

## **DRAFT for consultation**

### **1. Vision**

Our year round events, festivals and cultural calendar helps to position the Highlands of Scotland as an exceptional place to live, visit and do business.

### **2. Mission**

We will provide the focus for local and national stakeholders to develop the year round calendar of events, festivals and cultural activity to motivate people to live, visit and do business in the Highlands.

### **3. Strategy**

Our calendar of events, festivals and cultural activity will make the most of the unique and special nature of the Highlands of Scotland. Our focus will rest on the following:

- i) Our natural environment
  - as the arena
  - as the stage
  - as the programme
- ii) Our traditional and contemporary culture
  - through the arts
  - through sport
  - through innovation and science
- iii) Our rich heritage
  - Highland icons
  - our history
  - our buildings, artefacts and monuments
  - our ancestors
- iv) Gaelic language and culture
  - our indigenous language
  - its place in our heritage
  - its modern face
- v) Highland hospitality
  - our people
  - our food and drink
  - our unique entertainment

### **4. Rationale**

Our Mission is aligned with the development of 'Scotland – The Perfect Stage', the national events strategy being devised by EventScotland and is based on a firm belief, supported by clear evidence, that events generate economic and social growth through positive impact and their subsequent legacy.

### **5. Impacts**

In collaboration with key partners, this strategy will contribute to the delivery of the following impacts:

- i) Social benefits
  - Enhancing community confidence
  - Building community capacity
  - Skills development
  - Encouraging in migration
  - Reducing out migration, especially of young people
- ii) Economic benefits
  - Creating employment
  - Developing the creative industries
  - Achieving tourism growth targets
  - Enhancing the reputation of the region as a great place to work and do business
- iii) Regional Profile
  - Increasing sense of local pride and confidence
  - Increasing levels of positive coverage of events in the Highlands through close working relationships with local and national media
  - Increasing exposure of Highland events and festivals by VisitScotland
  - Increasing support for Highland events and festivals by EventScotland
- iv) Gaelic Language and Culture
  - Improving the positive perception of the language
  - Increasing the number of learners
  - Increasing exposure of the language and culture to new audiences
- v) Health and Wellbeing
  - Increasing interest in local cultural activities
  - Increasing participation in cultural activities
  - Creating a feel good factor

## 6. Partners

We will work with the following partners to deliver this strategy:

National and local event promoters, cultural organisations and community organisations  
 Highlands and Islands Enterprise  
 The Scottish Government  
 EventScotland  
 VisitScotland  
 Scottish Arts Council / Creative Scotland  
 Homecoming Scotland  
 Bòrd na Gàidhlig  
 National Health Service  
 Skills Development Scotland

## 7. Methodology

To achieve our mission we will concentrate our resources and attention on the following tasks:

- i) Providing the focus for local and national stakeholders in co-ordinating the development of and investment in the events, festivals and cultural programme of the Highlands.
- ii) Supporting event organisers in the development, delivery and promotion of a programme of events, festivals and cultural activity each year that enthuses its target audiences and leaves them with positive images and memories of the Highlands of Scotland.
- iii) Presenting clear guidance on the availability and criteria to access funding support for events, festival and cultural activity.

- iv) Developing clear information on the focus and priorities of funding support for events, festivals and cultural activity.
- v) Developing a calendar of major events that generates sustainable economic growth for the region and increases the positive profile of the Highlands.
- vi) Developing a programme of community events that showcase the quality, diversity and appeal of the traditional and contemporary cultural landscape of the Highlands.
- vii) Identifying and securing events to the region that would add value to the events and festivals calendar, enhance the profile of the region and generate a positive economic return.
- viii) Ensuring that the calendar of events festivals and cultural activity is year round and region wide.
- ix) Developing an anti-clash diary to promote additionality and avoid displacement.
- x) Supporting the work of other Council services and cultural organisations in providing opportunities to increase confidence, to develop capacity and to enhance the skills of individuals and community groups involved in hosting events and developing cultural projects across the Highlands.
- xi) Supporting the work of other Council services and cultural organisations in developing the creativity, talent and excellence of artists and performers based in the Highlands.
- xii) Contributing to the enhancement of the physical cultural infrastructure of the Highlands through targeted allocation of capital funding.
- xiii) Supporting the work of Gaelic development agencies and initiatives in the aims of promoting Gaelic language and culture and increasing the number of Gaelic speakers.
- xiv) Encouraging young people to take part in cultural activities through their involvement in planning, choosing and participating in a diverse range of cultural projects and events.
- xv) Developing a marketing and communications strategy to promote the events, festivals and cultural programme of the Highlands to key target audiences.
- xvi) Increasing the level of promotion of Highland events, festivals and cultural activity by VisitScotland.

## **8. Resources**

The resources required to implement this strategy will be sought from the following sources:

- i) Highland 2007 Legacy Programme
- ii) The Highland Council Partnership with VisitScotland
- iii) The Highland Council Tourism Development Budget
- iv) Homecoming Scotland
- v) The Scottish Government
- vi) Scottish Arts Council / Creative Scotland
- vii) Highlands and Islands Enterprise
- viii) LEADER

## **9. Review**

Proposals would be welcomed on the most effective way to review the strategy and the success of its implementation.

## **10. Critical Success Factors**

If the Highlands' cultural partners are successful in delivering the Events and Festivals Strategy, the following will characterise the Highlands' events scene in 2012.

- i) The Highlands will be recognised nationally and internationally as a unique and special host of high quality events.
- ii) Events will take place in the Highlands throughout each calendar year and across the region.
- iii) The events and cultural sector will be regarded as significant contributors to the Highlands' economy.

- iv) The portfolio of events delivered annually will comprise a core of events that are unique to the Highlands and are embedded in Highland culture, with this core including all aspects of arts, sport, heritage, science, language and the environment.
- v) The core portfolio will be complimented by a range of high profile one off and recurring events that have been attracted to the Highlands by our unique appeal as a location and through our reputation as a region that delivers high quality events.
- vi) The roles of all agencies, public, private and voluntary, within the events and cultural sectors will be clearly identified and understood, with partnership being an underpinning principle.

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