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Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982
Proposed Procession
Police Response to Aberdeen City Council Licensing Team

Our Ref: A28.3/04/12/8906

Your Ref: 9/50/22 - jwNOTIFICATIONLET

Proposed Procession:	National Front Parade
Date:	1800 hours on Friday 20 April 2012
Police met with organiser:	Yes
Police objection to procession:	Yes
Recommendations:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. There should be dedicated, appropriately qualified Stewards in attendance;2. The organiser must fully brief Stewards as to their responsibilities;3. The Stewards must wear yellow high-visibility jackets, at all times when escorting the procession;4. If the parade is approved, the route should be as per the usual template, from St Nicholas Church, Union Street to the Castlegate;5. The organiser must inform the local media of the timings of the procession and likelihood of there being disruption to traffic in the City Centre;6. The organiser must inform the Hackney Licensing Department of the timings of the procession given the potential disruption to taxi ranks in the City Centre;7. The organiser must inform local bus companies of the street closures and their duration, to enable alternative routes to be implemented;8. The organiser must inform the Scottish Ambulance Service and Grampian Fire and Rescue Service about the times and movements of the procession; and9. The organisers should have in place Public Liability Insurance should any legal action or otherwise be forthcoming following an incident during this event.
Policing to be provided:	Yes

Comments:

The National Front Scotland is recognised as a legitimate political party. The organiser has intimated that the Parade is in protest against the Scottish National Party and their governing of the country.

The organiser has submitted two applications in relation to this Parade. One is for a rally at Union Terrace Gardens between 1800 - 2000 hours. The second application is for a Parade from Adelphi Lane, Union Street to Union Terrace Gardens.

The organiser met with Grampian Police and advised initially that he intended to hold a meeting within Union Terrace Gardens, Aberdeen. He submitted forms to Aberdeen City Council for use of the park and also with regard to a parade there. He was advised that the parade form was incorrect and this was returned to him. He further contacted the Police and advised that as he had not received a reply regarding use of the park, he was now submitting a further parade application. He intimated to the Police that his primary intention was to hold the meeting within Union Terrace Gardens and the parade was the 'fall back' position.

It appears that he has not received a response to this request, which has led to the current parade application.

In respect to the application, as submitted it does not follow the existing template recommended by Grampian Police, the route starting at St Nicholas Church and proceeding eastwards to the Castlegate. A parade which follows this template can be facilitated by minimal numbers of Police Officers, causing minor disruption to the general public and normal Police business. The route of the parade requested in this application would require significant Police resources and might potentially adversely affect the day to day business. Of particular significance would be the road closures required at the junction of Union Street with Union Terrace/ Bridge Street which would have a negative impact on traffic management.

The route normally recommended by Grampian Police ensures the traffic management can be carried out wholly by means of Police personnel, without a requirement for signs and barriers.

The organiser has further intimated that the participants will gather at 1800 hours at the Adelphi, with the Parade commencing shortly thereafter, westwards along Union Street, turning right onto Union Terrace and terminating at Union Terrace Gardens, where the marchers will disperse onwards to a private function. As stated, this Procession does not follow the existing tried and tested route as in previous Parades and Grampian Police have significant concerns in respect of disruption to the public and the additional Police resources which will be required to facilitate this.

The organiser has advised on his application that he has not currently taken Public Liability Insurance, but will arrange for this if permission for the parade is granted. It is therefore important that a recommendation for Public Liability Insurance is included.

In his application, the organiser has stated that the date of the procession is not particularly significant to his organisation. It should be noted that 20 April is the date of Adolf Hitler's birthday.

The organiser advised the date had been chosen to coincide with the founding date of the Scottish National Party set up in 1934, and he further stated that any relation to Adolf Hitler's birthday was 'purely coincidental'.

Grampian Police are concerned that irrespective of the organisers claims, the date is not simply a coincidence and is in fact a significant rationale for the Parade, given that the National Front is recognised as a far right political party.

On previous occasions where National Front Parades and rallies have occurred, despite the significant planning and the apparent intentions of the organisers, the parades may potentially attract persons whose motives can tend towards public disorder.

It is also possible that such a parade could attract overt displays by far right sympathisers who could attend from outwith the region.

Grampian Police are also concerned that unlike the majority of parades, this parade might attract persons who wish to register their protest against the participants or the parade taking place. As such, there is a genuine risk to public safety and potential damage to nearby property should the application for the parade be approved.

To mitigate against such disorder and to ensure public safety would take a significant amount of multi agency planning and would be resource intensive for Grampian Police as well as partner agencies.


The Risk Assessment submitted by the organiser indicates that they consider the parade to be Low Risk across a number of areas. Grampian Police are concerned that this is not in fact the case and indeed there is a significant risk to public safety given the emotive nature of the policies endorsed by the National Front. Media coverage indicates there is a significant public interest in the parade and there is the suggestion from a local trade union activist that should the parade be approved, a parallel anti-fascist event would be considered. Grampian Police have received several items of correspondence from members of the public raising objections to the parade taking place.

Irrespective of the above observations and concerns expressed by Grampian Police, if the application to parade is approved, it is requested that consideration is given to applying the existing template with the route being along Union Street, Aberdeen, from St Nicholas Church to the Castlegate.

Police contact:

Events Planning, Aberdeen Division, Tel 01224 306481

Signed:



Date: 2 March 2012

Keith Henderson, Chief Inspector, Aberdeen Division