

East Lothian Council cancels Christmas events

by Marie Sharp Local Democracy Reporter

Christmas has been cancelled in East Lothian as the local council ruled out any community events which would traditionally be held.

Council leader Councillor Willie Innes said on Friday that “with considerable regret” he was asking community groups and gatherings to postpone their plans this year.

The council-run Musselburgh Fireworks Display, held on Bonfire Night each year, has been cancelled and the council is asking for other events, including Christmas parades, lights switch-ons and Remembrance parades, to be cancelled as well.

Mr Innes said: “At this time of year, planning would be under way for bonfire night firework displays, Remembrance parades and Christmas lights switch-on events.

“With considerable regret, the council has decided not to proceed with the Musselburgh firework event this November and requests that similar community group events and gatherings over the festive season are postponed this year.

“It is predicted that there is a greater risk of coronavirus spread as we move into winter and so gathering many local people together for community events, even outdoors, poses a considerable risk to public health.

“Also, many of our high streets and locations where Christmas lights are erected are confined spaces, albeit outdoor spaces.

“During the response phase of the Covid-19 emergency, when adherence to physical distancing and public health advice is essential, it would not be possible to ensure the safety of potentially hundreds of participants at gatherings in, for example, narrow areas of high streets and would be contrary to the Scottish Government Routemap.

“Whilst we understand that the cancellation of these popular events will bring some disappointment, we are also aware of the determination and support of local communities to organise future celebrations when appropriate to do so.”

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