

Review of Waterford City & County Council's Festival & Events Funding Policy

At the meeting of the Economic Development & Enterprise SPC held on 20th March, a review was undertaken of the current Festival & Events Funding Policy which was adopted in September 2021. This fulfilled a commitment in the policy to undertake a review three years after adoption.

This review contained the following recommendations:

1. The existing Flagship Festivals continue to be designated as such and continue to benefit from multi annual funding over a three year period. This includes Winterval, Waterford Festival of Food, Waterford Walls, Spraoi and Blackwater Valley Opera Festival.
2. No additional Flagship Festivals/ Events are being proposed at this time.
3. An objective on sustainability be adopted and included in the Policy. The proposed text for this objective is:
'Festivals and events should be encouraged and supported to become more sustainable across all areas including Energy, Travel & Transport, Materials & Waste, Food & Beverage, Water, Nature & Biodiversity, and Governance'.
4. Continue using the Post Event Evaluation Form as the method of collecting data on funding recipients and this remains a condition of the funding.
5. Maintain the indicator set in the Post Event Evaluation Form under review and amend it, as necessary, in response to the new Council Corporate Plan, and other changes in organisation or policy focus.
6. Ensure better and effective use of event impact evaluation data through, for example, the production of an Annual Report Card on Festivals & Events, based on the data captured in the Post Event Evaluation Form. This Report Card should be produced in advance of the Councillors' Workshop to assess grant applications.
7. The Policy and the Flagship Festivals should be reviewed again in Q1 2028.

Following adoption of these recommendations by the Economic Development & Enterprise SPC, we are now proposing:

- The adoption of the change to the policy objectives to include the objective on sustainability 'Festivals and events should be encouraged and supported to become more sustainable across all areas including Energy, Travel & Transport, Materials & Waste, Food & Beverage, Water, Nature & Biodiversity, and Governance'.
- The continuation of multi-annual funding over three years to the designated Flagship Festivals, which includes Waterford Festival of Food, Spraoi, Blackwater Valley Opera Festival, Waterford Walls and Winterval.

Yours sincerely,

Cllr Pat Nugent
Chairperson
Economic Development & Enterprise SPC