

Report on	Sperrins Sculpture Trail Update
Date of Meeting	4 th February 2021
Reporting Officer	Michael Browne, Head of Tourism
Contact Officer	Michael Browne, Head of Tourism

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	The purpose of this report is to provide members with an update on progress in relation to the Sperrins Sculpture Trail project. The report seeks approval to accept a Letter of Offer from DAERA through its Rural Tourism Scheme for funding towards Phase 2 of the Sculpture Trail project, i.e. capital delivery, together with approval of the Council's financial contribution.
2.0	Background
2.1	The Sperrins Sculpture Trail project is a joint tourism initiative developed by Derry City and Strabane District Council (DCSDC) acting as the lead partner, Fermanagh & Omagh District Council (FODC) and Mid Ulster District Council (MUDC). It has been identified as a key flagship project and economic driver to deliver upon the strategic aims articulated by each of the three partner councils.
2.2	A number of sites were considered within the Sperrins AONB and the entrance of Davagh Forest was selected as the preferred site for the sculpture location within the Mid Ulster district with other sites having been ruled out under an options appraisal process. The other two installations will be located at the summit of Mullaghcarn (Fermanagh & Omagh District Council) and the former Sperrins Heritage Centre (Derry City and Strabane District Council)
3.0	Main Report

3.1	The Sperrins Sculpture Trail project incorporates two phases; Phase 1 relating to the technical study and project competition, while Phase 2 relates to the capital delivery element of the project. Derry City and Strabane District Council acted as lead partner. In respect of Phase 1 which will now be completed with the identification and appointment of a preferred artist team.
3.2	The appointment of the team is subject to the Letters of Offer for funding being accepted by each of the three partner Councils. Both DCSDC and F&O have confirmed their acceptance alongside their respective match funding.
3.3	Members will be aware that approval was granted in September 2018 to develop and make application to the Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs' (DAERA) Rural Tourism Scheme (RTS) for a maximum potential grant of £500k with a potential 25% match funding from the Council for the Sperrins Sculpture Trail project.
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	<p>Financial:</p> <p>The total price of the successful tender is £1,774,581.30 which is within the initial Global Cost Plan estimated for the project. The total cost of Mid Ulster District Council's element of the overall project is £581,987.33, comprised of funding of £426,702.99 (75% DAERA's Rural Tourism Scheme) and a Council contribution of £142,234.34 (25%) over the next two financial years and an additional £13,050 for professional fees, which can be met from within existing Tourism and Culture & Arts budgets this financial year.</p>
	<p>Human:</p> <p>The required support will be included within the work plans from the Tourism development & Arts and Cultural development Officer Teams.</p>
	<p>Risk Management:</p> <p>All potential risks associated with the project have been identified by the Project Board and are discussed as a standing agenda item at monthly project Board meetings</p>
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & Good Relations Implications:

	Both Tourism services and Culture & Arts services are delivered by the respective officer teams to be fully inclusive, and are designed to encourage wide participation from all sections of the community and promoting and supporting good relations between all sections of the community within Mid Ulster
	<p>Rural Needs Implications:</p> <p>A key aspect of the proposed Sperrins Sculpture Trail Project addresses Rural needs issues and enhances the unspoilt and rural nature of the Sperrins AONB region as one that has significant potential to increase visitor numbers to this region.</p>
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	<p>That the committee notes the report and, subject to the Development Committee adopting the recommendations at its next meet on 11/2/2021, recommends that the Council:</p> <p>(1) Authorise the release of the match funding required, being £142,234.34 (25% of the tender cost of the Mid Ulster District Council element of the project) to be expended between the 2020/21 and 2021/22 financial years in accordance with the progression of the project works, the funds having been previously included within the Council's Capital Programme.</p> <p>(2) Authorise the officers to fund the relevant professional fees amounting to £13,050 from the Tourism & Culture and Arts 2020/21 budgets.</p> <p>(3) Instructs its officers to review the current capital budget and implement such steps as are necessary to ensure that all capital costs associated with capital projects, including legal and other associated costs, are properly incurred and funded from the relevant capital project budget.</p>
6.0	Documents Attached & References