
Tim Fanucci (Event Productions Manager LBL)
Lee Fiorentino (Head of Events & Filming LBL)
Claire Horan (Senior Event Operations Officer LBL)
Rory Huston (Local resident)
Stephen Kearney (St Martin's TRA)
Irene Kimm (Thurlow Park SNP / Whytefield Estate Residents' Association)
Ann Kingsbury (Brockwell Park Community Partners)
Tony Leach (Chief Executive, Parks for London)
Jane Lyons (Herne Hill Forum)
Samuel Martin (Streamz)
Pauline Meehan (Local resident)
David Morris (Trinity Rise / Brockwell Park Gardens Residents' Association)
Zi Neil (Local resident)
Harry Niazi (Herne Hill Traders)
Olivia Pearcey (Event Operations Manager LBL)
Christine Scales (Local resident)
Eileen Smith (Clapham Manor School)
Michael Smith (Brixton BID)
Erica Tate (Parents Organising Play)
Marcus Weedon (Co-Founder, Field Day)
Dafydd Walters (Brockwell Gate Management Company)
Cllr Sonia Winifred (Cabinet Member for Equalities & Culture LBL)
Sophia Yates (Hootananny)

Annex B: Commission Scope

Commission Proposal and Scoping Template

Scrutiny Principles agreed by Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chair and Vice-Chairs

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Commissions it sponsors should as far as possible:

- *Be independent from the administration and stakeholders;*
- *Be accessible and inclusive of everyone in the borough;*
- *Enable decisions to be challenged constructively;*
- *Strive for better services that produce the best outcomes;*
- *Base its decisions and recommendations on the best evidence available;*
- *Follow up its recommendations.*

Commission members: Cllr Mary Atkins (Chair); Cllr Nigel Haselden, Cllr Philip Normal and Cllr Becca Thackray

Councillor(s) submitting proposal	Cllr Mary Atkins
Working title	Commercial events in parks and open spaces: how do we ensure they work for everyone?
Reason for inquiry and desired outcome	<p>There is scheduled to be a review of the Council’s Events Strategy in 2019. Several major events in Lambeth parks and open spaces during 2017-2018 resulted in public disquiet about the use of public spaces by commercial companies.</p> <p>The purpose of the scrutiny would be to:</p> <p>Consider the context of commercial events in parks, including: (i) the Council’s aspiration, as set out in the Borough Plan, to deliver cultural activities for everyone while keeping our parks and public spaces clean, well maintained and enjoyable for all; (ii) the potential of events to raise revenue to maintain and invest in the borough’s much loved green spaces and provide wider community benefits as local authority budgets are reduced.</p> <p>Collect evidence on whether promised benefits (including job opportunities, community grants, increased turnover for local business, investment in green spaces etc) have been realised.</p> <p>Explore how the process of agreeing events and determining benefits might be made more inclusive.</p> <p>Consider good practice from other local authorities.</p> <p>Produce recommendations regarding the benefits that would be expected to be delivered via future events which commercial</p>

	<p>partners would have to consider when holding events in Lambeth's parks</p> <p>Enable these recommendations to be used as good practice to be shared by the Events team across the council and community e.g. capture benefits, work with communities, create inclusiveness and raise expectations.</p>
<p>Links to Borough Plan Outcomes / Resident Priorities</p>	<p><i>Tick those that apply and explain why.</i></p> <p><i>The three overarching priorities in the Borough Plan 2016-2021 are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Inclusive Growth [x]</i> – income generated from events needs to benefit the local and Lambeth-wide economy - <i>Reducing Inequality [x]</i> – commercial events need to be open to and/or benefit all sections of the community - <i>Strong and Sustainable Neighbourhoods [x]</i> – the principle of local events benefitting local people is an agreed principle; do commercial events directly and indirectly help sustain neighbourhoods? <p>Relevant outcomes:</p> <p><i>Supporting groups and businesses to deliver cultural activities for everyone</i></p> <p><i>Keep our parks and public spaces clean, well maintained and enjoyable for all</i></p> <p>Parks and open spaces is third on the list of issues that matter most to residents (18%), behind only public transport (23%) and clean streets (22%) (Residents' survey 2016 – via Borough Plan)</p>
<p>Time constraints</p>	<p><i>If the commission needs to be considered within a specific time frame please state here and why.</i></p> <p>Ideally to feed into the Events Strategy review though should be a standalone piece of work.</p>
<p>Core Questions / Terms of Reference</p>	<p><i>What are the core questions the commission is seeking to answer (no more than three)? These will form the Terms of Reference of the commission</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Borough Plan sets out the Council's aspiration to deliver cultural activities for everyone while keeping our parks and public spaces clean, well maintained and enjoyable for all. Parks are places that contribute to the health and wellbeing of Lambeth communities. How do we deliver both these aims and sustain parks and public spaces in times of budget cuts?

	<p>2. How can private companies work positively with the Council and local community groups/stakeholders when events are held in public spaces to ensure appropriate benefits are delivered?</p> <p>3. How can benefits and disadvantages be evaluated? How can good practice in working with commercial organisations be spread around the Council?</p>
What will not be included	<p><i>This will assist in setting the boundaries for the commission's work and prevent 'scope-creep'.</i></p> <p>Only major commercial events held since the approval of the current events strategy in 2016 will be considered.</p> <p>The scope of the Events Strategy itself will not be considered.</p> <p>Culture 2020 policy will not be considered.</p>
Risks (mitigation)	<p><i>What risks are there to the commission completing its work? Other pieces of work the commission may be dependent upon should be included.</i></p> <p>Difficulties of obtaining socio-economic information on current users of parks and open spaces.</p> <p>Difficulty in gaining evidence of benefits and disadvantages i.e.jobs created, environmental damage.</p> <p>Potential commercial sensitivity of some information.</p>
Equality & Diversity considerations	<p><i>Identify any Equalities and Diversity issues that may arise – this may include positive or negative impacts on those with protected characteristics (for Lambeth this includes socio-economic status, health, and English as a Second Language as well as the 9 outlined in law)</i></p> <p>Who attends events and what are the barriers to attending (e.g disability / economic status)?</p> <p>Who are the beneficiaries of events? Are they spread across groups? If not what can be done to make benefits more inclusive?</p>
Possible co-options	<p><i>Would the commission's work benefit from having a co-optee?</i></p> <p>Not thought to be required</p>
Key stakeholders / Potential witnesses	<p><i>Who will the commission wish to hear from in order to meet its Terms of Reference? Include opportunities to involve the public/service users/voluntary sector/other authorities//lobby groups/academics/private sector etc</i></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Events team (particularly re feedback received in relation to previous major commercial events) • Event producers • Beneficiaries of apprenticeships, jobs, free tickets etc • Businesses / businesses forums / BIDs • Schools • Young people (e.g. Young Lambeth Co-op) – inc those who would like to attend events but can't • Older people and those with disabilities • Residents' groups • Festival/event participants • Community partners • Potentially London Parks Forum / Parks for London
Portfolio holder(s)	Cabinet Member for Equalities & Culture: Cllr Sonia Winifred
Research/Evidence	<p><i>What information will the commission need to meet its Terms of Reference?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of the planned Events Strategy review (to ensure the commission's work complements this without duplicating effort) • Information on major commercial events held since 2016 (including numbers, types, info on attendees) • Information on benefits secured via previous events and how these were agreed upon • Feedback (positive and negative) from previous major commercial events • Summary of policy initiatives on expected benefits from events from other London councils for comparative purposes • Views of stakeholders listed above • Socio economic information on areas where events focussed • Relevant reports from other bodies (e.g. GLA, CLG select committee) as appropriate
Potential site visits	<p><i>Would the commission's work benefit from any visits?</i></p> <p>No</p>
Commission format and Outline Plan	<p><i>Commission format could include (but is not limited to):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One-off meeting akin to a single-issue OSC - One-day stakeholder summit at which a variety of views can be taken - Longer series of themed meetings <p><i>Outline plan (include timelines):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One meeting to refine/agree scope and identify/confirm research needed • One meeting to gather/digest research • One/two meetings to hear from stakeholders

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• One/two meetings to draw conclusions and draft recommendations <p>Initial meetings/research in Oct/Nov 2018, completion in early 2019</p>
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Annex C: Background Documents

LB Lambeth [Future Lambeth: Our Borough Plan 2016-2021](#) (Sept 2016) [*includes Resident Survey information*]

LB Lambeth [Lambeth's Borough Plan Review](#) (July 2019)

LB Lambeth [Events Strategy 2016-2020](#) (Sept 2016)

LB Lambeth [Lambeth's Response to the Climate Emergency](#) (July 2019)

LB Lambeth Licensing Sub-Committee [Winterville Benefits Statement](#) (Oct 2018)

Fields in Trust [Revaluating Parks and Green Spaces](#) (2018)

Mayor of London [Draft London Plan \(July 2019\)](#)

Greater London Assembly Environment Committee [Park Life: Ensuring Green Spaces Remain a Hit with Londoners](#) (July 2017)

House of Commons Communities & Local Government Select Committee [Public Parks](#) (Jan 2017)

House of Commons Digital, Culture, Media & Sport Select Committee [Live Music](#) (March 2019)

LB Enfield [Park Events Strategy 2017-2022](#) (2017)

Parks for London [Outdoor Event Policy Template](#) (Nov 2018)

Parks for London [Good Parks for London 2018](#)

Centre for London Press Release: [London Borough budgets fall a fifth in eight years, with inner London hardest hit](#) (May 2019)

LB Lambeth [Full Council motion to declare a climate emergency](#) (Jan 2019)

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [Global Warming of 1.5C](#) (2018)