

# **Edinburgh Council to consider Orange Walks and other processions**

**Orange walks may be allowed to go ahead in Edinburgh later this year for the first time since 2019.**

Applications for three Protestant parades through the city centre in June have been submitted to The City of Edinburgh Council.

Whilst marches organised by Orange Order groups and Protestant fraternal societies are more common in Glasgow, some have been held in the capital in recent years.

However, as Covid-19 restrictions have prohibited large gatherings during the pandemic, Orange Walks have not gone ahead in Edinburgh for almost three years.

Orange walks celebrate the victory of Protestant king William of Orange over Catholic king James II at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690, and are often criticised for promoting sectarian views.

The council's licensing committee will meet on Monday 14 March to consider proposed demonstrations by the Apprentice Boys of Derry on 4 June, the Loyal Orange Institution of Scotland on 11 June and the Orange Order Parade on 25 June.

A report prepared ahead of the meeting notes that the events "may be considered controversial".

As all three plan to use The Royal Mile as part of the parade

route, they have to be approved by the committee.

Furthermore, anyone organising a parade or procession in Scotland is required to notify the council and the police at least 28 days prior to the date of the event.

Councillors have limited powers to restrict or ban parades which can only be exercised to “prevent public disorder, risk to public safety, damage to property or excessive disruption to the life of the community”.

A report to councillors states: “Should the committee decide to restrict or prohibit the procession, the persons proposing to hold the procession may appeal against that decision to the Sheriff Court within 14 days of written reasons being received by them”.

Representatives from organisations will be invited to address the committee regarding the proposed marches.

Councillors will also consider an application for a pro-Scottish independence march by the Yes2Edinburgh group on March 19.

In addition, cycling group Pedal On Parliament is planning a ride on 23 April, and city centre parades are due to take place for May Day on 7 May and Norwegian Constitution Day on 17 May.



Some of the Orange Order marchers on 13 September 2014 in The Meadows PHOTO © Martin P McAdam

*by Donald Turvill, Local Democracy Reporter*

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