

Council to seek full cost recovery from Oasis after £40k spent on Taylor Swift

Edinburgh Council will look to bill Oasis for all costs it incurs from the band's hotly anticipated return to the capital next year, after nearly £40k was spent supporting Taylor Swift's concerts this summer and not recovered from organisers.

Council leader Cammy Day said taxpayers 'should not bear the costs' of the city hosting large-scale events, regardless of the wider boost to the local economy.

He said it was "fantastic" the capital attracted major events like the Oasis tour, but the council faced a £30m black hole whilst organisers enjoyed "huge profits".

A new policy applying 100 per cent cost recovery to commercial events will come into force on Tuesday, October 1. This will allow the council to claw back all funds spent on toilets, lighting, street cleaning and other services which facilitate concerts and sports matches.

It comes after Taylor Swift left the local authority nearly £40k out of pocket this summer.

Figures released last month showed for the Eras Tour's three nights at Murrayfield in June, the council spent: £16,934 on

security measures; £3,650 on lighting; £2,985 on temporary toilets; £678 on 'radios'; £642 on CCTV; £400 on signage; and £1,434.36 on 'intelligent traffic signals'. Council staff also worked 1,044 hours of overtime, which based on the real living wage amounts to at least £12,528.

Organisers did however foot a £21,913 bill for additional waste and cleansing, while Scottish Rugby, which hosted the concerts at Murrayfield, met some other costs.

Greens city councillor Dan Heap, who requested the figures, said "billionaire entertainers" should meet their own costs and added the revised charging model "could not come a moment too soon".

However online some argued as these numbers were dwarfed by the boost to the city's economy, which research by Hellotickets reported was £77m, the expenditure on additional services was justified.

Speaking at a full council meeting last week, Councillor Day said: "I don't think the taxpayer in Edinburgh should bear the costs of that. Of course, these concerts bring tens of millions of pounds to the city and it's hugely successful and we want that to continue, but the impact shouldn't be on our residents."

Culture and communities convener Val Walker said: "It is fantastic that our city attracts major events such as the Oasis tour.

"What is the council leader's view on the additional pressures on the city during the festival, the busiest time of the year, when it's estimated that the population of the city doubles? And should we be able to recoup all the additional costs that fall on the council?"

Cllr Day replied: "Of course it's great that we've seen fantastic acts like Taylor Swift and the many other acts that

came here in the last year

“As the lowest funded council in Scotland facing a budget deficit as I touched on earlier of over £30m, whilst some event organisers across the country are making huge profits.

“I think they should cover the costs of these events, not the council. The Taylor Swift event alone incurred costs of around £29,000 of resources and staff time.”

The council leader told the LDRS: “As Scotland’s Capital we host of a number of world class festivals and international events every year, and we have a responsibility and duty of care to our residents and those visiting to ensure their safety and that the facilities they need are available.

“Which is why, on 1 October 2024, a new council policy will come into force that will look to recoup costs from event organisers.

“The additional costs to the city of hosting international events and world class concerts also highlight our need for a visitor levy, which we plan to introduce as early as Summer 2026.

“The levy will generate millions of pounds in additional revenue to sustain and develop our incredible city – just as so many other major destinations already do so successfully – and will help us to support and enhance our events. As an example, a 5% levy on overnight stays in Edinburgh would raise over £6 million in August alone.”

Councillor Heap said: “I am pleased that the figures I was able to get out of the council that showed that it provided a wasteful £40,000 subsidy to a billionaire entertainer’s concert at Murrayfield has been influential and the Administration supports full cost recovery from large events.

“Large events need and should, where appropriate, receive the

logistical and organisation support from Council to ensure the smooth and safe running of the event, but they do not need a subsidy from the council's hard-pressed finances. Greens will be forcing this issue to a Council vote in the near future."

By Donald Turvill Local Democracy Reporter