

Culture, Tourism and Major Events Directorate
Deputy Director



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Margo Williamson
Chief Executive
Angus Council

Dear Margo

AIG WOMEN'S OPEN – SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT GATEWAY EVENT

I write in connection to the AIG Women's Open, which will take place at Carnoustie Golf Links, Angus, from 19-22 August. As you may be aware, due to its prestige the championship has been selected as one of a handful of events to be taken through a Scottish Government-led 'Gateway process'. The purpose of this letter is to provide information on the Gateway process, with a view to our organisations working together – and alongside the event organisers – to deliver a world-class event.

The Gateway process, which was approved by the First Minister on 15 March, aims to support a small number of flagship events to take place over summer and autumn with limited numbers of attendees, outwith the Levels or any equivalent framework, subject to epidemiological conditions. The flagship events have been selected because they are internationally significant and align with 'Scotland The Perfect Stage' (our national events strategy), or support our broader policy priorities. The AIG Women's Open, of course, fits all of those criteria and as such the First Minister has given approval for the event to go through the Gateway process.

The intention is that being part of the Gateway process gives organisers of the chosen flagship events greater confidence with which to plan and support to deliver to world-class standard – for example through exceptions in relation to the number of attendees permitted and / or physical distancing requirements, both of which are under consideration for the AIG Women's Open.

For information, the first Gateway event will be Euro 2020, for which current plans are for up to 12,000 spectators at the four games at Hampden, as well as a Fan Zone accommodating up to 3000 per session. The Edinburgh International Festival and the British and Irish Lions Test vs Japan have also been approved in principle by Ministers.

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The Gateway process requires an inception meeting, regular review meetings, and a final pre-event meeting at which all stakeholders agree that the event can proceed as planned. Throughout the process we will be putting advice to Ministers to update on the position and any issues that need to be addressed.

I would stress that the Gateway process is designed so as not to require significant new processes and work. Our intention is to fit in as far as possible with your existing processes, most notably the multiagency meetings approach. Indeed, I am aware that multiagency meetings for the AIG Women's Open have already taken place, with attendance from the Major Events Policy Team within my division.

Ultimately, the aim is to collaborate fully across the planning process so that we are collectively reassured, and can reassure Ministers, that the event can proceed as planned and that measures have been taken to ensure it will be the success we would all wish it to be. Your team are a critical part of that process.

I am aware that delivering the AIG Women's Open is a cross-cutting endeavour involving multiple teams and functional areas across the Council. Through the strong existing relationships we have with the event organisers and those involved in the multiagency meetings, we have already started discussions about the event, however I would welcome you cascading this information to any other relevant parties or areas, and I would welcome their support in this additional level of assurance to achieve the best possible event in the current climate.

I look forward to our teams working together to deliver this flagship event, benefitting Angus and Scotland.

BETTINA SIZELAND
Deputy Director – Tourism and Major Events