

<b>Report on</b>	Report on Tourism Groups Mid Ulster - 2020
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	16 January 2020
<b>Reporting Officer</b>	Michael Browne
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Mary Mc Gee

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

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	To inform members of the progress made through the tourism teams work at trade shows and exhibitions in 2019. The challenge here is that the travel trade is not a single entity. It consists of different types of operators and third party agents operating a range of business models.
1.2	The key and the challenge is finding the right match for the facility or business. The tourism team continued to work on this in 2019 and plans for 2020 will include continuing promotion of the region and the tourism trade including Seamus Heaney HomePlace, Hill of The O'Neill and Ranfurly House, US Grants and the new Davagh Dark Sky Observatory due to open in April 2020.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Background</b>
2.1	Mid Ulster Council Tourism Plan sets out our vision for Mid Ulster Tourism. Aims of the plan include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To grow tourism as an economic driver.</li> <li>• To profile and promote Mid Ulster to enhance the visibility of the area and boost visitation and spend.</li> </ul>
2.2	<b>Working with the travel trade</b> <p>Throughout 2019 Council tourism team have attended a series of trade and tourism B-to-B events and exhibitions including Meet the Buyer, GB Coach Operators, World Travel Market and the Incoming Tour Operators event in Belfast. This work is starting to show results for 2020 and beyond. Key to this are the linkages between the public and private sector businesses in Mid Ulster particularly those working through the Tourism Development Group clusters.</p>

<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	Analysis and research across a sample of businesses in Mid Ulster indicates that going forward into 2020 they continue to attract existing and new business into the region. To date 4 businesses surveyed have conservatively reported over £170,000 worth of bookings into 2020. Seamus Heaney HomePlace have confirmed 2020 bookings to date from operators including: Cara Group Travel, Boston, Celtic Tours Albany New York, and new Cruise ship bookings from Derry with Excursions Ireland.
3.2	Businesses including Davagh Dark Skies and Seamus Heaney HomePlace and our private sector are also reporting advanced positive negotiations with a number of high profile Incoming Tour Operators including CIE, Brack Tours, Irish Welcome Tours, Brendan Tours, EF Tours and are awaiting final contracts on these for 2020 and onwards.
3.3	Tourism NI have just confirmed the Meet The Buyer event for March 2020 and International Tour Operators will be visiting the region and plan to visit 9 sites across Mid Ulster including Seamus Heaney HomePlace, Davagh Dark Skies, Sperrin View Glamping Bakehouse NI, Glenshane Country Farm, Friels Bar & Restaurant, Rosehill House, Stewartstown, Beaghmore Stone Circles and Corick House Hotel.
3.4	Three of our products Seamus Heaney HomePlace, Davagh Dark Skies and Glenshane Country Farm have also been selected as signature brand experiences in the new Tourism NI Embrace A Giant Spirit brand.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Other Considerations</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Financial, Human Resources &amp; Risk Implications</b>
	Financial:
	Human: Tourism staff support required.
	Risk Management: Risk assessment will be carried at the stand.
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Screening &amp; Impact Assessments</b>
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: N/A
	Rural Needs Implications: N/A
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Recommendation(s)</b>
5.1	Council to continue to support our attractions and trade in this work.
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached &amp; References</b>
	N/A