

Decision on Hogmanay to be made in August

After much speculation the council has confirmed that initial discussions looking at ways of celebrating Edinburgh's Christmas and Hogmanay this year began yesterday with the Council All Party Oversight Group.

A final decision on this year's activities is expected in late August when a committee of 17 city councillors will discuss the possibilities and agree what is to happen.

Representatives from all political parties met with senior officers and Winter Festivals' producers, Underbelly, to discuss a range of proposals, which take account of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic and associated health and safety considerations.

Following what are described as 'positive informal discussions', the proposals will be developed further before being reported to the Council's Policy and Sustainability Committee in late August for a decision.

Charlie Wood & Ed Bartlam, Directors of Underbelly, said: "We're working closely and positively with City of Edinburgh Council and other partners on plans for Edinburgh's Christmas and Hogmanay. This will be a pivotal moment for the world both to reflect on 2020 and to look to the future, and the safety of Edinburgh's residents and visitors is critical to how these plans evolve. We're excited by the events being

discussed and look forward to sharing the details in the coming weeks.”



Transe Express

Council Leader Adam McVey said: “The Council is having positive discussions on how Edinburgh’s Christmas and Hogmanay could be celebrated this year. All involved recognise the uncertainty of the current situation and the significant requirements for anything Edinburgh hosts to meet public health guidance. It’s clear that if our 2020 Winter Festivals go ahead they will look very different from recent years, using different locations across the City. It is also important to think more creatively about how to better support our local businesses who have been impacted by the lockdown. Any events will need to give our residents a truly Edinburgh experience that helps discover more of our fantastic businesses that operate all year round. Work is underway with our partners to further investigate the feasibility of these new proposals and Councillors will agree the way forward in the coming weeks.”

Depute Leader Cammy Day added: “We’re the proud hosts to what are well established and internationally renowned winter festivals and, in light of the ongoing global pandemic, we’re looking at alternative ways to mark them in a meaningful, workable and safe way. I feel positive that our Edinburgh will be able to celebrate Christmas and Hogmanay this year. However, the safety of residents and visitors remains paramount and we need some time to develop and check feasibility of proposals before a final plan can be brought forward for a final decision in August.”