

# Edinburgh City Council 'lost control' of Hogmanay

**Edinburgh City Council 'lost control' of Hogmanay leading to thousands staying away from the centre on the night, it has been claimed.**

A meeting of the council's governance, risk and best value committee, heard councillors voice concern at seeing promoters and performers giving advice after the main events were cancelled on television and social media.

They said the people were 'wrongly' told to stay away with no clear message coming from the council itself.

And there were calls for a report into the impact of the cancellation to look at the 'domino effect' on local restaurants, cafes and bars who were deserted on the night.

A motion by Councillor Kate Campbell, SNP, who chaired the meeting, was brought to the committee by her colleague Simita Kumar, calling for a report to be brought to elected members on the decision to cancel the event.

The world-famous street party was cancelled on December 30 after the council said "extreme weather and forecast conditions" meant preparations had to be halted.

However Councillor Kumar said that she was alarmed to see promoters giving out advice through the media 'rightly or wrongly' to residents to stay away.

And she said it led to deserted streets in the city centre and impacted local businesses on the night.

Councillor Campbell told the meeting she was out for dinner in the city on Hogmanay and expected to need a taxi home but was surprised to step outside to a 'light breeze'.

She said: "I was so disappointed. There was hardly anyone on the street. This was Hogmanay in Edinburgh, I do not understand what happened."

The committee heard advice was being given out online from performers with no clear advice from the council issued for residents on the night.

Councillor Joanna Mowat told the meeting: "We lost control of the message. We should always be in control of the message."

The committee agreed to call for a report into the decisions behind the cancellation and timeline of how it happened.

They were told a report into the cancelled event which costs the council an estimated £812,000 annually, is being prepared for a meeting of the council's culture and communities committee.

By Marie Sharp Local Democracy Reporter