

Report on	Lough Neagh Partnership Core Funding Progress Report
Date of Meeting	Thursday 12 March 2020
Reporting Officer	Michael Browne
Contact Officer	Allison O'Keefe

Is this report restricted for confidential business?	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	X

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To update on Lough Neagh Partnership (LNP) Core funding activities, marketing tourism, recreational, environmental and heritage activities on Lough Neagh (LN) and the shoreline on behalf of Mid Ulster District Council.
2.0	Background
2.1	<p>LNP is the main co-ordinating body for tourism, environmental, heritage and marketing activities on LN, delivering projects and programmes on behalf of local and central government. Mid Ulster District Council agreed an annual contribution of £22,000 towards core running costs and to operate a continuous marketing plan for LN, specifically within Mid Ulster.</p> <p>LNP receives funding toward core running costs from five Council's around the Lough Shore for the co-ordination of substantial development, promotion and marketing of LN.</p>
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p>Funding primarily contributes towards core staff costs (Manager, Marketing Officer and Admin/Finance Officer), development/ delivery of programmes and office running costs.</p> <p>LNP continue to identify and secure additional investment to the region to assist in addressing social, environmental and economic issues around the Lough. As part of the funding LNP offer Mid Ulster District Council continued coordination and marketing around LN and its Waterways and continue to develop Lough Neagh as a tourism destination.</p> <p>Measurable targets and quantifiable outputs are attached in Appendix 1.</p> <p>£22,000 was identified in the 2019/20 budget, with £10,143.08 having been drawn down for the period April – August 2019.</p>

	A second claim has been received to for period September 19– January 20 at a cost of £9,802 leaving a balance of £2,050.
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	<p><u>Financial & Human Resources Implications</u></p> <p>Financial: £9,802.00 towards Core running and salary costs.</p>
4.2	<p><u>Equality and Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>Ensure effective co-ordination of activities on LN and its shoreline and deliver social, economic and cultural benefits within MU. LNP is committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity in all its activities with a focus on all citizens living within the Mid Ulster area of LN.</p>
4.3	<p><u>Risk Management Implications</u></p> <p>LNP has been in existence since 2003 with experience in managing risk. Funding has been secured with 4 Councils surrounding Lough shore therefore minimising risk to MUDC. Monitoring and verification of original invoices, payslips and corresponding bank statements, as well as, quarterly reports and site visits will be carried out to minimise risk.</p>
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	
6.0	Documents Attached & References
6.1	Appendix 1 - LNP Progress Report

LOUGH NEAGH PARTNERSHIP CORE FUNDING 2019/20 - £22,000 Aug – Jan 2020
MID ULSTER DISTRICT COUNCIL ANNUAL FUNDING MEASUREABLE TARGETS AND
QUANTIFIABLE OUTPUTS



Comhairle Ceantair
Lár Uladh
Mid Ulster
 District Council

Targets	Target Date	Quantifiable Outputs	Progress to up to 31 Dec 2019
1. Landscape Partnership Project Deliver Year 3 of the Lough Neagh Landscape Partnership project	31/03/2020	Implement projects as agreed in HLF plan for 2019/20 e.g. signage project, progress on Brookend Reserve and Derryloughan nature reserves.	Projects implemented as agreed. Derryloughan. Reserve in process of changing and major conservation work carried out on Brookend Farm.
2. Destination Marketing Plan Working with Mid Ulster Council and stakeholders, identify and help develop new tourism products on Lough	31/03/2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and promote three new major Lough Neagh Tours two of which relate to and promote the Mid Ulster Tourism Development product. • Begin to develop a new food project for the Lough and Lough Beg. • Implement Seamus Heaney tours. • Assist MUDC with implementation of their tourism strategy. 	<p>EU Food Project application submitted, application was declined. Lough Neagh Artisans project is now underway (includes Bakehouse NI & Rosehill House)</p> <p>Assisted with implementation of MU tourism strategy with focus on WW2 heritage</p> <p>Irish Thatch Tour Developed & operational, includes Rosehill House</p> <p>New Boat Tours (x3) developed in partnership with River Bann Tours & local fisherman (departing from Ballyronan to Lough Neagh and Toome along the River Bann)</p> <p>Seamus Heaney Tour itinerary has been developed and included in the tour portfolio for group bookings</p>

			New Game of Thrones Itinerary developed to include Ballyscullion park – awaiting sign off from HBO
3. Marketing and Promotion 3.1 Ensure that VICs provide event information to Tourism NI on regular basis 3.2 Co-ordination of Tourism NI marketing features for LN Work includes co—ordination of marketing features for Tourism NI productions/ advertorials. 3.3 Blog Competition 3.4 Trade fairs and exhibitions	31/03/2019 01/12/2019 31/03/2020 31/12/2019	Minimum of 20 events per District. MUDC events submitted to TNI will be featured on Discover Lough Neagh website & app 2 advertorials - Spring and Autumn 3 stakeholder newsletters - Quarterly Review content and update website & app weekly. Issue of event updates and minimum of 6 press releases. 200 consumer and trade posts on Facebook and Twitter.	Events linked with TNI Advertorials no longer placed by TNI Stakeholder newsletters issued: 17 th April, 15 th May, 10 th June, 26 th July, 16 th September, 3 rd October Website content reviewed & updated by LNP team: www.loughneagpartnership.org www.discoverloughneagh.com www.loughneaghtours.com www.loughneaghlp.com Social Media updated weekly from April to September and less frequently out of season: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lough Neagh Tours (Facebook, Twitter & Instagram) 2. Lough Neagh & Its Waterways (Facebook) 3. Lough Neagh Partnership (Facebook) 4. Lough Neagh LandscapePartnership (Facebook) Lough Neagh Brand Impact 2019 Report compiled by NB Chartered Communications attached providing a breakdown of brand reach, including media coverage and social media engagement.

		<p>Electronic Christmas Colouring competition for schools.</p> <p>Blog Competition. LNP will feature the top 10 blogs on the destination website, which will have significant SEO value for the destination website and also for the individual visitor attractions featured in the blog. A link can also be included to Mid Ulster Council on the relevant blogs.</p> <p>LNP will attend trade fairs and exhibitions where opportunities arise to promote the destination and its events. Do not envisage taking destination stands of their own as this would be cost prohibitive.</p>	<p>Christmas colouring competition complete, winner selected from Anahorish Primary School</p> <p>Blog competition was replaced with our own blogs – this was to ensure we got the content we required to achieve SEO. The blogs did include tourism stakeholders from each council area including MUDC</p> <p>LNP attended Meet the Buyer Belfast (April 19), ITOA, Belfast (September 19) and World Travel Market, London (November 19). Attendance is also planned at the Seamus Heaney event in Christ Church, Dublin 6th February with MUDC.</p>
<p>4. Lough Neagh Cycle Trail Monitor condition of Lough Neagh Cycle Trail as part of the establishment of a Heritage Trail under the HLF Landscape partnership project</p>	31/03/2020	<p>Lough Neagh Partnership will help promote the cycle trail and Lap the Lough event throughout 2019/20.</p>	<p>Partnership continues to work with promoters to raise profile of event</p>
<p>5. Lough Neagh Cooperation Project Help LAGS and Mid Ulster District Council develop Lough Neagh Cooperation Project</p>	31/03/2020	<p>Help and assist Lags to develop Rural Development Programme Cooperation project.</p> <p>Continue to provide help and advice on the implementation of this project for the LAGs and Councils around the shores of the Lough</p>	<p>LNP involvement in Co-operation project rejected.</p> <p>No common marketing aspect of Lough Neagh Co-operation project</p>

6. Lough Neagh Food Programme Apply to DAERA and develop strategy for Lough Neagh food with particular emphasis on Lough Neagh fish with a view to securing EU or RDP funding for a food programme.	31/03/2020	Implement new food programme with DAERA including partners from Mid Ulster e.g. Bakehouse.	Artisan food group continues to be developed and set up with reps from Mid Ulster (Bronagh's Bakehouse, Bellaghy & Rosehill House, Stewartstown). The group collaborated on Christmas Hampers which were promoted and sold prior to Christmas (pilot). New members will be recruited in 2020. An artisan study trip has been arranged to Northern Italy for the group 24 th – 28 th Feb 2020.
7. Liaison with MUDC Ongoing liaison MUDC	31/03/2020	Minimum of 3 meetings with MUDC officers in 2019/20 to update on progress and provide general advice.	LNP Manager has regular meetings with Head of Tourism in MU Council to discuss how new projects could be developed on Lough but as part MU Tourism Strategy.
8. NIEA Shoreline Plan Attract new funding and engage with farmers and landowners on western shore to improve condition of western shore	31/03/2020	LNP staff will assist in implementation and administration of £54,000 per annum over 3 years which has been secured from NIEA towards the development and implementation of management for Special Protected Areas (SPAs). Part of this project will relate to the Mid Ulster District Council area.	Project has commenced with all islands on the Lough having been visited. Important beaches have also been surveyed. New boats provided and for Island and beach conservation. Both plans were printed and provided to NIEA for comment and signing off
9. New Group Farm Scheme Set up new Group Farm Scheme on western shores of Lough Neagh and Mid Ulster Council area	31/03/2020	LNP will continue to implement, manage and administer the existing £200,000 DAERA Group Farm Scheme for LN with main focus in western shores/ mid ulster area giving help and assistance to over 30 farmers along the Mid Ulster shoreline. Arrange training and best practice for an additional 20 farmers for 2019/20	95 farmers now involved in the scheme. New programme set up for east side of Lough. Training arranged

		Attract over £200,000 EU EFS funding into the area through uptake of new EFS plans and attract new EFS investment.	Final figure to be calculated but at present exceeding target
10. Lough Neagh Navigation Help develop new markers and navigation for LN	31/03/2020	LNP staff will meet regularly with stakeholders to develop dredging and marker proposals	Set up new navigation authority sub group for lough New meeting held with DFI and correspondence sent
11. Mid Ulster Community Planning Meetings Help and assist with development of Mid Ulster Community Plan	31/03/2020	Lough Neagh intends to attend Mid Ulster Community Planning meetings and feed into LN issues and concerns	Liaised with staff regarding CP input
12. Mid Ulster HLF Advise and assist with Mid Ulster HLF Landscape project THOAULP		LNP staff intend to provide advice and assistance to help with MU HLF Landscape proposal.	Regular meetings with Mid Ulster staff regarding HLF projects. HLF projects developed in this period.
13. Moyle Cattle Project	31/03/2020	LNP staff will apply to DAERA to develop a Moyle Cattle Food Chain project including partners in Mid Ulster.	Moyle Cattle application developed with members now agreed. Initial application accepted Application successful and being implemented
14. Coalisland HLF Great Places Project Submit application	31/03/2020	LNP staff will implement Great Place project in Coalisland and wider area. Will spend £150,000 this year within MUDC area.	Project now operating with steering group. Major event held to celebrate opening of Coalisland Museum. Halloween event also held. New Museum group set up.