

A

Minutes of Meeting of the Development Committee of Mid Ulster District Council held on Thursday 16 June 2016 in the Council Offices, Ballyronan Road, Magherafelt

Members Present	Councillor Molloy, Chair Councillors Burton, Clarke, Cuddy (7.28 pm), Doris, Elattar, Forde, McAleer (7.06 pm), McNamee, T Quinn, J Shiels
Officers in Attendance	Ms Campbell, Director of Culture and Leisure Mr Browne, Head of Tourism Mr Hill, Head of Parks Ms Linney, Head of Community Development Mr McCance, Head of Culture and Arts Ms McIntyre, Programmes and Policy Officer Miss Thompson, Committee Services Officer
Others in Attendance	Agenda Item 4: South West College - Mrs Farquhar, SUSE+ Mentor Mr McManus Deputy Head of Training

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm.

D149/16 Apologies

Councillors McEldowney, C O'Neill and Wilson.

D150/16 Declaration of Interests

The Chair reminded members of their responsibility with regard to declarations of interest particularly in relation to Paper Q, which, although in confidential business the Chair encouraged Members to make any declarations of interest they may have at this stage of the meeting.

D151/16 Chair's Business

The Chair spoke in relation to the recent and premature passing of Mr Eamon McClean, Manager of Speedwell Trust and who had worked in partnership with Council. The Chair offered the condolences of the Council to the McClean family.

Councillor Burton stated there was great respect for Mr McClean within the community and spoke of the shock of hearing of Mr McClean's untimely death.

Councillor T Quinn stated he was on the Board of Trustees for the Speedwell Trust and that Mr McClean would be irreplaceable. The Councillor stated Mr McClean's death was very sad for his family and the community.

D152/16 South West College: SUSE+ Presentation

The Chair welcomed representatives from South West College and invited them to make their presentation on the SUSE+ programme.

Mr McManus thanked Council for its ongoing support of the Step Up to Sustainable Employment (SUSE+) programme, he advised that SUSE+ had now been operational for a year and was over-performing in its targets. Mr McManus stated it was hoped that over the duration of the programme that 202 people will enter employment which will be of benefit to the local economy. Members were provided with an overview of the programme, its catchment and partner organisations, funding sources of the programme and how targets were being met and exceeded.

Councillor McAleer entered the meeting at 7.06 pm

Mrs Farquhar also outlined her role as a mentor to individuals participating in the programme and highlighted the 3 phase programme strategy. Mrs Farquhar emphasised that the programme provides a tailored approach and provides specialised development for each individuals needs to assist them back to employment.

Mr McManus referred to the operating structure of SUSE+ and stated that the programme has a strong steering committee. Mr McManus highlighted the key concepts of SUSE+ and the key priorities for development of the programme for 2016-2017.

Mr McManus concluded by stating that the college would shortly be bidding for Peace IV funding for a cross border project and asked for Councils ongoing support in respect of this.

The Chair, Councillor Molloy stated that the presentation provided a good insight into the SUSE+ programme and hoped the college would be successful in receiving Peace IV funding.

Councillor J Shiels congratulated Mr McManus and Mrs Farquhar on the success of the project and stated he was pleased to hear that the programme offered a tailored approach to participants from all age groups.

In response to Councillor McNamee's question Mr McManus advised that a greater focus would be given to the Cookstown area this year to improve performance in that area.

Councillor Clarke stated that SUSE+ was a fantastic programme and thanked the officers for their work. The Councillor felt that the needs of a rural area are different to that of urban areas and that this programme offered a local approach to the needs of Mid Ulster.

Mrs Farquhar advised she had previously worked in both the private and public sector and she could honestly say that this was the best programme she had ever worked on because of its tailored approach.

The Chair, Councillor Molloy thanked Mr McManus and Mrs Farquhar for their presentation following which they withdrew from the meeting at 7.25 pm.

D153/16 Minutes of the Development Committee held on Thursday 12 May 2016

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor Burton and

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of the Development Committee held on Thursday 12 May 2016 (D116/16 to D140/16 and D148/16), were considered and signed as correct and accurate.

Councillor McNamee spoke in relation to the re-opening of Tullaghoge Fort and commended the staff who had worked on providing such a great facility. The Councillor referred to the new entrance and car park and felt that Tullaghoge Fort was now much more accessible to everyone. Councillor McNamee felt there could be further improvements made to Tullaghoge Fort by providing a toilet block and a playpark.

Councillor J Shiels concurred with Councillor McNamee's comments, he stated that the re-opening of Tullaghoge Fort had been his first visit and again congratulated those who had worked on the project. Councillor J Shiels agreed that a toilet block should be provided at Tullaghoge Fort.

Councillor Cuddy entered the meeting at 7.28 pm

Matters for Decision

D154/16 Arts and Culture and Sports Development Community Support 2016/17

The Director of Culture and Leisure presented previously circulated report which sought approval for the Arts and Culture and Sports Development Support Programmes for 2016/17.

In response to Councillor Cuddy's question the Director of Culture and Leisure advised that this was a new programme, she continued that one of the aspects relates to how Council supports schools and that a further paper will come before committee on this in the near future.

Proposed by Councillor Clarke
Seconded by Councillor McNamee and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to agree the proposed Arts and Culture Support Programme and Sports Development Grants as detailed within report.

D155/16 Erasmus Youth Project

The Head of Community Development presented previously circulated report which sought approval for Council to participate in a European ERASMUS Youth Project based on European citizenship and participation. The Head stated that in light of the reference made as part of the presentation by South West College regarding their EU Citizenship project, that it would also be important to link.

Proposed by Councillor Elattar
Seconded by Councillor T Quinn and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to participate in the ERASMUS Youth Project with officer time being committed to transnational meetings over a three year period.

D156/16 Countryside Management Services

The Head of Parks presented previously circulated report which sought approval for specialist consultancy/investigatory services to assist Parks Service with countryside access disputes and public path development issues.

In response to Councillor Cuddy's question the Head of Parks advised that slippage monies would come from throughout the organisation.

Proposed by Councillor McAleer
Seconded by Councillor J Shiels and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to proceed with procuring the necessary services to assist Mid Ulster District Council in the delivery of Countryside Management Services over a period not extending beyond 31 March 2017. Services to be procured from slippage monies available to Council.

D157/16 Irish Language Development Programme and Code of Courtesy for Irish

The Head of Culture and Arts presented previously circulated report which sought approval of the Irish Language Development Programme for 2016/17 and adoption of the Code of Courtesy for Irish.

Councillor Cuddy asked if there was any feedback available as to the success of last year's programme.

The Head of Culture and Arts advised that the programme for this year was based on the successes of last year and agreed to bring a report to a future meeting.

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor McAleer and

- Resolved** That it be recommended to Council –
- To approve that proposed Irish Language Development Programme for 2016/17.
 - That the proposed Courtesy Code for Irish be adopted.

D158/16 Regional and Minority Language Bursary Scheme

The Head of Culture and Arts presented previously circulated report which sought the approval of the proposed Regional and Minority Language Bursary Scheme allocation to be awarded to successful applicants for 2016/17. The Head of Culture and Arts advised that there was a 23% increase in the number of bursaries awarded from last year and a 22% increase in the amount of funding provided.

Councillor Cuddy expressed the need for Council to give consideration to providing other schemes in order to cater for all of the community.

Councillor J Shiels asked if there is a need to go to the Gaeltacht or if more activities could be provided locally.

The Head of Culture and Arts advised that the Gaeltacht is located mostly in Donegal and that bursaries are mostly for students although families are also now applying. The Head of Culture and Arts advised that going to the Gaeltacht helps the individual to immerse themselves in the Irish language.

Councillor J Shiels advised he could think of areas within Mid Ulster which could provide support for Irish language activities and that Council may wish to give consideration to this in the future. The Councillor asked if provision of bursaries is means tested.

The Head of Culture and Arts advised that the bursary scheme is not means tested but is cross checked with other schemes ie. Líofo.

Councillor Clarke agreed with the sentiment that there would be a time in the future when people would come to Mid Ulster to learn Irish.

Councillor Cuddy reiterated his comments that Council spends a lot of money on this bursary scheme but that there is a section of the community that is not catered for and that Council needs to offer a balance.

The Director of Culture and Leisure advised that Council's Ulster Scots policy is under development which will bring progress in respect of Councillor Cuddy's comments.

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor Clarke and

- Resolved** That it be recommended to Council that the Regional and Minority Language Bursaries be approved for the 231 successful applicants identified with a total amount allocated of £29,895.65.

Matters for Information

D159/16 Leisure Services Progress Report

Members considered previously circulated report which provided update on the progress being made regarding activities in Leisure Services and highlighted events that will be occurring in the future.

Councillor McNamee asked if there was any update in relation to broken glass incident at Greenvale Leisure Centre.

The Director of Culture and Leisure advised that investigations were still ongoing as to the reason for the glass breaking but that the viewing gallery had been reopened for persons waiting on those taking swimming lessons with wooden panels now in place on the balcony.

In response to Councillor McNamee's question the Director of Culture and Leisure advised that the Pulse sub-committee is scheduled to meet twice a year and that the last meeting had taken place in February, a further meeting is due to be organised in the near future.

Councillor Cuddy suggested that Pulse be invited to attend a future Development committee meeting.

The Director of Culture and Leisure advised that the five year break point in the Pulse contract would be in September and that a paper will come before Members which will set out future management options of the Greenvale Leisure Centre.

Councillor Cuddy still felt it would be useful for Members to meet with Pulse.

The Director of Culture and Leisure advised that the paper to come before Members will provide a background to the management of Greenvale Leisure Centre and that at this stage timescales may not allow for Pulse to come to committee before this paper is considered.

Councillors McNamee and J Shiels both felt that there was a sub-committee in place in which discussions should be directed through.

Councillor Burton referred to reference within report to Fairhill Bowling/Tennis Pavilion and asked if Council work with King George V Pavilion in Fivemiletown.

The Director of Culture and Leisure advised she would check this for the Councillor.

D160/16 Small Grants for Greenways

Members considered previously circulated report which advised of an opportunity for Councils and other bodies to avail of funding to develop their own schemes as part of a greenway network for the entire region.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to submit initial expressions of Interest for two proposed greenway routes to include – Ulster Canal route from Moy to Caledon and Caledon via Clogher Valley to Lisnaskea.

D161/16 Mid Ulster District Angling Summer Schools

Members noted previously circulated report which provided update on the scheduled launch date and promotional event for the Mid Ulster District Council Summer Angling Schools.

In response to Councillor J Shiels question the Head of Parks advised that officers were currently looking at the condition of facilities at Glenone and considering how to develop the site and its activities.

D162/16 Parks Service Progress Report

Members noted previously circulated report which provided update on the progress being made regarding activities associated to Parks Services and highlight events or consultations occurring in the future.

Councillor Burton asked when Caledon play park would re-open.

The Head of Parks advised that the play park should be open by end of June.

Councillor Molloy asked if wardens for Railway Park were in place yet.

The Head of Parks advised that shortlisting is due to take place within the next week and would hope that Railway Park Wardens would be in place in the near future.

In response to Councillor Cuddy's question the Head of Parks advised that there was still a view to progress proposals for Railway Park within resources.

D163/16 Culture and Arts Update Report

Members noted previously circulated report which provided update on the progress being made in Culture and Arts, the report detailed events that occurred during April and May and highlighted events and activities that will be occurring in the future.

D164/16 Supplementary Guidance on Regional and Minority Languages

Members noted previously circulated report which provided update on the supplementary guidance issued by DCAL for Regional and Minority Languages.

D165/16 Tourism Department Update

Members noted previously circulated report which provided update on recent activities undertaken and upcoming events within the Tourism Department.

Councillor J Shiels stated that it was good to see the continued success of Maghera Walled Garden and congratulated officers working at the site.

Councillor Forde stated that the grass at Maghera Walled Garden needed to be cut.

D166/16 Halloween Activities in Mid Ulster

Members noted previously circulated report which advised of Council activities which are being planned to celebrate Halloween in Mid Ulster.

D167/16 Economic Development Report

Members noted previously circulated report which provided update on Regional Start Initiative and Maghera Development Framework.

Councillor Burton referred to the Rural Development Programme which is currently open to applications and advised she was aware of applicants who were experiencing difficulty in progressing their business plans with the delivery organisation. The Councillor stated the closing date for applications to this programme was fast approaching.

The Director of Culture and Leisure stated that officers would follow up on the issue raised by the Councillor and that if there were matters of concern it was important that officers are made aware of them.

Confidential Business

Proposed by Councillor J Shiels
Seconded by Councillor McNamee and

Resolved That items (D168/16 to D172/16) be taken as confidential business.

D173/16 Duration of Meeting

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm and ended at 8.25 pm

CHAIR _____

DATE _____

B

Subject: Recommended Sportsperson/Team Representative/Sports Club Competitive Grant allocations (Rolling Programme).

Reporting Officer: Liam Glavin, Head of Leisure

1	Purpose of Report
1.1	To present to members the proposed Sportsperson/Team Representative/Sports Club Competitive Grant allocations (Rolling Programme).

2	Background
2.1	<p>Following the public call for this grant in February 2016 there were 10 individual applications which were awarded £2,125.00 in May 2016, there have been 20 further applications to the rolling programme of Sportsperson/Team Representative/Sports Club Competitive Grants.</p> <p>Eligibility criteria compliance was completed by officers.</p>

3	Key Issues
3.1	<p>Detailed analysis of the proposed grant awards are attached for your information.</p> <p>Summary detail is as follows: 20 applicants awarded a total of £6,250.</p>

4	Resources
4.1	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>There is £1,625 left in the budget.</p>
4.2	<p><u>Human</u></p> <p>N/A</p>
4.3	<p><u>Basis for Professional/ Consultancy Support</u></p> <p>N/A</p>
4.4	<p><u>Other</u></p> <p>N/A</p>

5	Other Considerations
5.1	N/A

6	Recommendations
6.1	Members are asked to agree the recommendations for successful grant applications.

7	List of Documents Attached
7.1	Grant recipients and amount of grants to be awarded.

Appendix 1

GRANT TYPE	Area	Organisation Name	Project Title	Date Assessed	Amount Requested	Score	Amount Awarded	Comments
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Sportsperson/Team Representative 75% grant on eligible cost to a max of £250

Ind Rep	M	Ruth Arrell	Ladies International Fly Fishing Competition	01.06.16	£456.00	86	£225.00	
Ind Rep	M	Jenna Bowman	European Netball Championships	01.06.16	£250.00	80	£225.00	
Ind Rep	M	Kyla Bowman	European Netball Championships	01.06.16	£250.00	80	£225.00	
Ind Rep	M	Shane Donnelly	International Fell Running Competition	01.06.16	£240.00	80	£225.00	
Ind Rep	D	Noah Grimes	International Football Competition	01.06.16	£250.00	80	£225.00	
Ind Rep	C	Joshua McCabe	International Hockey Tournament @ Lilleshall	01.06.16	£185.00	75	£200.00	
Ind Rep	C	Scott McCabe	International Hockey Tournament @ Lilleshall	01.06.16	£185.00	75	£200.00	
Ind Rep	C	Kirstie McCammon	European Netball Championships	01.06.16	£250.00	80	£225.00	
Ind Rep	M	Declan McFerran	Taewondo International Competitons	01.06.16	£424.91	76	£200.00	
Ind Rep	C	Kayleigh O'Neill	International Ladies Darts	01.06.16	£250.00	92	£250.00	
Ind Rep	C	Jacqueline O'Neill	International Ladies Darts	01.06.16	£250.00	92	£250.00	

Sports Team Representative 75% grant on eligible cost to a max of £500

Team Rep	M	Aodh Ruadh Ladies GFC	All Ireland Feile	01.06.16	£2,000.00	74	£400.00	
Team Rep	M	Dungannon United Youth FC	Costa Blanca, Spain	01.06.16	£500.00	95	£500.00	
Team Rep	M	Edendork GAA	All Ireland Feile	01.06.16	£500.00	72	£400.00	
Team Rep	M	Michael Davitt's Camogie Club, Swatragh	All Ireland Feile	01.06.16	£500.00	71	£400.00	
Team Rep	D	Mid Ulster Zone ~ Ladies	Irish Inter Zone Competition	01.06.16	£500.00	73	£400.00	
Team Rep	C	Mid Ulster Zone ~ Men	British Isles Bowling Competition	01.06.16	£500.00	90	£500.00	
Team Rep	C	O'Donovan Rossa GAC	All Ireland Feile	01.06.16	£500.00	75	£400.00	
Team Rep	C	St Malachys GAC, Castledawson	All Ireland Feile	01.06.16	£500.00	72	£400.00	
Team Rep	M	St Trea's GFC, Ballymaguigan	All Ireland Feile	01.06.16	£500.00	71	£400.00	

C

Subject Mid Ulster District Council Culture & Arts Strategy

Reporting Officer Tony McCance

1	Purpose of Report
1.1	To seek approval to engage specialist services to develop a five year Culture & arts strategy for Mid Ulster District Council's Culture & Arts Services.

2	Background
2.1	At the meeting of the Development Committee in May 2016, The committee was presented with the Service Improvement Plan for Culture & Arts Services.
2.2	The Service Improvement Plan confirmed the core activities and actions that would form the Culture & Arts Service Work Plan for 2016-17. Detailed within the Plan was a proposal to develop an integrated five year Culture & Arts strategy for the Mid-Ulster region (2017-2022).
2.3	Given the current development of the Culture & Arts service offering within the Mid Ulster region (which includes the development of The Hill of the O'Neill project in Dungannon, and the new Seamus Heaney HomePlace facility in Bellaghy), coupled with the existing service offering both within Ranfurly House Arts and Visitor Centre, Dungannon and the Burnavon Theatre Cookstown, it is appropriate and timely to develop an integrated Culture & Arts Strategy which will provide direction for the delivery of Culture & Arts Services over the next five year period

3	Key Issues
3.1	The development of an integrated Culture & Arts Strategy will assist in ensuring the delivery of high quality arts and cultural activity across the mid ulster region directly by and/or supported by Mid Ulster District Council. This will lead to enhanced local and regional civic pride, assisting in building and strengthening the arts and cultural sector within the region and will assist in the development of the arts and cultural skills base, shaping the existing and future arts and cultural infrastructure within the mid ulster region.
3.2	The development of an integrated arts & Cultural strategy will provide clear guidance and direction to both Council and staff in the delivery of key service objectives. It is envisaged that the strategy will include a comprehensive audit of current Arts & Cultural provision to be carried out (including community arts and cultural activity); Propose priorities for Arts and Cultural development in the district; identify any gaps in Arts and Cultural provision; propose a five year action plan for implementation and identify potential funding sources, delivery partners (where appropriate) and costings for key projects/activities and actions identified within the strategy.

4	Resources
4.1	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>The cost of delivery of the strategy is not anticipated to exceed £15,000. This can be met from within existing agreed budgets.</p>
4.2	<p><u>Human</u></p> <p>None</p>
4.3	<p><u>Basis for Professional/ Consultancy Support</u></p> <p>Procurement of specialist consultancy services in relation to development of a strategy and which will also assist with the sourcing of associated external funding to deliver key elements/projects/activities detailed within the strategy</p>
4.4	<p><u>Other</u></p> <p>None</p>
5	Other Considerations
5.1	None
6	Recommendations
6.1	<p>Council approval is sought to procure specialist services to develop a five year Culture & Arts strategy for Mid Ulster District Council's Culture & Arts Services as identified within 2016/17 Service Improvement Plan and to approve allocation of up to £15,000 from 2016/17 budget.</p>
7	List of Documents Attached
7.1	None

D

Subject **Coarse Angling Tariff**

Reporting Officer **Nigel Hill Head of Parks**

1	Purpose of Report
1.1	To seek members approval for the introduction of a new tariff structure to cover newly developed coarse angling activities on council water recreation properties.

2	Background
2.1	The addition of coarse angling to Dungannon Park Lake has necessitated the introduction of a specific tariff to differentiate it from other angling activities.

3	Key Issues
3.1	Tariff levels proposed following on from consultation with Ulster Coarse Fishing Federation and similar public angling facilities.
3.2	The capacity to track income generated by coarse angling permit sales.
3.3	Public recognition of coarse angling activities available at council managed facilities.
3.4	Coarse and Game angling opportunities will be available to visiting anglers throughout the year with no seasonality restrictions.

4	Resources
4.1	<p><u>Financial</u> N/A</p> <p><u>Human</u> Existing resources adequate.</p> <p><u>Basis for Professional/ Consultancy Support</u> N/A</p> <p><u>Other</u> N/A</p>

5	Other Considerations
5.1	N/A

6	Recommendations
6.1	Approval is sought to accept the proposed tariff structure as presented in Appendix 1

7	List of Documents Attached
7.1	Coarse Angling Tariff Appendix 1

Appendix 1

DAY TICKET			
ADULT	£5.00	Return all fish	
ADULT (Concession)	£3.00	Return all fish	
JUNIOR	£3.00	Return all fish	
SEASON TICKET			
ADULT	£96.00	6 months/Return all fish	
ADULT (Concession)	£57.50	6 months/Return all fish	
JUNIOR	£57.50	6 months/Return all fish	
GROUP RATES			
ADULT	£4.00	Events/competitions/Return all fish	11 + Anglers
JUNIOR(Concession)	£2.00	Events/competitions/Return all fish	11 + Anglers
TUITION			
ADULT (per session)	£4.00	Equipment excluded	
JUNIOR (per session)	£2.00	Equipment excluded	
EQUIPMENT HIRE (per session)	£5.00	Fishing Rod/Pole Landing net	

E

Report to	Development Committee
Subject	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Regional Start Initiative Update 2) Prince's Trust – Proposal 3) Network Personnel – Up for Work & Job Match Request 4) Irish Central Border Area Network – Request 2016/17 5) Women in Business Awards & Conference Request 6) Blackwater Regional Partnership Update 7) DfC Revitalise Scheme 2016/2017 – Cookstown & Dungannon Town Centres 8) Town Centre Positioning Study 9) Draft response to Programme for Government 2016/21 10) Wi-Fi in Maghera 11) Public Art for Magherafelt Town Centre.
Reporting Officer	Adrian McCreesh, Director of Business and Communities

1	Purpose of Report
1.1	To provide Members with an update on key activities as detailed above.

2	Background
2.1	<p>Regional Start Initiative (RSI) Update</p> <p>All 11 Councils agreed to roll forward the Regional Start Initiative Contract by Invest NI to October 2016, with Councils repaying expenditure from the Transferring Functions Budget. Invest NI will continue to forward updates to Councils on performance. Invest NI agreed to continue delivering the RSI on behalf of Councils until October 2016, to enable Councils to develop an ERDF Application to the new 'Growth and Jobs' Programme for a future initiative, and to then procure delivery agents for this.</p>
2.2	<p>Prince's Trust – Development Award Scheme Request</p> <p>The Development Awards seek to remove financial barriers that prevent young people entering employment, training or further education. All applications are assessed by a trained Prince's Trust assessor and the items (usually of the value of between £200 - £500) are purchased by the Trust on behalf of the beneficiary (please see Appendix 1).</p>

2.3	<p>Network Personnel: Up for Work & Job Match Programmes</p> <p>In September 2015, the Council's Development Committee agreed to provide match funding towards the delivery of a number of ESF Programmes in the Mid Ulster District Council area over 3 years. Network Personnel are the delivery agent for two of these, over a 3 year period: 'Up for Work' total value £543,552, (Council contributing £28,536) and 'Job Match' total value £590,397 (Council contributing £30,996).</p>
2.4	<p>ICBAN Request 2016 – 17</p> <p>Over the past number of years, a group of 8 northern and southern Councils (listed below) have provided a financial contribution towards ICBAN to support their work: Mid Ulster District Council, Fermanagh and Omagh Council, Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Council and Monaghan, Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim and Cavan County Councils.</p> <p>ICBAN has now submitted a request to Mid Ulster District Council for a contribution of £10,000 for financial year 2016/17 (i.e. at the same level as 2015/16). Please refer to Appendix 2.</p>
2.5	<p>Women in Business Awards and Conference Request</p> <p>Due to Councils' new responsibilities in promoting enterprise in underrepresented groups, Women in Business have approached Belfast City Council to request sponsorship from all 11 Councils towards the Women in Business Conference (in September 2016) and their 6th Annual Women in Business Awards (Nov 2016), (see Appendix 3).</p>
2.6	<p>Blackwater Regional Partnership – Strategic Review</p> <p>The Blackwater Regional Partnership (BRP) is an organisation established over 20 years ago, under the auspices of three legacy administrative authorities, Armagh City and District, Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Councils and Monaghan County Council, to develop cross border linkages. It has over this period delivered on a range of social, environmental and economic cross border projects including an Interreg IV Environmental and River protection project at over £2m. The Partnership has also been instrumental in driving forward joint asset development across the border, including roads, bridges and the Ulster Canal.</p> <p>Mid Ulster District Council has taken over the lead in the administration, staff and financial management services that are provided to the cross border body from the legacy Council. The Partnership operates on a yearly Service Level Agreement between the Partnership and Mid Ulster District Council. The Board consists of 4 elected members from each participating Council with Cllr P Gildernew, Cllr K Reid, Cllr C Cuthbertson and Cllr D Mullen representing MUDC. Directors and relevant officers represent an Executive Committee who, with the Board, are responsible for the strategic direction of the Partnership. The Partnership employs one full time member of staff.</p> <p>BRP are embarking on a strategic planning process as the new Councils have emerged through RPA. Mid Ulster District Council and Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Council have newly formed to join Monaghan County Council. The BRP Board and Executive Committee have pursued this strategic plan with the understanding that BRP needs to position itself and play a central role in this new operating environment.</p>

2.7	<p>DfC Revitalise Scheme 2016/2017- Cookstown & Dungannon Town Centres</p> <p>Department for Communities (DfC) have scheduled two Revitalisation schemes in the current financial year for Dungannon and Cookstown to a value of £150k each, subject to submission and assessment of applications from Council. Conditions of funding will include that projects must be completed by 31st March 2017. Council will be required to provide match funding to a total value of £30k towards delivery of the schemes: - the £30k has been budgeted for under Town Centre Regeneration. Each area will receive a similar allocation. Council will approach DfC for a similar scheme to be delivered in Magherafelt, once the Public Realm Scheme has been completed.</p>
2.8	<p>Town Centre Positioning Study</p> <p>Marketing and Promotion is one of the key themes contained in the Mid Ulster Town Centre Action Plan 2016/2017. Under this theme a review of the current marketing and branding of the three main towns: - Cookstown, Dungannon & Magherafelt was to be conducted. Following the conduction of meetings in each of the three towns with Traders' representatives and DEA's, initial findings identified a need to conduct a positioning study to identify propositions/uniqueness of each of the towns, up to a value of £20,000 (excluding vat and including expenses).</p>
2.9	<p>Draft Response to Programme for Government 2016/21</p> <p>The Economic Development section has compiled a Response on behalf of the Council which will be circulated to Members for comment/ input at the P R and S Committee on 7 July 2016. The deadline for submissions is 22 July 2016.</p>
2.10	<p>Maghera Wi-Fi</p> <p>Maghera is the last of the 5 towns requiring Wi-Fi. The current situation whereby there is no accessible Wi-Fi service is a detriment to the people who use the town Centre. An imbalance currently exists which can be addressed through funding within the existing budget.</p>
2.11	<p>Public Art for Magherafelt Town Centre</p> <p>Magherafelt Public Realm Scheme Strategy identified the need for a piece of Public Art on the Three Spires Roundabout in the Diamond area.</p>

3	Key Issues
3.1	<p>Regional Start Initiative (RSI)</p> <p>From 1 April 2015, the RSI Contract has been managed by Invest NI on behalf of the 11 Councils until the end of the third Service Level Agreement period on 21 October 2016. Annual performance targets were established at the outset for (as per Invest NI's Contract with Enterprise NI) and have been used to set the target for the period 1 April – 22 October 2016 (on a pro-rata basis).</p> <p>Progress against the targets set for Mid Ulster from 1 April – 22 October 2016 is summarised below:</p>

	7 month Target for Mid Ulster	Achieved	% Achieved	
	(1 Apr 2015 – 22 Oct 2016)			
	Business Plan Approvals	244	57	23%
	Jobs promoted	150	43	29%
3.2	Prince's Trust – Development Awards Scheme Request The Prince's Trust has requested Mid Ulster District Council to partner with it, and a local business (Cunningham Covers) to match fund a 'Development Awards' project aimed at providing practical support to help a minimum of 20 unemployed young people across Mid Ulster to access sustainable employment, training and/or further education. The total cost would be £5,000, with the Trust contributing £1,250 Cunningham Covers providing £2,500, with the Council requested for up to £1,250 (Appendix 1)			
3.3	Network Personnel: Up for Work & Job Match Programmes Year 1 of both programmes is now complete, however, Network Personnel has been informed by their main funder, DEL, that Year 2 costs will be funded 100%. Network Personnel have requested the Council considers reallocating its 2016/17 funding (£12,000 and £11,029) towards providing further training / support to those participants who have exited each programme and who would benefit from developing higher levels skills in Level 2 or 3 in Sage Accounting, Health and Wellbeing and Creative Media (ESF funding is only for Level 1 accreditations). Workspace is also providing £13,156 and £13,202 respectively towards these costs. The proposal will add value to the current Programme to provide further assistance to a minimum of 66 individuals to resource their progress to achieve higher level qualifications, which will in turn increase each participant's skills and employment potential. The proposal will support their progress to achieve higher level qualifications in Level 2 Computerised Accounting, Health and Wellbeing and Creative Media and achieve additional outputs including delivering 66 new qualifications (making a new total of 199 for year 2), and 19 participants progressing to employment or (totalling 56 for Year 2) Across both programmes in year 2 this will result in a 32% increase in qualifications, Job Match will see a 42% increase in progress to employment and Up for Work a 60% increase.			
3.4	ICBAN Request 2016 /17 ICBAN's Report on work completed in 2015/16 was presented at the Development Committee on 10 March 2016. ICBAN's request to Mid Ulster District Council is for a contribution of £10,000 for the financial year 2016/17 (and is for the same amount as 2015/16 – see Appendix 2).			
3.5	Women in Business Conference and Awards Request It has been proposed that Councils sponsor both the Conference and Awards using the regional 'Go for It' brand as opposed to on an individual Council basis. The total requested is £12,000; £8,000 as a Key Conference Partner and £4,000 to sponsor the 'Best Start-Up Award' (see Appendix 3) which would link best to the current Regional Start Initiative. Councils contributing will each get one place at the awards. The cost to Mid Ulster District Council would be up to a maximum of £2,000.			

3.6	<p>Blackwater Regional Partnership Update</p> <p>Three quotations were received for the delivery of the Strategic Review, following assessment Venturei Network were appointed at a cost of up to £4,350 (including expenses and excluding vat). The final report will be completed by 31 August 2016.</p>
3.7	<p>DFC Revitalise Scheme 2016/2017- Cookstown & Dungannon Town Centres</p> <p>Officers have met to discuss potential ideas for application and would recommend the following projects to go forward:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid Ulster Town Centre Shop Improvement Scheme – Cookstown and Dungannon properties currently on the reserve list. • Spruce-Up Scheme at Shambles Lane (Dungannon) • Branding Programme (Dungannon) • Branded Shopping Bags (Cookstown) • Footfall Counters (Cookstown) • Event Marquees (Cookstown / Dungannon) • Christmas Lights Contribution (Cookstown) • Video Production- promote assets of Town Centre & reinforce branding (Cookstown) <p>An update on progress will be reported at a future committee meeting.</p>
3.8	<p>Town Centre Positioning Study</p> <p>Officers have met with the Communications Department and a terms of Reference are currently being developed to appoint a consultant to undertake a Town Centre Positioning Study of a value of £20,000 (including expenses and excluding vat).</p>
3.9	<p>Maghera Wi-Fi</p> <p>Shoppers are unable to keep connected and visitors cannot access tourist information in the town. Seek approval for £15,000 from within existing budget to install WI-Fi for Maghera. A competent contractor will be required to install Wi-Fi in Maghera. A Terms of Reference will be drafted up to a value of £15,000 (excluding vat and including expenses).</p>
3.10	<p>Public Art for Magherafelt Town Centre</p> <p>The Mid Ulster Town Centre Action Plan identified the need to explore Public Art projects in strategic locations throughout the district and has set aside £30,000 to deliver this. Officers are working on options to develop a suitable piece of Public Art for the Three Spires Roundabout to enhance the Public Realm Scheme when it is completed.</p>
4 4.1	<p>Resource Implications</p> <p>Financial</p> <p>Prince's Trust – amount £1,250 available from within LED Budget 2016/17. ICBAN – £10,000 provided for within LED Budget for financial year 2016/17. Women in Business – Up to £2,000 is available from the 2016/17 LED Budget Network Personnel – Redeployment of £23,029 is available from within existing 2016/17 LED budget</p>

	<p>Blackwater Regional Partnership Strategic Review – £4,350 provided for within BRP budget 2016/17</p> <p>Town Centre Positioning Study - £20,000 provided for within town centre budget</p> <p>Department for Communities (DfC) Revitalise Scheme – match funding of £30,000 is provided for within town centre budget</p> <p>Maghera Wi-Fi - £15,000 is available from existing Physical Regeneration Improving Infrastructure budget.</p> <p>Public Art for Magherafelt Town Centre - Within Council Budget</p>
4.2	<p><u>Human</u></p> <p>Officers' time.</p>
4.3	<p><u>Basis for Professional/ Consultancy Support</u></p> <p>Blackwater Regional Partnership Strategic Review – independent consultant required to make recommendations on future work and direction</p> <p>Town Centre Positioning Study – External professional assistance will be required to complete a detailed Positioning Study; provision of such technical support to the value of up to £20,000 has been budgeted for in 2016/17.</p> <p>DfC Revitalise Scheme 2016/17 – External professional assistance will be required to deliver some of the identified projects.</p> <p>Maghera WI-FI – Contractor required to deliver Wi-fi</p>
4.4	<p><u>Other</u></p> <p>N/A</p>

5	Other Considerations
5.1	None

6	Recommendations
6.1	<p>Regional Start Initiative and New Business Start Programme</p> <p>Members to note progress on the Regional Start Initiative.</p>
6.2	<p>Princes Trust – Development Award Scheme Request</p> <p>It is recommended to approve a contribution towards the Prince's Trust of up to £1,250 towards the provision of a minimum of 20 Development Awards to assist unemployed young people from Mid Ulster access employment, training and/or further education.</p>
6.3	<p>Network Personnel: Up for Work & Job Match Programmes</p> <p>It is recommended to approve the request to redeploy this 2016/17 (year 2) Council allocation of £23,029 for both Programmes towards supporting 66 programme participants to achieve higher level qualifications, to enhance their skills base and employment prospects.</p>
6.4	<p>ICBAN Request 2016/17</p> <p>It is recommended to:</p>

	<p>i) approve the provision of up to £10,000 funding for ICBAN from Council's Economic Development Budget 2016/17, to be paid in two equal instalments, subject to Council being provided with the requisite monitoring documentation (application form, confirmation of match funding, copies of accounts, insurances financial report and Progress Reports).</p> <p>ii) approve the release of the first 50% payment once Council is in receipt of all documentation requested (outlined above). Progress updates from ICBAN will be provided to future Development Committee meetings.</p>
6.5	<p>Women in Business Conference and Awards Request</p> <p>The Council supported the promotion of female entrepreneurship through sponsorship of a category in the Mid Ulster Local Women Business Awards held in Glenavon on 18 June 2016, and will also be providing a contribution towards the Mid Ulster Business Awards (November 2016).</p> <p>It is therefore recommended that the Council advises that it would be prepared to provide a financial contribution towards the Women in Business events, along the basis of an equal split with the other contributing Councils.</p>
6.6	<p>DfC Revitalise Scheme 2016/17 – Cookstown & Dungannon Town Centres</p> <p>That Members approve the projects identified.</p> <p>That subject to securing letters of offer from DfC, that suitably, qualified companies are procured in accordance with the Council's Procurement Policy.</p>
6.7	<p>Blackwater Regional Partnership –Members to note progress</p>
6.8	<p>Town Centre Positioning Study</p> <p>Members to note progress.</p>
6.9	<p>Maghera Wi-Fi</p> <p>Seeking approval for £15,000, set aside from Economic Development budget this year to procure a suitable organisation to carry out required works.</p>
6.10	<p>Public Art for Magherafelt Town Centre</p> <p>Seeking approval for £30,000, set aside from Economic Development budget this year to procure a suitable organisation to carry out required works.</p>

7	List of Documents Attached
7.1	Appendix 1: Prince's Trust – Development Award Scheme Request 2016/17
7.2	Appendix 2: Women in Business: Conference & Awards 2016 Request
7.3	Appendix 3: ICBAN Request and Invoice 2016/17



Prince's Trust

Partnership proposal to Mid Ulster District Council May 2016

Proposal summary

The Prince's Trust would like to invite Mid Ulster Council to partner with The Trust and local private sector employer, Cunningham Covers, to support our work with unemployed young people, with the aim of helping more young people throughout the Council area to move into sustainable employment, training and further education.

The Prince's Trust

The Prince's Trust helps over 6,000 disadvantaged young people aged 13-30 to realise their potential and transform their lives every year in Northern Ireland. Last year, 78% of the young people on our programmes achieved a positive outcome – progressing into employment, training or education.

The Trust works exclusively with disadvantaged and marginalised young people who experience multiple barriers to moving into education, training or employment, including young people who are:

- ➔ Unemployed
- ➔ In or leaving care.
- ➔ Underachieving in school or who are at risk of exclusion.
- ➔ Offenders and ex-offenders

Our programmes give young people the practical and financial support needed to stabilise their lives.

Cunningham Covers

Cunningham Covers was founded in 1969 by managing director, Gordon Cunningham, to supply the needs of a local trailer manufacturer. Since those early days, the company has steadily increased its production capacity and experience to encompass a wide range of advanced products. Using the most up-to-date materials and technologically advanced equipment, Cunningham Covers, together with a dedicated workforce and after-sales service, have helped to contribute to the company's growth over the past 40 years.

Development Awards

Development Awards are small cash grants which aim to remove financial barriers that prevent young people entering education, employment or training. Factors such as travel costs or college fees can be significant barriers preventing young people from taking up education and employment opportunities. To be eligible young people should be aged 16-25 and not in employment.

The Prince's Trust Development Award scheme is a unique scheme exclusively provided by The Trust in Northern Ireland, supporting disadvantaged young people to overcome significant barriers within a short space of time. Young people are referred to The Prince's Trust Development Awards programme by a wide range of organisations, including for example, Jobs and Benefits Office, Health Trusts, Voluntary Organisations, Further Education Colleges and Private Training Organisations. The Trust has already established an effective referral network in the Mid Ulster area; however our Outreach Team would welcome the opportunity to develop further partnerships at community level to support unemployed young people with a Development Award.

All applications for Development Awards are assessed by a trained Prince's Trust assessor or trained external assessor and The Prince's Trust always buys materials and services on behalf of young people to ensure that, where possible, we can secure value for money through bulk purchases from our approved suppliers and to safeguard the integrity of the programme.

In addition, young people are also offered help with action planning and ongoing support to help them achieve their goal. The Prince's Trust will contact each young person to track their progress at three months following receipt of an Award and collate this information using our Monitoring and Evaluation system Dash to report back to Council on, for example, the young person's electoral ward, what an Award was used for and the outcome for the young person.

Partnership approach

In return for an investment of £1,250 from Mid Ulster District Council, The Prince's Trust would target Development Awards at unemployed aged 16 -25 who live within the Council area. The aim would be to help over 90% of young people who receive a Development Award to achieve a positive outcome, progressing into education, training or employment.

The contribution from the Council will leverage private sector support from Cunningham Covers who will contribute match funding to the value of £2,500 and The Prince's Trust will provide £1,250, demonstrating a firm commitment to supporting unemployed young people in Mid Ulster. In total, £5,000 will be invested into the Mid Ulster area to supporting unemployed young people into education, training or employment.

In 2016/17 the Development Awards programme would support 20 disadvantaged young people in Mid Ulster Council area with small grants averaging £200 with a maximum up to £500 to help fund course and professional fees, equipment needed for a qualification or job, interview clothes, short-term childcare or travel costs essential to help young people develop their skills and qualifications and enhance their ability to gain employment. (See Annex 1 for case study).

Following an evaluation of the scheme in 2016/17 The Trust would seek to build on the partnership and secure further funding year on year to support more young people into employment, education or training.

Proposed Budget

Programme	Cunningham Covers	Mid Ulster District Council	The Prince's Trust	TOTAL FUNDING
Development Awards	£2,500	£1,250	£1,250	£5,000

Outputs	20 Development Awards
Outcomes	90% + progress to Education, Training or Employment

The Prince's Trust would welcome the opportunity to discuss this proposal in more detail at your earliest convenience.

Correspondence:

Orla Major, Public Sector Partnerships Manager
The Prince's Trust, Unit 8, Weavers Court
Belfast BT12 5GH
T: 02890 895025

Annex 1 – Development Awards case study – ‘Steven’

Steven was diagnosed with dyslexia during his school years and this significantly affected his ability to engage fully with education. He struggled with literacy and numeracy and left school at 16 with entry level qualifications.

In 2013 Steven found himself in court, having been charged with Drunken Disorderly behaviour. He was convicted of this and received a suspended sentence and community service. At the time of his conviction, Steven's partner was heavily pregnant with their first child. He realized that he needed to get into employment and turn things around for himself if he was ever to be able to provide a decent life for his young family.

As a result of his conviction, Steven became involved with NIACRO and was referred to a local Tree Surgery business for a work placement. During his time on the placement, Steven greatly impressed the staff with his hard working attitude, commitment to the work and overall dedication. As a result of the placement he was offered full time employment if he got the CS30 Chainsaw qualification.

The chainsaw qualification was expensive, and as Steven had no income other than his benefits there was no way he could have paid for this himself. Steven applied for a Prince's Trust Development Award to complete the training and assessment and with additional support given during the test, due to his dyslexia, he passed with flying colours.

Passing the chainsaw qualification meant that Steven was able to take up the job with the local Tree Surgery business. Steven's confidence and self-esteem have grown and he has been able to prove that he is capable and hard working. Getting work and being able to remain in employment has allowed Steven to gain control of his life again after his conviction.



WIBNI 8th Annual Conference, “Leading Global Ambition”

**Ramada Plaza, Belfast,
22nd September 2016**



Outstanding Key Note speaker
Regina Moran, Chief Executive Officer, UK & Ireland

Regina is currently CEO of Fujitsu Ireland, where she leads a 350 strong team focussed on delivering ICT services that add business value to the Irish marketplace. Regina has recently been appointed as President of Engineers Ireland, of which she is a fellow. She is the former Chair of ICT Ireland within Ibec and is a member of the Ibec board. She is a member of the Dublin City University governing authority, a member of the government-industry led Smart Futures Advisory Board and a non-executive Director of EirGrid. Regina holds an MBA from Dublin City University, which she achieved with First Class Honours, coming first in her group. She was awarded the ‘Sir Charles Harvey Award’ for outstanding contribution in her post-graduate studies and was recently awarded the IT Person of the Year award at the 2014 Tech Excellence Awards.

THE CONFERENCE

The theme of this year's conference is "The Future of Business" and has been designed to inspire all delegates by providing them with world class and high quality speakers/role models who will share their view on the future of Business, what it will look like in the future and how we will work in it.

Our keynote speakers, panels and breakout sessions will explore the future of enterprise, ambition, business and career growth and leadership.

Our two break out streams are "Working on Your Career" for our employed managers and senior managers and for our self-employed delegates "Working on Your Business". Very practical workshops to ensure we are all preparing for the future.

400 delegates will attend the Women in Business NI Conference 2016 which will be made up senior level management in the private, third and public sector, business owners, entrepreneurs and employees.

Delegate feedback from previous conferences has been extremely positive, highlighting the importance and benefits offered by the Women in Business NI conference year after year:

"As always, I come away completely inspired, encouraged and with a new perspective".

"An amazingly positive experience, great speakers and insightful"

"Delighted I attended the conference after such a hectic period at work. It has left me feeling inspired and assured".

"Powerful, engaging and a great opportunity to reflect on regaining passion for your business"

"The best conference I have ever attended".

Other speakers confirmed



Molly Harvey - Key note Leadership

Recognised as a Leading Authority on Leadership and Cultural Transformation. Being a best-selling author of 8 books, with 21+ years experience of engaging people, companies and communities Molly has produced a range of E-books, CD's and Podcasts. Other

achievements include being the first National Woman President and Fellow of the Professional Speakers Association in England 2005, past Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and a founding member of the Association of Transformational Leaders Council, Europe. Molly believes that to be a success in business you must connect the head, heart and soul of a company and by working with CEO's, Leaders and Managers, achieve sustainable profits by developing their people. "Leadership is all about the ability to show up and allow everyone around you to step forth." Molly Harvey



Norah Casey – Key note Entrepreneurship

Broadcaster and publishing entrepreneur was formerly a Dragon in the popular television series Dragons' den and is a well-known radio and television personality.

She is owner and Chairwoman of Harmonia, Ireland's largest magazine publishing company, printing over four million magazines annually for the Irish, British and USA market and selling on average 2.6 million in the Irish market annually. She founded the company and was CEO until October 2013. Harmonia publishes the top three best-selling women's magazines in Ireland – Irish Tatler, U magazine and Woman's Way – along with a range of lifestyle and consumer titles such as FOOD&WINE, CookBook, Irish Tatler Man, Eat Out, Auto Ireland and Ireland of the Welcomes.



Our host again for 2016 Claire McCollum

An MA graduate at the University of Dundee, [1] began her career in broadcasting with Macmillan Media in 1997. She also worked as a researcher for CNN and as a newsreader on Downtown Radio. [2] McCollum joined UTV in March 2000. As well as presenting and reporting for UTV Sport, she has also presented UTV News bulletins [3] and Sport on Sunday.

Over the past 4 years Claire has built up her portfolio with BBC Northern Ireland. She has become synonymous with many of Northern Ireland television's highest profile events. She recently co-hosted BBC Proms in the Park at Titanic Slipways, the Olympic Flame arriving at Belfast City Hall and the Clipper Homecoming in Derry~Londonderry.

Others confirmed: Eleanor Mc Evoy, Founder & CEO Budget Energy, Diane Mulholland, Group Area Manager EHI, Carla Tully Vice President, AES

Invited: Susan Whelan , CEO Leicester FC, Anne O Leary, CEO Vodafone, Clare Harty, Microsoft.

SPONSOR PACKAGES

CONFERENCE KEY PARTNER- £8,000+VAT

- Exclusivity as WIBNI Annual Conference Key Partner
- Recognition and promotion throughout the conference as Key Partner
- Invitation for senior executive to address delegates at the opening plenary session
- Key Partner recognition on all pre- and on-site communications, including promotional materials, website, on-site programme and general session sponsor logo loop
- Significant PR and publicity opportunities pre/post event
- Full Page advert with editorial in the Conference programme with premium placement
- Goody Bag opportunities
- Signage with corporate logo displayed prominently throughout the Conference
- Six (6) complimentary full conference registrations
- Exhibition stand with prime positioning

CONFERENCE PARTNER -£5,000+Vat

- Recognition and promotion throughout the conference as a Partner
- Logo recognition in conference promotional materials, website, on-site programme and general session sponsor logo loop
- Signage with corporate logo displayed prominently throughout the conference
- Four (4) complimentary full conference registrations
- Exhibition stand with prime positioning
- PR and publicity opportunities pre/post event
- Full Page advert in the Conference programme

MARKETPLACE/EXHIBITING & OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

- Corporate Exhibitor – £1,000
- Small Business Exhibitor – £500
- Half page advert in Conference Programme - £300



Take Your Seat for 2016



**The Alexander Mann Solutions
Women in Business Awards 2016**
17th November, Ramada Plaza, Shaw's Bridge

The Women in Business NI Awards celebrate the hard work and achievements of many business women who make a valuable contribution to the economic life of Northern Ireland. It show cases the best in innovation, enterprise and leadership.

Now in the sixth year, the Awards continue to recognise the women at the cutting edge of our economy. The Women in Business NI Awards 2016 will build on from the success of the previous five years and is set to be our biggest yet as we reach our 6th Awards.

Last year almost 500 business women and men packed into beautiful surroundings of the 5 star Culloden Estate & Spa to celebrate the success of entrepreneurs, business leaders and senior managers at the only ceremony of its kind in Northern Ireland.

Category sponsor includes:

- Logo featured and acknowledgement in Awards Application
- Logo on all event material including invites, backdrop, display boards etc
- Logo featured in extensive billboard campaign if commissioned
- Logo on the Women in Business NI website
- Social media updates on Facebook Twitter and LinkedIn promoting your company/organisation
- Company logo to rotate on stage screen with other sponsors throughout the course of the evening
- Significant PR and publicity opportunities pre/post event with Media partner Irish News
- Goody Bag opportunities
- Category sponsorship acknowledgment by host
- Presentation of Category Award on the evening
- 10 places at the Awards ceremony gala worth £100 + VAT each

Package: £4,000 + VAT

Award Categories highlighted are already reserved :

- Award for Best New Start Up
- Award for Outstanding Management / Leadership
- Award for Best Small Business
- Award for Advancing Diversity
- Award for Best Exporter
- Award for Entrepreneurship / Innovation
- Award for Best Marketing Campaign
- Award for Best Customer Service
- Award for Best in Professional Services
- Award for Young Business Woman of the Year
- Award for Excellence in IT

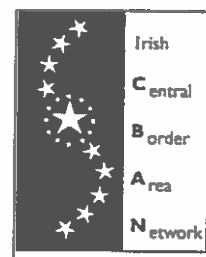
APPENDIX 3

Irish Central Border Area Network Ltd
Units 4-6 Enniskillen Business Centre
21 Lackaghboy Road
Enniskillen
Co Fermanagh
BT74 4RL

Tel: (0)28 6634 0710

Email: info@icban.com

Website: www.icban.com



09 June 2016

Mr Anthony Tohill
Chief Executive
Mid Ulster District Council
Burn Road
COOKSTOWN
County Tyrone
BT80 8DT

Dear Anthony,

ICBAN Member Councils Annual Contribution (2016/17)

Further to our email correspondence of 02 December 2015, please find enclosed an invoice for the ICBAN Annual Member Contribution for the 2016/17 period.

As previously advised, the ICBAN Management Board met on 21 October 2015 to discuss and agree the Annual Contributions from Member Councils. The Board deliberated the challenges of our Member Councils and have considered these in line with ICBAN's development strategy for the coming year. As such, the Board has agreed to maintain the annual contribution of £10,000 stg per Council for the year ahead.

These contributions will enable the continuation of ICBAN's cross-border work throughout the Central Border Region. For your information, I enclose an update outlining ICBAN's most recent developments and work interests.

On behalf of the ICBAN Management Board I would like to express our sincere thanks and appreciation to you for your continued support and commitment.

Should you have any queries or would like more information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards,

Shane Campbell
CEO

Irish Central Border Area Network Ltd.

ICBAN



Enniskillen Business Centre
21 Lackaghboy Road
Enniskillen, Co Fermanagh
BT74 4RL, N. Ireland
Tel: 028-66340710

email: info@icban.com

INVOICE

DATE:

09 June 2016

INV NO: 16/001

Invoice To:

Mid Ulster District Council
Cookstown Office
Burn Road
Cookstown
Co Tyrone
BT80 8DT

DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
Council's Annual Contribution towards Operational Programme for 2016/2017	£10,000.00 Stg
Nett	£10,000.00
VAT	
STERLING TOTAL	£ 10,000.00

Please make all cheques payable to Irish Central Border Area Network Ltd

F

Subject	Tourism Strategy Update
Reporting Officer	Michael Browne

1	Purpose of Report
1.1	The purpose of this report is to provide Members with the final draft of the Council's Tourism Development Strategy.

2	Background
2.1	As previously reported to Council, the final drafts of the summary action plan and full report of the Tourism Development Strategy were circulated in advance of the collective engagement events with private sector and officers held during April and May.
2.2	At a meeting with the private sector in the Burnavon on 28 th April, it was agreed that an extension of time be given for comments on the draft documentation to be submitted. Further comments were received including those from various interest groups in the district including Flavour of Tyrone which represents the interests of various tourist operators in the area.
2.3	These comments have been reviewed, and where appropriately included in the final draft of the strategy.
2.4	Members will be aware from previous discussions and presentations, that by necessity, the Tourism Development Strategy is a high-level, overarching strategic document, which will complement the Community Planning process and the council's Economic Development Strategy, as well as existing plans and strategies.
2.5	It will be a "living" document and the subject of ongoing review.
2.6	The Council's strategy recognises the roles of other parties in relation to the promotion and development of tourism in the district. These include, but are not limited to, Tourism Ireland, Tourism NI, Waterways Ireland, Forest Service and National Trust as well as the wider industry such as those representing the accommodation and hospitality sectors.

3	Key Issues
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3.1	While the Council's document has been prepared in cognisance of the forthcoming Northern Ireland Tourism Strategy, there will be a need to review the Council's strategy against the final Northern Ireland tourism strategy.
3.2	With regard to the Sperrins and Lough Neagh as destinations, the strategy acknowledges the importance of these assets to the Council area but also recognises that the best prospects for its tourism development is in the context of collaboration across the geographic area covered by the Lough Neagh & Sperrins, as opposed to one or two Council's working independently. In this regard, Tourism NI have recently reiterated their intention to convene a meeting of the four Councils which have a geographic link to the Sperrins and the work being carried out by the Lough Neagh Partnership should align to the Council's strategy.
3.3	As the Terms of Reference for the BTS commission have now been satisfactorily completed, it is recommended to proceed to adopt the final draft of the Tourism Strategy.

4	Resources
4.1	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>Appropriate financial provision for the strategy and associated actions has been included and within budget</p>
4.2	<p><u>Human</u></p> <p>It is recommended that Council Officers will provide reasonable practical assistance and this will be factored into their overall work plan.</p>
4.3	<p><u>Basis for Professional/ Consultancy Support</u></p> <p>N/A</p>
4.4	<p><u>Other</u></p>

5	Other Considerations
5.1	N/A

6	Recommendations
6.1	<p>Recommended that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council approves and formally adopts the Tourism Development strategy.

7	List of Documents Attached
7.1	Tourism Action Strategy and Action Plan



Comhairle Ceantair
Lár Uladh
Mid Ulster
District Council

Tourism Strategy and Action Plan, 2016 – 21

for

Mid Ulster District Council

Final Report

June 2016



Volume 1 – Contents	Page
1 Introduction	1
1.1 Key Priorities	1
1.2 A Living Strategy for Mid Ulster Tourism	1
1.3 The Brief	1
2 Destination Profile, Market Analysis and Key Issues - Summary	3
2.1 Mid Ulster Profile	3
2.2 Key Issues	3
2.3 Opportunities for the Future	4
3 Vision and Strategic Direction for Mid-Ulster Tourism 2015-2020	6
3.1 The Vision for Mid Ulster Tourism	6
3.2 Strategic Aims and Objectives	6
4 Strategic Themes and Actions	7
4.1 Development of Strategic Tourism Strands	7
4.1.1 Seamus Heaney	7
4.1.2 Archaeology, History and Heritage	9
4.1.3 Outdoor Activities	11
4.2 Tourism as an Economic Driver	12
4.3 Destination Management	13
4.4 Promoting Mid Ulster for Tourism	15
4.5 Dispersal of Visitor Spend and Supporting Local Communities	18
5 Implementation	20
5.1 Tourism Development Group	20
5.2 Role of the Local Authority	21
5.3 Measuring Performance	22
5.4 Risk Analysis	23
6 Next Steps	25
Action Plan	26
Volume 2 - Appendices	Separate volume

1 Introduction

1.1 Key Priorities

Mid Ulster has the potential to expand its tourism offer significantly by focusing in upon one new tourism strand, currently under development – linked to Seamus Heaney - and two strands that are significant and prominent, but so far undeveloped, relating to Outdoor Activities and to Archaeological sites, the History and Heritage of the island of Ireland, Northern Ireland and the area itself. These strands, or themes, will serve as the strategic core propositions for Mid Ulster, to attract visitors, encourage them to stay longer in the area and ensure that tourism contributes to the local economy.

1.2 A Living Strategy for Mid Ulster Tourism

The Mid Ulster Tourism Strategy and Action Plan provide a framework to guide destination development, planning, management and marketing over the period 2016 - 2021. The Strategy is a living document that should be continuously updated to take account of investments, successes and changed market conditions in the area. A living strategy is one that is owned by the tourism industry, local authority, local communities and wider stakeholders and embodies the aspiration for Mid Ulster to be a successful tourism destination.

This strategy embodies a shared vision for Mid Ulster and reflects the geographical attributes of the area (of which, more later), the characteristics of tourism operators and compelling tourism attractors upon which growth can be built, provided concerted action is taken to build on opportunities and address weaknesses.

1.3 The Brief

There are over 3,000 tourism and tourism related jobs in Mid Ulster, which represent a modest proportion of all jobs¹; yet tourism's importance to Mid Ulster lies both in its links to the retail, food, cultural and heritage offer, and to wider perceptions of the area. Opportunities for tourism growth lie in galvanising existing and new tourism propositions and capitalising on Mid Ulster's central geographical position in Northern Ireland.

From April 2015, the former areas of Dungannon and South Tyrone, Cookstown and Magherafelt fall under the auspices of the new authority of Mid Ulster District Council. The creation of the new Council² and investment in the Seamus Heaney HomePlace – bringing a dynamic new dimension to Mid Ulster tourism – necessitate the need to evaluate tourism priorities and actions across the whole area, with opportunities to integrate the proposition from each legacy council.

In mid-2015, the Council commissioned Edinburgh based tourism experts BTS to prepare this Tourism Strategy and Action Plan for the Council, stakeholders and the tourism industry in the area. The overall aim of the work is to develop a Tourism Strategic Plan that includes an overview of tourism activities, highlights potential opportunities and how to address gaps. While specific opportunities were identified as Heaney Country, Outdoor Activities and History and Heritage, the role of the strategy is to test and define how these opportunities (and any others) can be developed and exploited.

The preparation of the Strategy and Action Plan has been undertaken through stakeholder consultation, workshops with and a survey of the tourism trade, workshops and discussions with elected members and senior staff of the authority. A market analysis (including data held by Tourism Northern Ireland and Tourism Ireland), policy review and review of the tourism product have been undertaken through desk research. Additional analysis has been undertaken of Seamus Heaney tourism opportunities through discussions and further workshops.

¹ 3,165 of 90,000 jobs in the area = 3.5%

² With extended Planning, Local Economic and Tourism Development and Community Planning powers

Guidance and direction of this commission has been provided by senior tourism and economic development managers in the Council. Those consulted in the preparation of this plan are listed in the appendices.

Appendices have been prepared which are contained within a second volume.

2 Destination Profile, Market Analysis and Key Issues - Summary

Here we provide a summary of the market analysis and key issues impacting tourism in Mid Ulster. The appendices provide fuller analysis and documentation.

2.1 Mid Ulster Profile

Mid Ulster covers about 14%³ of NI, extending some 60 miles from Swatragh in the north to Fivemiletown in the south. There is a population of 141,000 working in manufacturing, services, construction, retail, agriculture, forestry and fishing industry sectors.

An important characteristic of Mid Ulster is its location within an hour's drive of Northern Ireland's significant tourism regions – Causeway Coast, Derry/Londonderry, Fermanagh Lakes, Belfast, and also the cross border destinations of Donegal and Monaghan. This strategic location presents opportunities to develop and promote tourism experiences within striking distance of these destinations and encourage more visitors to visit and stay within Mid Ulster.

Current tourism performance is largely based on rural and outdoor activities, linked both to the Sperrins and across the whole Mid Ulster area and tied into the area's natural attributes. Tourism performance is also linked to the strong retail proposition of Cookstown, Dungannon and Magherafelt and a compelling mix of heritage properties and historic and archaeological sites, again spread right across the district. Recent years have seen dynamic tourism developments in the area - a strong events-based programme, Hill of the O'Neill and Ranfurly House Arts and Visitor Centre, mountain biking at Davagh and the development of the Dark Skies project.

But the central issue for Mid Ulster is its comparative lack of visibility in the tourism marketplace, linked to limited levels of visitation (214,000) and spend (£27m) equivalent to 4.6% of NI overnight trips and 3.6% of NI spend in 2014. The area is dominated by day trips and those visiting friends and relatives. Mid Ulster, in tourism terms, is a developing destination that in recent years has not fulfilled its potential to contribute to economic growth.

2.2 Key Issues

A number of key issues have implications for the way forward and how tourism development and promotion is managed. We summarise these issues here; they are developed further in the appendices:

1. Tourism is not recognised as an integral part of the economy and residents underestimate the tourism attributes of the area and the economic role of the sector.
2. While day visitation to the area is important, the reasons to visit are not well articulated and so NI residents are unaware of what they should visit for and what experience they might have.
3. The current tourism propositions for the area are relatively weak (retail being the exception), resulting in comparative low visitation levels and spend from out-of-state visitors.
4. The visibility of Mid Ulster's natural heritage, outdoor activity and historic and archaeological heritage are lost partly because they are spread across the area and also because these attributes haven't been pulled together into distinct propositions for visitors.
5. The two destinations classified by Tourism NI and linked to the area – Tyrone and Sperrins and Lough Neagh and its Waterways – are the weakest of NI's 9 destinations, from the point of view of visitors' propensity to visit and the dissipation of strategic decision making spread across a number of authorities.

³ 1,714 km²

6. The Sperrins AONB falls under the auspices of four local authorities⁴. The absence of a single co-ordinating management body responsible for landscape, tourism and related issues, results in a policy vacuum and implementation weakness, as they relate to countryside access, product development, safeguarding the environment etc.
7. Lough Neagh offers opportunities for outdoor recreation but suffers from comparable issues of a lack of developed product, difficult access (to the water) and shared decision making amongst 4 local authorities⁵.
8. There is a weak accommodation base, exacerbated by variable occupancy levels (and thus viability) throughout the year.
9. The SME and microbusiness characteristics of the tourism sector in the area exacerbate challenges of communicating and engaging with the trade and developing collaborative projects across the trade.
10. The geographical dispersal of the area – in terms of scale, distance and character – suggests a challenge in creating both a tourism identity for Mid Ulster itself and for a hierarchy of individual communities that have identities and propositions that could encourage visitation.
11. Continuing constraints in countryside access limit the opportunity to exploit the natural environment to its full potential for outdoor activities⁶.
12. The tourism industry in Mid Ulster is characterized by owner operators and small businesses, many of whom feel helpless in the light of trading conditions and their relationship with tourism and public agencies. These conditions contribute to a sense of disillusion and helplessness in some quarters.
13. The quality of the visitor experience is key to tourism success – building reputation and referrals - but is vulnerable in the area because of different levels of service quality, expertise and knowledge within the tourism trade. The changing role of VICs in visitor dispersal, building product awareness and industry networking and connectivity is an opportunity to enhance the visitor experience and work with operators to help them raise their standards.
14. At the time of writing the review of NI's tourism is being conducted by the Department for the Economy. Although final results and recommendations have not yet been made (they are due in the summer) there are a number of issues that emerge from the consultation process. These resonate with Mid Ulster's current situation – the importance of tourism as an economic generator, a fragmented industry, the need for industry leadership, the requirement to focus on out-of-state and overseas markets⁷.

2.3 Opportunities for the Future

However, an extremely positive context exists for developing tourism in Mid Ulster, resulting from:

1. The establishment of the new Council, which brings a range of skills and integrated powers together, while the District area it covers includes a stronger range of sites and facilities which can be drawn into stronger propositions with greater market visibility.
2. The identified opportunity to develop the tourism product and experience associated with Seamus Heaney has been recognised by the commitment to construct and open the £4.2m Seamus Heaney HomePlace in Bellaghy in mid-2016. Links to other literary tourism centres

⁴ Councils of Mid Ulster District, Fermanagh & Omagh District, Derry City & Strabane District, Causeway Coast and Glens Borough

⁵ Councils of Mid Ulster, Antrim and Newtownabbey, Lisburn and Castlereagh and Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon

⁶ This despite Outdoor NI playing a strong role in helping negotiate access and consequent liabilities

⁷ See <https://www.detini.gov.uk/publications/key-messages-regional-stakeholder-engagement>

and experiences throughout the island of Ireland will offer strong visibility.

3. The application of business development interventions and support from the new authority to support the SME and microbusiness tourism community.
4. The opportunity exists to exploit Mid Ulster's central location within NI and improving access (Magherafelt Bypass; A6 dualling; Randalstown (M22) to Castledawson). The central location of Mid Ulster could also boost camping and caravanning based in the area. However, historically strong dependence on the NI domestic day and overnight market for visitation highlights the need to encourage more overnight stays from out-of-state markets and their greater expenditure.
5. The strength of Mesolithic, Neolithic, pre Christian, early Christian and other archaeological sites and facilities across Mid Ulster, right up to the 2nd World War, offer a significant and compelling tourism proposition, exploitation of which will give Mid Ulster significant competitive advantage. The uniqueness of Mid Ulster to exploit the history of the O'Neills, the Flight of the Earls, and the development of the plantations contribute to this potential.
6. Outdoor tourism sites and experiences, including the presence of very successful outdoor activity providers, suggest that the outdoor tourism product can be exploited further right across the area.
7. The success of the area in initiating and running events which have grabbed the imagination – such as the Dark Skies project – offer a positive foundation for new events to enhance off season visitation.
8. Enhanced opportunities for trade engagement and communication established through the Flavour of Tyrone (see section 5.1 below).
9. Three significant Heritage Lottery Fund projects at different stages of development relate to the Lough Neagh Landscape Partnership, the Seamus Heaney trail development and to the Lower Sperrins to the Carrickmore Plateau to the Pomeroy Hill⁸; all offer exciting opportunities to integrate tourism in the landscape.
10. The potential to exploit the Sperrins for outdoor activities and for its contribution to the history and heritage of the area is complemented by the potential of Lough Neagh. The reopening of the Ulster Canal offers a medium to long term opportunity to intensify use of the Lough for recreation.
11. A comparative “new start” offered to tourism development and promotion by the establishment of the new Council suggests the chance to reevaluate and build on technologically based routes to market, exploiting broadband and consumer use of smart phones, iPads etc..
12. An invigorated district wide programme of marketing and promotion is achievable, including events, enhanced signage, technology use, visitor information services and limiting print production.

⁸ The latter project jointly with Fermanagh and Omagh District Council

3 Vision and Strategic Direction for Mid-Ulster Tourism 2016-2021

Mid Ulster is not a single or unified tourism “product” or destination; it has not been, to date, a discernible tourism location⁹. It is currently an amalgam of tourism products and visitor experiences, with individual attractions and activities succeeding independently in the tourism market. With this lack of distinctiveness, separating it from other competing destinations, the challenge is to cohere Mid Ulster’s tourism assets and attributes, to give them visibility and give visitors reasons to visit.

The vision for tourism in Mid Ulster comprises two complementary components:

- Developing the propositions for Mid Ulster; and
- Ensuring that the processes for developing and promoting products in the market place are efficient and effective.

3.1 The Vision for Mid Ulster Tourism

The vision for tourism in Mid Ulster is:

To enhance Mid Ulster’s image and reputation for visitors and grow the visitor economy to £50m by 2021 as measured by overnight visitor expenditure.

3.2 Strategic Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of the strategy are as follows:

1. To develop three strategic tourism strands, around which the attributes of the area and the industry can cluster and to attract visitors. The three strands or themes are:
 - i. Seamus Heaney
 - ii. Archaeological sites, history and heritage
 - iii. Outdoor Activities
2. To grow tourism as an economic driver for Mid Ulster;
3. To manage the destination and create the preconditions for successful tourism;
4. To profile and promote Mid Ulster to enhance the visibility of the area and boost visitation and spend;
5. To support the dispersal of visitor spend and investment across the area.

⁹ Although arguably it is a distinct business location for e.g. logistics, industrial services and manufacturing activity

4 Strategic Themes and Actions

The aims and objectives of the strategy are translated into strategic themes and interrelated actions for delivery, as follows:

1. Development of three strategic tourism strands (Seamus Heaney, Archaeological sites, history and heritage and Outdoor Activities);
2. Tourism as an economic driver;
3. Destination Management;
4. Promoting Mid Ulster for tourism;
5. Dispersal of visitor expenditure and supporting local communities.

Where actions are defined under each theme they are captured in more detail in the action plan.

4.1 Development of Strategic Tourism Strands

Mid Ulster has one new tourism strand under development – linked to Seamus Heaney - and two strands that are significant and prominent, but so far undeveloped, relating to Outdoor Activities and to Archaeological sites, the history and heritage of the island of Ireland, Northern Ireland and the area itself. These strands, or themes, will serve as the strategic core propositions for Mid Ulster, to attract visitors, encourage them to stay longer in the area and ensure that tourism contributes to the local economy.

The following sections drill down into what actions are required to develop and integrate these tourism products into the tourism proposition for Mid Ulster.

4.1.1 Seamus Heaney

The strong and compelling association of Seamus Heaney with Bellaghy and the surrounding communities and countryside provide the foundation for the development this tourism strand. The £4.2m HomePlace centre at Bellaghy is currently under development and will open in mid-2016, with literary and heritage trails developed into the local landscape to place connections referenced in Seamus Heaney's poems and literature.

The community and educational roots of the Bellaghy Centre are important, but so too is the objective for the HomePlace and its trails to act as an economic generator for the village and surrounding area, and as a tourism hub linking relevant sites in the region. The association of the trail with the Lower Bann would be one such linkage. The Seamus Heaney proposition will underpin – alongside the other tourism strands below – the visibility, reasons to visit and quality of visitors' experiences in Mid Ulster.

Seamus Heaney's stature and significance go well beyond the immediate locale of County Derry/Londonderry and Mid Ulster, and indeed well beyond Northern Ireland and the island of Ireland. Seamus Heaney's reputation is worldwide and the project must therefore be seen and be developed as a national and international centre of excellence and as an iconic addition to Northern Ireland's tourism portfolio, with strong potential to attract visitors from out-of-state and from overseas; the Heaney project is therefore of enormous importance to Mid Ulster.

A separate action plan has been prepared to support the tie in of the HomePlace and trails with the tourism community and wider stakeholders, all with the intention of ensuring:

- High market visibility for the Seamus Heaney tourism product;
- Successful integration of the product with the tourism and hospitality sector in Mid Ulster, and thus have the local industry acting as ambassadors for it; and
- Ensuring that the travel trade (those who decide and influence where visitors tour and visit) place the Seamus Heaney product prominently on their itineraries, particularly for out-of-state visitors.

The vision for the Seamus Heaney proposition is therefore:

To integrate the Seamus Heaney HomePlace and Heaney experience into the wider tourism offer for Mid Ulster, NI and the island of Ireland.

This would be achieved through a programme of events and activities that promote the HomePlace, its exhibitions and collections to maximise visitor numbers.

The Council and HomePlace manager are already undertaking a significant programme of work. This includes developing relationships with stakeholders, planning audience development, an education programme and community outreach, developing the marketing rationale for the HomePlace and proposed trails and positioning them as a significant national and international visitor attraction and resource dedicated to the life and work of Seamus Heaney.

Actions

There are several themes under which actions and tasks are necessary to establish the Heaney experience effectively in the tourism market.

Priority actions that fall under the auspices of the tourism strategy are as follows:

1. Development of the event programme, marketing and communications (by the HomePlace):
 - Developing and implementing a marketing and communications plan for the Seamus Heaney experience to include engagement and communication with the tourism trade, Tourism Ireland and Tourism Northern Ireland and with the travel trade.
 - Develop a year round events programme both within the HomePlace and linked to the wider Heaney experience. Integrate this in communications and marketing, as above.
 - Develop a strong digital platform for the HomePlace, including a continuous social media presence.
 - Integrate marketing of the HomePlace and trails into the visitor marketing for the area (see section 4.4. below).
 - Explore opportunities of working with other Ireland literary centres and develop a wider all-Ireland literary experience.
2. Product and service development (by operators working independently): review by each business of their marketing and operational plans to see how the Heaney proposition can be integrated – to include marketing and sales plans, digital marketing etc.
3. Business collaboration and networking (between operators working together): support for operators to cluster and develop new product, services and experiences for visitors (e.g. accommodation, transport, tour guides, food and drink, entertainment).
4. Skills development/mentoring programme to engage all business through World Host training for the Seamus Heaney experience, including developing Mid Ulster as a World Host destination, to set the benchmark for the quality of welcome provided to visitors (see section 4.3 below).
5. Engagement and working with the tourism trade (the centre and tourism operators): the HomePlace and tourism trade to collaborate on marketing, promotion, events, new products and services.
6. Preparation and implementation of a Bellaghy village renewal and public realm plan to enhance the quality of the environment for visitors (and residents)¹⁰.
7. Complete the development and implementation of the Seamus Heaney trails, celebrating his literature and legacy and extending the appeal of the Heaney experience to NI, out-of-state and overseas visitors¹¹.

¹⁰ An initial £100,000 commitment has been made by the Council to start this process

¹¹ The development of the trails have their own action plan, timeline and resource needs although the Heritage Lottery Fund has committed almost £350,000 to help implementation

4.1.2 Archaeology, History and Heritage

Arguably, Mid Ulster contains the richest seam of archaeological, historic and heritage sites and facilities in Northern Ireland, stretching from Mesolithic, Neolithic, pre Christian, early Christian and medieval times to the plantation era and up to the 2nd World War. The archaeology, history and heritage theme suffers from issues of lack of visibility, limited understanding by residents and visitors alike of the significance of these assets within an all-Ireland as well as a Northern Ireland context and consequently limited appreciation of what the visitor experience will be. This results in a barrier to visiting.

Yet, Mid Ulster's rich and diverse cultural and historical inheritance provides a strategic opportunity to develop tourism and enhance visitation to the area, and across the area. Mid Ulster has very many historic sites and facilities. Among them are more than 185 scheduled sites and monuments protected under planning policy for their historical value. In addition, there are 39 State Care Monuments that are maintained for both public amenity and conservation and a number of historic houses. Most significant amongst these assets are:

- Ardboe Cross
- Ballynagilly Neolithic house and settlement
- Ballyscullion Park
- Beaghmore Stone Circles, Cairns and Alignments
- Bellaghy Bawn
- Blessingbourne
- Broughderg archaeological remains
- Clogher Cathedral
- Clogher Hillfort
- Donaghmore Cross
- Errigal Kerrogue Cross
- Hill of The O'Neill and Ranfurly House Arts & Visitor Centre
- Knockoneill Court Tomb
- Lissan House
- Killymoon Castle
- Parkanaur Manor House
- Tirkane Sweathouse
- Tirnony Dolmen
- St Lurach's Church
- St Patricks Chair and Well
- Springhill House
- Tullaghoge Fort

Archaeology, history and heritage are a subset of cultural tourism. According to UNESCO, cultural and natural heritage tourism is "the most rapidly growing international sector of the tourism industry"¹². Although international data on the size of this market are hard to come by, the OECD and the UNWTO report that in 2007, cultural tourism accounted for 40% of all international tourism. The Heritage Lottery Fund estimated in 2013 that "heritage tourism" generates £26.4bn towards the UK economy, fuelled by both international visitors and more Britons deciding to holiday at home; more than a quarter of holiday activities undertaken by Britons who holiday in the UK now involve heritage, both historic and natural heritage.

¹² Mintel, 2010

Untangling the relevance of this statistical overview to Mid Ulster is problematic, since the number of visits to many sites is unrecorded. However, the analogy of Kilmartin in Argyll, Newgrange in County Meath and Orkney is relevant.

- Kilmartin Glen is located between Oban and Lochgilphead, in the west of Scotland. There are more than 350 ancient monuments within a six mile radius of the village, with 150 of them being prehistoric (the area spans 5,000 years with a multitude of cairns, standing stones, carved rock, stone circles, forts and castles). Kilmartin Glen is considered to have one of the most important concentrations of Neolithic and Bronze Age remains in Scotland. The remains of the fortress of the Scots at Dunadd, a royal centre of Dal Riata, are located to the south of the glen. The voluntary Kilmartin House Trust¹³ oversees the sites and has a museum and visitor centre attracting 40,000 people p.a.
- Newgrange's Brú na Bóinne Visitors' Centre has managed as many as 200,000 visitors p.a. to the UNESCO World Heritage site making it the most visited archaeological monument in Ireland. In addition to the large passage tombs of Knowth, Newgrange and Dowth, 90 recorded monuments are scattered across the area¹⁴.
- In Orkney, up to 55,000 people explore the Neolithic village of Skara Brae every year. Visitor surveys show that just over 142,800 people visited Orkney spending over £31 million in the local economy over 2013¹⁵. The main influence on visitors deciding to come to Orkney (51%) was an interest in the archaeology and history of Orkney, with 80% actually visiting archaeological sites.

The significance of the history and built heritage of Mid Ulster is recognised in the Heritage Lottery Fund approved project under the Lough Neagh Landscape Partnership Project and the planned joint project between Mid Ulster and Fermanagh and Omagh Councils¹⁶. This latter project aims to address the preparation of a Landscape Conservation Management Plan stretching from the Lower Sperrins to the Carrickmore Plateau to the Pomeroy Hill, acknowledging the density and importance of the archaeological attributes of the area. NIEA¹⁷ and Council investment in improvements at Tullaghoge Fort, due to open to the public in June 2016 will also strengthen the visitor appeal of this facility.

Mid Ulster is also the only place to appreciate the history and importance of the O'Neills and the Flight of the Earls, while also being at the centre of the C17th plantation movement.

Events are important ways to raise profile and generate visitation. So for instance the Dark Skies project at Beaghmore Stone Circles is out of season, yet generates strong publicity and visitation. Heritage Open Days and weekends and the heritage education programme at the Hill of The O'Neill & Ranfurly House Arts & Visitor Centre are additional events, but there is an opportunity to generate more. The unique charter of the Dark Skies Project in Northern Ireland offers opportunities for exploiting visitation.

Actions

We don't suggest that a new visitor centre is established, as with Kilmartin or Newgrange, but the following actions are required in order to capitalise on Mid Ulster's wealth of archaeological, historic and heritage attributes:

¹³ www.kilmartin.org/

¹⁴ <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/659>

¹⁵ www.hie.co.uk/about-hie/news-and-media/archive/survey-results-show-rise-in-visitors-to-orkney.html#sthash.zMLPRsgi.dpbs

¹⁶ Heritage Lottery Landscape Partnership Scheme Stage One Application

¹⁷ Now part of the Department for Communities

1. Create a unifying heritage and history tourism theme across Mid Ulster, building on the wide range of assets across the area, positioning Mid Ulster as a centre of excellence for history and heritage to encourage visitors to the area, to stay longer and spend more.
2. These archaeological, historic and heritage assets and sites need to be drawn into a compelling and coherent tourism product, requiring them to be packaged and promoted to visitors.
3. Tie the history and heritage theme into the branding for the area (see section 4.4 below).
4. Develop a series of itineraries for visitors to encourage dispersal.
5. Develop a year round programme of events linked with historic venues to generate profile and attract visitation, including continuation of the Dark Skies project.

4.1.3 Outdoor Activities

The former local authorities, Forest Services and other stakeholders, including a strong operator base, have invested successfully and heavily in the outdoor activity market across Mid Ulster. The Sperrins provide an envelope within which many outdoor activities take place, although they have problems of their own, in terms of constraints of countryside access in the area and policy and priorities in the area spread across (now) four local authority districts. Lough Neagh, likewise, is an underutilised resource, again with decision making spread across four different local authorities.

Like the Archaeology, History and Heritage theme, outdoor tourism in Mid Ulster suffers from comparable issues of lack of visibility, limited understanding by residents and visitors alike of the significance of outdoor assets and consequently limited appreciation of what the visitor experience will be. This results in a barrier to visiting.

Mid Ulster's outdoor activity attributes are found across the whole area and offer a wide range of adrenaline fuelled and soft activities, with the following particular strengths – Walking, Cycling, Mountain Biking, Canoeing, Angling, Multi-Adventure Centres (e.g. Todds Leap, and Jungle NI) plus a number of Activity Tourism providers in the area. Horse riding and golf add further value to the product of the area. In many places opportunities for developing the outdoor product have been taken by national agencies, the local authority, Outdoor Recreation NI, sports and recreation interest bodies and local communities. These are important because they emphasise the strength of the area for outdoor activities, but they also require to be drawn together into a coherent and visible attractor for visitors.

The objective of focussing on the outdoor activity market lies in its scale and size and the opportunity of strengthening the competitiveness of the Mid Ulster destination, by building on this undeveloped sector.

The outdoor activity market in Mid Ulster is explored in detail in the appendices: the overriding characteristic is that the market is dominated by day visitors (including the educational market), important for the reputation and status of the area to accommodate outdoor activities, and residents, but, both groups with limited tourism spend¹⁸.

The number of sites and physical attributes available in Mid Ulster to accommodate outdoor activities – from passive activities like walking and strolling, through to adrenaline fuelled adventures – range from open countryside, in the Sperrins and around Lough Neagh and the Lower Bann, bike and walking routes away from roads, through to more formal trails within specific sites. These sites include forest parks which the local authority manages on behalf of Forest Services, to private sites like Blessingbourne. Substantial investment has been made in mountain biking facilities and trails at Davagh. Two major private operators (Jungle Ni at Magherafelt and Todds Leap at Ballygawley) provide a range of activities and have very effective marketing to NI residents and to those living in

¹⁸ Spend per visit to Tyrone and Sperrins in 2011, at 38% of the NI average, was substantially lower than other areas in NI

the Republic of Ireland. Events have also been promoted linked to outdoor activities, with Davagh being particularly active – e.g. Davagh Duathlon, Enduro Night Rider and Rough Riderz Taster – and Parkanaur’s Blood Sweat & Tears Extreme 10k and Sperrin Harriers Winter League Trail Series. These events help to generate visitation, visibility and reputation.

Maximising the economic value of outdoor recreation and adventure tourism requires the reputation and visibility of the destination to improve significantly to increase the number of visitors and have more of them staying overnight (and spending more). The “Unique Outdoors” is one of Tourism NI’s four key pillars, around which the NI tourism brand and marketing activity is orientated, and Mid Ulster is very well aligned with this theme.

Previous analysis¹⁹ identified remoteness and distance from cities, markets and transport hubs as being equally the area’s biggest weakness and a strong attractor. Other weaknesses of the area include limited collaboration amongst tourism providers to develop activity based packages with local accommodation and weak marketing of the area (for activities). In the Sperrins, the ORNI Recreation Action Plan and the Forest Recreation Audit promote the outdoors and activity tourism but the promise of the area cannot be fulfilled because of access constraints, lack of visibility and the absence of any agreed marketing and promotional plan by the four LAs. (Although outside our remit, we include an appendix with actions that should be taken in so far as they relate to the future of the Sperrins.)

Crucially, despite the strong attributes of the wider area for outdoor activities, the (potential) visitor finds it difficult to identify what their experience will be, how many activities they can access, and where they might stay, all barriers to visiting and staying.

The objectives for outdoor activities to be a strategic component of Mid Ulster’s tourism lie in:

- Drawing the components, sites and operators working in outdoor tourism together to package and present a coherent and composite product to the market;
- Enhancing the visibility, appeal and promotion of the area for outdoor activities;
- Increase visitation to and the economic value from outdoor activities for Mid Ulster;
- Promoting business opportunities from outdoor tourism.

Actions

Improving the economic contribution of outdoor and activity tourism is dependent on:

1. Creating a coherent and compelling range of outdoor activity sites and facilities, by pulling all existing and potential new sites under the one umbrella – this requires the wide range of outdoor activities to be articulated and packaged for the visitor, tying into the planned branding for the destination (see section 4.4 below).
2. Positioning Mid Ulster as a centre of excellence for visitors, thus encouraging them to visit the area, stay longer and spend more.
3. The development of the outdoor and activity tourism product comprises both a physical focus – sites, trails, development and activity hubs – and management and organisational dimensions – marketing, interagency collaboration and cluster development - prerequisites to the successful development of the destination for outdoor tourism. Collaboration with activity tourism operators to package and market year-round product is required.
4. The following forest parks should be prioritised to accommodate and create new and enhanced activities and facilities – Parkanaur, Knockmany and Drum Manor. Improvements would include better welcome facilities, trails for cycling and walking.
5. Events to generate profile and attract visitation should continue to be a priority, linked to outdoor activities. A year round programme should be developed.

¹⁹ Wild Adventure in Tyrone and Sperrins, BTS, 2015

6. Additional camping and caravanning or “Touring in the Trees” caravan sites are required to encourage visitation; specific sites identified include improvement and extension of Drum Manor, extending Parkanaur caravan sites plus potential replacement for that lost in the Clogher Valley.
7. A special focus is required to address countryside access and negotiate more and better access for activity tourists, such as the Greenway plans in the Blackwater Valley and in the Sperrins AONB.

4.2 Tourism as an Economic Driver

Tourism in Mid Ulster is largely unrecognized as an economic driver. There is general appreciation that it could grow in importance, helping to sustain more jobs and businesses, especially as a year round sector. However, its growth is dependent on preconditions being met, which are articulated in the strategic themes in this strategy and the associated actions.

Currently, the tourism product and experiences in Mid Ulster are dissipated across the area, from the River Blackwater and Clogher Valley, through Dungannon, around Lough Neagh, to the Sperrins and the area north of Magherafelt. As importantly, the outdoor activities and history and heritage tourism products are not yet adequately defined to be “attractors” that will stimulate market recognition of Mid Ulster and more visitors and their spend. Many potential visitors don’t know what the tourism assets of the area are and what their experience will be. Addressing marketing is therefore integral to stimulating economic value for the area.

Enhancing the role of tourism as an important economic activity requires local agencies, stakeholders and residents to understand its importance and potential. Thus, agencies need to be continuously persuaded to commit to investment in products and services and residents to understand how tourism helps to sustain local facilities, like outdoor sites, arts centres, cafes and restaurants etc. One role of this strategy and action plan is to help direct that commitment to where it is needed.

Actions

The actions under this theme are:

1. Adoption of and commitment to this strategy and the associated actions by the local authority.
2. Generate the commitment and support of the tourism trade to the strategy and its actions. We recommend that this be undertaken through an agreed engagement and communications plan with the trade, and through a defined partnership approach, which is defined below under actions in section 5.1.
3. Communication plan with agencies, stakeholders and residents to promote the importance of tourism in the area. This will require the value of tourism to be articulated and a sustained programme of communications to be delivered. This might be focused on key activities, assets, events etc. throughout the year.

4.3 Destination Management

The development of a competitive destination requires a number of challenges to be addressed to ensure the success of the area in attracting and accommodating visitors:

- to nurture and encourage a robust and competitive tourism industry, made up of the operators in the area;
- to establish good communication and collaborative relationships between stakeholders with an interest in sites, facilities, attractions and marketing;
- to ensure a welcoming and clean public realm, including public toilets, street furniture, roads, viewing points, signage, interpretation etc., all necessary to facilitate the quality of the visitor experience;

- to guarantee the quality of welcome and hospitality service for visitors, in addition to effective information provision (pre, during and post visit).

Falling under the auspices of “destination management”, investment in tourism product and its marketing will be wasted if the destination is unable to give visitors positive, quality experiences that encourage positive word of mouth and reputation (the cheapest form of marketing) and repeat visits.

Under the auspices of the tourism strategy, the local authority has to set the tone for future growth in the destination and how relationships with the tourism trade and other stakeholders will operate. Mid Ulster Council must also ensure that all public services²⁰ are aligned to the needs of the visitor. Guidance from the Department for the Economy²¹ suggests that destination management is coordinated management to address all the components that go to make up the quality of the visitor experience.

Hospitality and service quality go hand-in-hand and are vital dimensions to a successful and competitive tourism destination. In Mid Ulster, tourism operators have quite variable levels of service standards: programmes to raise awareness and address hospitality and service quality are important opportunities to enhance industry competitiveness.

Underpinning the strategic tourism strands referred to above – relating to Seamus Heaney, Outdoor Activities and History and Heritage – are the other activities which visitors undertake: shopping, eating, being entertained, staying and sleeping etc. The quality of these experiences has to be high and service standards and the quality of welcome need to be concentrated on. Equally, the information available, broadband quality, distribution of print locally and emphasis on digital and social media are important channels to ensure visitors know what to access, where.

Representing the local authority and being a half-way house to the trade, Visitor Information Centres should have the role of encouraging increased length of stay, repeat visitation, improved visitor yields and enhanced consumer awareness, as well as working with the tourism trade to support it achieve these objectives. At present VICs in NI are subject to a Tourism NI mid-term review of visitor information and given this changing context and the development of the strategic vision contained in this tourism plan, it is timely to consider the future role and effectiveness of VICs. Collaboration between and sharing of VIC management practices, greater product awareness, working with the tourism trade locally and an unambiguous focus on digital marketing and delivery of information to visitors through technology, are important considerations.

Actions

The following actions will ensure that the destination management philosophy is adopted by the Council, its stakeholders and the tourism trade in Mid Ulster to ensure the quality of visitor experience is at the requisite level for a competitive destination:

1. Develop strong working relationship with the tourism trade to generate its commitment to the strategy and to quality and service standards necessary for Mid Ulster to be a competitive destination. We recommend the establishment of a Council/stakeholder/trade Tourism Development Group, the role and remit of which are outlined below (see section 5.1 below).
2. Strengthen collaboration and partnerships between Mid Ulster Council and stakeholders whose engagement and commitment are necessary for the successful delivery of tourism in the area.
3. Redefine the role of the Visitor Information Centres and their relationship with the tourism industry, to ensure that they support the tourism trade and help raise quality standards.

²⁰ Including those operated by other agencies

²¹ DETI – Destination Development – Guiding Principles for Destination Planning

Additional functions to include marketing of the area, social media, trade engagement and communication.

4. Align all non-tourism services and functions of the local authority to support tourism development and growth – these to include business and skills development; regeneration; planning and physical development; investment promotion; arts and leisure, sport and outdoor activities.
5. Support the development of Mid Ulster as a World Host destination. Review additional skills required to support Council staff to work with tourism Ireland and the travel trade. Include social media delivery as part of the brief for VIC staff.

4.4 Promoting Mid Ulster for Tourism

Mid Ulster suffers from a comparative lack of distinctiveness in tourism destination marketing terms, with implicit limitations on market visibility and appeal and significant implications on how to develop the product proposition(s) and market them. However, an important strength is that Mid Ulster is located within an hour's drive of Northern Ireland's significant tourism regions – Causeway Coast, Fermanagh Lakes, Belfast and cross border destinations of Donegal and Monaghan²². This strategic location, in the heart of NI, presents opportunities to develop and promote tourism.

Developing tourism in Mid Ulster and raising its economic contribution is dependent not only on the development of tourism products (which shape the way in which visitors will relate to the destination) and effective destination management, both outlined above, but also on positive marketing of the destination.

There are several dimensions to marketing the destination:

- The need to establish the tourism strands and products detailed above – Seamus Heaney, Outdoor Activities and History and Heritage;
- Ensuring the quality of the welcome and service standards are high;
- Ensuring that the tourism trade and the public and other stakeholders work together to deliver a successful destination;
- Generate common agreement to the vision and consequent marketing and making sure there is public/private commitment to the marketing;
- Making sure residents of Mid Ulster understand the quality of the tourism experiences and assets in the area, so that they act as ambassadors for the destination (e.g. with friends and family).

Somewhat counterintuitively, this strategy is explicit about the focus of marketing and promotion to local residents, as well as residents of NI and out-of-state visitors²³:

- **Local residents** – while they will be day trippers and will not spend a lot, it is necessary to influence them to encourage friends and family to visit (for the experiences offered) and to keep them advised of the importance of tourism to the area. They will also be influential to the quality of welcome received by visitors;
- **NI residents** – many will be day visitors too, but it is important to raise the profile of Mid Ulster for tourism, and of the tourism experiences/products on offer and encourage changed behaviour, to visit the destination;
- **Out-of-state visitors** will come from a variety of originations with different characteristics and motivators. (Great Britain, Germany, France and North America are the priority originations.)

²² A proposal is under development in the cross border counties for "The Irish Borderlands", which would link the Wild Atlantic Way with Ireland's Ancient East, and include touch points in NI, including Mid Ulster.

²³ Tourism promotion would normally be targeted at the higher value segments associated with out-of-state visitors

The following figure highlights the target segments, based on Tourism Ireland and Tourism Northern Ireland's market analyses. A table with detailed motivators to visits is included in the appendices.

Mid Ulster Market segments		
NI & ROI	Great Britain, Germany, France, North America	Niche Segments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time Together • Mature Cosmopolitans • Family Fun • Young and Lively (ROI only) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Energisers • Culturally Curious • Great Escaper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literary Tourism • Ulster Scots • Travel trade • VFR²⁴

The marketing of the Mid Ulster area requires:

1. Agreement on the branding to underpin the way the destination is promoted and perceived;
2. A marketing strategy which is adaptable to changed market conditions, allows individual attractions and businesses to market themselves and reinforces the attributes and product experiences across the whole destination; and
3. A marketing plan to which all stakeholders align and commit.

Branding

The development of a collective "Mid Ulster" tourism brand will not in itself generate traction, brand recognition or a compelling proposition for the visitor. Nor will it raise awareness about the products and experiences available in Mid Ulster, nor do justice to the alternative proposition of positioning the three key products – Seamus Heaney, Outdoor Activities and History and Heritage – as the main attractors. These would be supported by other lower ranked products, town and villages, experiences, events, food and the natural assets such as loughs, rivers, countryside etc.

Thus, each of the three priority tourism products should be branded and their brands used to underpin their marketing and promotion.

The core (product) brand promises used in marketing are not designed to exclude the other product brands, but to identify how variously the Seamus Heaney, Outdoor Activities and History and Heritage visitor experiences will work, each working to maximise visitor opportunities for their own specific product area. They will of course each be targeted at their priority markets, which while not mutually exclusive, are likely to have limited overlap.

Despite the comments above, there is still a rationale for including Mid Ulster consistently in the product brands, using it as a lower ranking component in the branding of the products – to increase recognition of the Mid Ulster identity, both locally (for residents) and for NI markets. The recommended way to do this follows:

1. A brand architecture should be developed around the three core Mid Ulster product experiences (Seamus Heaney, Outdoor Activities and History and Heritage). These brands should be designed to underpin the marketing of each product. The brand design exercise should build on a strong understanding of the region's key strengths and core appeals and how these meet visitor segments and needs.
2. Mid Ulster should be used consistently as a subservient component (e.g. strapline) on all marketing in NI and the Republic, to increase recognition and understanding of what is on offer in the area. It is less relevant for the strapline to be used in further off out-of-state markets.

²⁴ Visiting friends and relations

3. The three product brands should be seen to come from the same “stable”, to support mutual reinforcement and help visitors understand what else there is available to do in the area.
4. A brand design exercise should be undertaken, working with representatives and stakeholders within each core product.

Marketing Strategy

The marketing strategy should use the agreed brands and will determine key markets (for each core tourism product for Mid Ulster). It will set the 3 to 5 year timeframe under which the marketing action plan will be implemented. It therefore has to be adaptable and be able to respond to changes (in currencies, market conditions etc.)

Target markets for each core product, based on Tourism NI and Tourism Ireland data, will be as follows:

Theme	Key Markets
1. Seamus Heaney Experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid Ulster residents and NI residents • Educational market • Other Seamus Heaney exhibitions and events²⁵ • Literary tourists • Alignment with other literary centres throughout Ireland • Literary trails and itineraries • Travel trade • Culturally Curious (GB, Germany etc.) • Mature Cosmopolitans (NI and ROI)
2. Outdoor Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid Ulster residents and NI residents • Active walkers, cyclists, canoeists etc. • Multi activity centres and activity operators’ markets • Time Together (NI and ROI) • Family Fun (NI and ROI) • Young and Lively (ROI only) • Social Energisers (GB, Germany etc.) • Culturally Curious (GB, Germany etc.) • Great Escapers (GB, Germany etc.)
3. History and heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid Ulster residents and NI residents • Time Together (NI and ROI) • Mature Cosmopolitans (NI and ROI) • Family Fun (NI and ROI) • Young and Lively (ROI only) • Social Energisers (GB, Germany etc.) • Great Escaper (GB, Germany etc.)

Marketing Plan

The marketing plan will an annual programme of activities focused around budgets, the key markets (defined in the strategy) and routes to market. It will be promoted to the tourism trade to generate its buy-in to joint marketing activities. A key annual target will be the travel trade who determine itineraries for visitors²⁶. Equally, the focus on digital media and social media should supersede all

²⁵ As planned in e.g. Dublin

²⁶ And whose timescale is 18 months to 2 years ahead in planning and marketing itineraries

efforts at print for destination marketing and arguably (consumer) exhibition attendance for promotions.

The annual plan should be agreed with the local tourism trade, through the proposed Tourism Development Group, in order to get endorsement and support buy-in to collective marketing.

Actions

1. Commission the development of a brand architecture for the three core tourism products for Mid Ulster, working with relevant stakeholders to generate their support and commitment. Communicate brand guidelines to tourism trade.
2. Develop marketing strategy and plan for domestic (NI) and out-of-state marketing. Prepare digital and social media plan.
3. Agree campaign to inform Mid Ulster residents of tourism's role and assets.
4. Establish and develop working relationships with Tourism Ireland for inclusion of Mid Ulster product in off-island marketing.
5. Work with the tourism sector in Mid Ulster to generate alignment of their marketing and promotion with the strategic direction agreed. Consult and seek the support of the putative Tourism Development Group to the marketing strategy and annual plans. Need to:
 - Encourage tourism operators to participate in campaigns
 - Work with stakeholders – especially e.g. National Trust, Department for Communities - to agree common objectives and involvement in marketing campaigns
6. Develop relationships with the travel trade and encourage and support them to package Mid Ulster product for their clients. (Market research needed to identify most appropriate tour agents etc.)

4.5 Dispersal of Visitor Spend and Supporting Local Communities

There's a twofold importance to this strategic strand – to ensure that visitor spend and benefit is spread throughout Mid Ulster and to support local communities play their role in accommodating and welcoming visitors.

The issue of local communities' tourism roles is profound. There is a tension between sustaining the identities and attractiveness of individual communities, towns and villages for residents and visitors, while reinforcing the role and identity of the whole of Mid Ulster. In section 4.4 above, the Mid Ulster identity is proposed as being projected as a subservient strapline (or similar) in the design architecture for the three priority tourism products.

Meanwhile, local communities are proud of their identities and their role in tourism. Because the Outdoor Activities and Archaeology, History and Heritage, and to a lesser extent the Seamus Heaney, tourism products and experiences are dispersed across the Mid Ulster region, it is important to ensure that visitors are motivated to visit and spend within these diverse communities. However, the tourism "offer" within each town and village must be decipherable, promoted and understood by potential visitors. The identity, quality of public realm, quality standards, food available etc. within each community are important, to ensure that visitors know to visit and are welcomed.

This necessitates a local regeneration approach within each community, which in turn requires (tourism) trade and community involvement in determining local priorities and the management of visitors – what they visit, how directed, what's the interpretation or orientation like, opening hours etc.

Dispersing visitors across the district means that their access to information and understanding of what authentic products and experiences are available in each place must be articulated. This is an added, but crucial, dimension to developing the priority tourism products and to marketing and promotion of these products. Local itineraries, places to visit, the local setting or context for outdoor

activities or heritage sites, where to visit next etc., all need to be articulated, while the distribution channels need to be defined, with due attention paid to broadband quality, digital and social media, local print distribution etc.

Such strategies are important in increasing visitors' length of stay and improving visitor yield. Well-placed and attractive directional, place-making and interpretive signage will facilitate visitors' awareness of all that Mid Ulster has to offer. It will also assist in enticing repeat visitation.

Actions

These comprise:

1. Inclusion of local facilities in the articulation of tourism product for Mid Ulster – including itineraries, places to visit, things to do, clusters of attractions.
2. Marketing and promotion of the tourism priorities should include key “hubs” around which outdoor facilities or history and heritage product are clustered.
3. Develop packages, bundles and itineraries of things to do and places to visit to encourage visitors to experience the best the destination has to offer.
4. Develop a toolkit for use by local communities to assist them develop and exploit their local identities and tourism assets. The toolkit might include: getting people together; projecting local identities; branding and marketing guidelines; things for visitors to do; running events; access to funds etc.
5. Council to support local communities through business engagement and review of local regeneration priorities, including helping local clusters to set up and operate.

5 Implementation

This section addresses issues associated with the implementation of the strategy and action plan. The detailed action plan is contained in the appendices.

Key items addressed here are:

- Setting up the Tourism Development Group
- Role of the local authority
- Measuring performance (KPIs)
- Risk Analysis

5.1 Tourism Development Group

Destinations only succeed when public and private sectors work together and the wider community commits to tourism. The legacy councils that make up Mid Ulster Council each communicated with the local tourism trade and the Flavour of Tyrone group provide an effective and enduring public/private partnership, with successes in place including business marketing, promotion and developing and sustaining quality standards.

The establishment of Mid Ulster Council and the focus on the three tourism priorities now necessitate a new approach to partnership, building on previous success. The need for this is prompted by:

- The renewed focus on three tourism strands or priorities which business operators²⁷ need to align with;
- The establishment of a new brand architecture, marketing strategy and annual marketing plans which need to be endorsed and committed to by the tourism trade, so their own marketing aligns and reinforces, including generating operator collateral in marketing campaigns;
- A new focus on working with Tourism Ireland, Tourism NI and the travel trade, to ensure Mid Ulster tourism product is placed out-of-state and off-island and is included in travel trade itineraries for their customers and clients;
- The geographical breadth of Mid Ulster and the stated objective of supporting local communities (and the tourism trade within them) to firmly establish their identities and role in welcoming visitors;
- The dependence on a number of other stakeholders – Tourism NI, Forest Services, Department for Communities, National Trust, Lough Neagh Partnership, Waterways Ireland etc. – in developing, articulating and promoting the tourism priorities for Mid Ulster.

The formality of partnership arrangements is proposed through a four tiered approach:

1. The establishment of a Tourism Development Group, to which the local authority, operator representatives and key stakeholders are invited to be members²⁸. Leadership from the local authority and trade is required at the highest level. The main roles of the Group would be to:
 - Help set the tourism priorities for the area
 - Comment on and contribute to the thinking behind the branding, marketing, annual marketing plans and product development opportunities across the area
 - Help generate operator contributions to such thinking and marketing delivery, including generating collateral for campaigns
 - Support partnership arrangements locally (within Mid Ulster and NI) and with Tourism Ireland and the travel trade
 - Act as ambassadors for the area in all matters relating to tourism

²⁷ We include voluntary and community owned tourism operations within this definition

²⁸ The Tourism Development Group would not substitute for the regulatory and budgetary functions or decisions that are within the remit of the local authority

2. Flavour would develop as an organisation to be Mid Ulster wide, supporting business engagement and communication, raising quality standards and ensuring the food and hospitality dimension to the destination are maintained. It should be renamed Flavour of Mid Ulster²⁹.
3. Clusters of operators would be encouraged, aligned to the main tourism products and to the needs of individual communities, towns and villages. Support should be on offer from the local authority.
4. The VICs' role in business engagement and communication would be formalised with regular enews, emails, information exchange and when appropriate business and skills training support.

The Council has from the outset committed to engaging with and working with tourism operators across the area. Other roles and functions of the local authority are developed in the next section below.

5.2 Role of the Local Authority

While playing a pivotal role in strategy and delivery of product development and marketing plans, the local authority has statutory functions and staff responsibilities and can allocate capital and operational (revenue) budgets to tourism. The proposal to establish and formalise the Tourism Development Group and engage and communicate with tourism operators does not negate the task the authority has of making its own decisions about resources and staff. The Tourism Development Group would assist with consultations and generating support from the tourism trade.

There a number of other roles the local authority must play to support tourism growth:

- Tourism staff will support product development, events management, business engagement and communications and will lead on marketing and promotions;
- VIC staff need to play a strong role in supporting implementation of these functions. (We anticipate that enhanced skills training will be required to e.g. ingrain working with the travel trade and Tourism Ireland, develop and consistently deliver social media and digital campaigns, etc.);
- The brand architecture and complementary development and strengthening of local communities and their identities will require support from communication staff within the local authority;
- Regeneration, planning, countryside access skills will be required to facilitate product development and local regeneration, of which Bellaghy is an example (see section 4.2.1 above);
- Business development is necessary to support operators, either independently or in clusters, to innovate, be more efficient, gain skills etc.
- Arts, culture and leisure functions add important components to the tourism product and things for visitors to do (in addition to the lead on the development of the Seamus Heaney experience and contributor to the Outdoor Activities and Archaeology, History and Heritage tourism priorities);
- The local authority needs to lead on:
 - Negotiation with stakeholders on their role and contribution to the delivery of tourism for the area;
 - Advocacy and lobbying on key issues, including resources, traffic improvements, broadband coverage³⁰ etc.

5.3 Measuring Performance

²⁹ This would need to be determined and agreed upon by the members, since it is an independent organisation

³⁰ Supported by the Tourism Development Group

Overall performance of the visitor economy can be assessed through tourism data, measuring overnight trips made by Northern Ireland residents and visitors from outside Northern Ireland. Derived from a variety of sources, information is published by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). There are issues about the district wide accuracy of this data, due in part to modest sample sizes and to disaggregating NI-wide information to local areas. Equally, many venues and sites have limited visitor surveys, so who visits, when and where they come from is unknown or can only be guessed at.

Key measurable outputs in assessing performance include:

- Number of trips
- Length of stay
- Number of overnight stays
- Spend
- Origin of visit
- Reason for visit
- Levels of satisfaction

The table below catalogues the KPIs and growth targets

Measuring Performance	
Baseline Now (2015)	Measures of Future Success and source of data
3 legacy councils with own tourism programmes and systems	Commitment by Mid Ulster Council to tourism as a strategic priority and economic driver
Existing communications from LAs to tourism trade sporadic and not consistent No formal public/private partnership, other than Flavour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of an effective Tourism Development Group • Consistent and regular engagement and communications with the trade • Effective business engagement and communications • Role of Flavour developed and organisation well established (with growing membership) (Source: internal Council assessment and tourism trade views)
Marketing strategy and plan	New brand architecture, marketing strategy and annual plans agreed with and used by operators (Source: Council assessment)
Limited out-of-state marketing and work with travel trade	Proportion of marketing budgets allocated to NI, ROI and out-of-state to be agreed (Source: Council assessment)
Advocacy for the sector is currently ad hoc	Preparedness of LA to be advocate for the sector (Source: internal Council assessment and tourism trade views)
£26.6m p.a. expenditure by visitors on overnight trips, 2014 (= 4% of NI total)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The value needs to be confirmed because of wide variations in NISRA estimates (£86m in 2013) • double value of overnight stays to £50m by 2021 (Source: NISRA)

Measuring Performance	
Baseline Now (2015)	Measures of Future Success and source of data
213,740 trips and 622,114 overnights in 2014 (4% of the NI total)	Increase number of trips and overnight stays by 14% p.a. to 2021 (Source: NISRA)
Number of people employed in the sector, currently 3,165 jobs (2013)	Sustain existing level through 2015/16 and 2016/17 and 2% p.a. growth thereafter (Need also to evaluate sustainability and full or part time character of jobs) (Source: NISRA)
Stakeholders' commitment – base line needs to be established.	Value of stakeholders investment and commitment to be evaluated by LA (Source: Council assessment)
New business formation	To be agreed in the future (Source: Council)

5.4 Risk Analysis

The purpose of the risk analysis is to identify what would happen if the Tourism Strategy and associated actions are not implemented or resourced.

We identify the major risks as follows:

- Risk of the local authority failing to integrate tourism functions across all services
- Risk of failure of the Council to engage and communicate with tourism operators
- Risk of failure to embrace and undertake the out-of-state and travel trade marketing roles
- Risk of not communicating with residents about the importance of tourism
- Limits on resource allocation to deliver strategy

We catalogue the risks and how to address or ameliorate them below.

Risk Analysis	
Risks	Actions to Address Risks
Risk of the local authority failing to integrate tourism functions across all services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism strategy and actions not given high enough priority by the LA • Departmental failure to integrate tourism within full range of economic and other services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council commitment must be generated, potentially seeking Tourism NI support to encourage Council to prioritise tourism • Enlist stakeholders' (including the tourism trade) commitment and support to identify way forward • Brief senior managers to enhance their commitment to tourism
Risk of failure of the Council to engage and communicate with tourism operators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to establish Tourism Development Group • Failure to generate match funding commitments to marketing activity • Failure to generate confidence in the Council's tourism leadership results in fragmentation of the tourism sector, which 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must engage and communicate with the tourism trade • VIC staff and tourism managers to design this component as a matter of priority • Establishment of a Tourism Development Group, to represent operator interests, as a high priority, with exchange of views on delivery of tourism across the LA area • Identify potential leaders and influencers to talk to peers in the sector

Risk Analysis	
Risks	Actions to Address Risks
ultimately leads to lower levels of performance	
Risk of failure to embrace and undertake the out-of-state marketing and travel trade communication roles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on domestic (NI) visitation will result in lower level of out-of-state visitors and lower levels of income 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Immediate review and agreement with Tourism Ireland about the role of the Council and the activities/priorities in out-of-state marketing Agreement on role the tourist trade in the area can play in out-of-state marketing Skills development of Council staff to take on this role effectively
Risk of not communicating with residents about the importance of tourism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Failure to advocate tourism's importance and opportunities to residents Potential loss of the VFR market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual campaign to residents to be built in to Council communications to home owners, businesses and residents Occasional news stories required Residents as potential markets for events and arts and sport activities
Limits on resource allocation to deliver strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risks to delivery of the strategy in its entirety Risks to delivery of specific components (e.g. marketing campaign) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritisation of strategy components for resourcing/implementation Negotiate with other stakeholders for funding commitments

6 Next Steps

The next steps for development and implementation of the tourism strategy and action plans follow:

Next Steps			
No	Action	Who?	Timescale
1.	Agree the Tourism Strategy and Action Plan, 2016 – 21, including presentation to the tourism trade	All	July/August 2016
2.	Set up the Tourism Development Group, identifying operator, stakeholder and Council representation	Council, with stakeholders	July – September 2016
3.	Prepare the brief for the new brand architecture to define the tourism products/propositions and relationship to the Council's branding. Include stakeholder workshop. Commission designers to prepare brands	Council and stakeholders	July/August 2016
4.	Prepare the marketing plan for the area and the 3 tourism products, with digital marketing being central	Council and stakeholders	July onwards
5.	Define the business development interventions to enhance the competitiveness of operators across the area	Council, with TNI and INI	August – ongoing
6.	Develop the industry engagement and communication programme, including mechanisms for clusters aligned to the major product opportunities and for local hubs	Council	Ongoing
7.	Develop and deliver communication campaign to residents	Council	September onwards
8.	Establish the baseline for KPIs	Council	July onwards
9.	Working with TNI and NISRA to determine what surveys are undertaken and agree the research work required to generate and monitor tourism performance	Council, TNI and NISRA	Autumn 2016
10.	Review landscape management arrangements in the Sperrins with other local authorities and interested stakeholders	LAs	Ongoing

Appendices

The second volume of appendices include:

- Policy context
 - Mid Ulster context
 - Tourism in a NI context
- Tourism trends
- Outdoor Activity market
- Report on survey of the tourism trade
- SWOT analysis
- Sperrins Actions
- Sources
- Consultations

Mid Ulster Tourism Strategy

Action Plan

The Action Plan is a working tool for Tourism Strategy implementation.

The implementation process may vary over time in response to new opportunities to secure funding, the level of support and commitment from stakeholders and relevant policy changes at all levels of government. The lead stakeholders identified in the Action Plan are therefore indicative only and the final list of stakeholders implementing a particular action may vary. The Action Plan is organised into the five themes each with strategy actions, tasks and priorities.

Time scales

1. Covers the period April 2016 – March 2017; 2. Covers the period April 2017 - March 2018; 3. Covers the period April 2018 – March 2019; 4 covers the period April 2018 – March 2020; 5 covers the period April 2020 – March 2021

Partners

MUDC = Mid Ulster District Council; TDG = (the new) Mid Ulster Tourism Development Group; PS =Private Sector; TNI =Tourism Northern Ireland; TI = Tourism Ireland; ONI= Outdoor NI; DfC = Department for Communities

Funding

Funding for the delivery of the action plan will come from a number of sources, including EU programmes, Tourism NI and Tourism Ireland, private sector, Council core budgets and other funding that is identified and becomes available over the period of the strategy and action plan.

Strategic Themes - Key Actions		Lead	Partners	Time Scale
1: Seamus Heaney				
1.	Seamus Heaney HomePlace Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a marketing and communications plan, to include engagement with the tourism trade, Tourism Ireland, Tourism Northern Ireland and the travel trade Develop a year round Heaney experience events programme Develop a strong digital platform for the HomePlace, including social media Integrate marketing of the Heaney experience into the visitor marketing for the area (see below) Work with other literary centres to develop an all-Ireland literary experience 	MUDC	TNI, TDG, PS	1-5
2.	Tourism operators' own marketing and service plans: review by each business of their plans to see how to integrate with the Heaney proposition	TDG	PS, TNI MUDC,	1-5
3.	Business collaboration and networking: support for operators to cluster and develop new product, services and experiences for visitors	MUDC	TDG, TNI, PS	1-5
4.	Skills development and mentoring: World Host training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For tourism businesses, linked to the Heaney experience For all operators in Bellaghy 	MUDC	TNI, TDG, PS	1, 2

Strategic Themes - Key Actions		Lead	Partners	Time Scale
5.	Working with the local tourism trade: the HomePlace to collaborate on marketing, promotion, events, new products etc. with the tourism trade	MUDC	TDG, PS	1 - 5
6.	Bellaghy village renewal: prepare, consult and implement a public realm plan to enhance the quality of the environment for visitors and residents	MUDC	TNI	1 - 3
7.	Seamus Heaney trails: complete the design and implementation of the trails to celebrate Heaney's literature and legacy	MUDC	TNI	1, 2
2: Archaeology, History and Heritage				
8.	Establish unifying heritage and history tourism theme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To position Mid Ulster as a centre of excellence for history and heritage Tie into the branding for the area (see action 26 below) Develop compelling archaeological, historic and heritage tourism proposition for visitors 	MUDC	TDG, TNI, DfC	1
9.	Heritage Lottery Fund: following feasibility study, integrate landscape management with historic sites in Lower Sperrins and at Lough Neagh, with HLF support	MUDC ³¹	DfC	1 - 5
10.	Itineraries: develop a series of itineraries for visitors, to encourage dispersal	MUDC	TDG, PS	1, 2
11.	Events: develop a year round programme of events linked with historic venues to generate profile and attract visitation	MUDC	TDG	1 - 5
3: Outdoor Activities				
12.	The Outdoor Activity product: pull existing and potential new sites and facilities under the one umbrella for the visitor, tying into the planned branding for the destination (see action 26 below)	MUDC	TDG, TNI, ONI	1
13.	Position Mid Ulster as a centre of Outdoor Activity excellence: marketing plan to develop proposition and promote to visitor markets	MUDC	TNI, TDG	1 - 5
14.	Physical development priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme to develop sites, trails and village/facility hubs Prioritise Parkanaur, Knockmany and Drum Manor forest parks for improvements Marketing, interagency collaboration and cluster development with operators including activity tourism operators 	MUDC	ONI, TDG, PS	1 - 5
15.	Outdoor activity events: develop and deliver year round programme to generate profile and attract visitation, including the Dark Skies project	MUDC	TDG	1 - 5
16.	Camping and caravanning: identify and develop specific sites, with stakeholders and private sector	MUDC	Forest Services	1, 2

³¹ Plus Fermanagh and Omagh District Council for the Lower Sperrins Heritage project

Strategic Themes - Key Actions		Lead	Partners	Time Scale
17.	Countryside access: focus to address countryside access and negotiate more and better access for activity tourists, e.g. in the Blackwater Valley and the Sperrins AONB	MUDC	ONI	1-5
4: Tourism as an Economic Driver				
18.	Adoption of the tourism strategy: Adoption of and commitment to this strategy and the associated actions by the local authority	MUDC	TNI, TDG, PS	1
19.	Generate support of the tourism trade, through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An agreed engagement and communications plan with the trade Set up the Tourism Development Group (see action 21 below) 	MUDC	TDG, PS	1, 2
20.	Generate support of stakeholders, through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication and engagement plan with agencies and stakeholders Communication plan with residents to promote the importance of tourism (requires a sustained programme of communication) 	MUDC	TNI	1, 2
5 Destination Management				
21.	Tourism Development Group: set up policy orientated Tourism Development Group with the tourism trade, stakeholders and Council (see action 2 above)	TDG	MUDC, TNI	1
22.	Collaboration and partnerships with the tourism trade: Council and tourism trade to communicate and engage, to establish strong working relationship for product development, marketing and quality of visitor welcome	TDG	MUDC	1-5
23.	Visitor Information Centres: redefine the role of VICS and their relationship with the tourism industry; functions to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trade engagement and communication Access to skills development Help raise quality standards Support marketing of the area and continuous social media presence Review skills required to support VIC staff to work with tourism Ireland, the travel trade and deliver social media	MUDC	TNI	1, 2
24.	Mid Ulster Council: align all non-tourism services and functions of the local authority to support tourism development and growth (e.g. business and skills; regeneration; planning; arts and leisure, sport and outdoor activities)	MUDC		1-5
25.	World Host: develop Mid Ulster as a World Host destination (see action 7 above).	MUDC	TDG, PS, TNI	1, 2
6: Promotion of Mid Ulster for Tourism				
26.	Branding: commission the development of a brand architecture for the three core tourism products, including communicating agreed brand guidelines to tourism trade	MUDC	TDG, PS, TNI	1
27.	Marketing strategy and plan: develop marketing strategy and plan for domestic (NI) and out-of-state marketing, including digital and social media components	MUDC	TDG, TNI	1-5

Strategic Themes - Key Actions		Lead	Partners	Time Scale
28.	Local residents campaign: to inform Mid Ulster residents of tourism's role and assets (see action 3 above)	MUDC		1 - 5
29.	Tourism Ireland and Tourism Northern Ireland: develop working relationships with TIL and TNI for off -island marketing of Mid Ulster tourism products	MUDC	TDG, PS	1 - 5
30.	Tourism trade: work to align tourism operators' marketing and promotion with the brand and agreed strategic direction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gain support of the Tourism Development Group to the marketing strategy and annual plans • Encourage tourism operators to participate in campaigns • Work with stakeholders – especially e.g. National Trust, DfC - to agree common objectives and involvement in marketing campaigns 	TDG	MUDC, PS	1 - 5
31.	Travel trade: work with travel trade to encourage inclusion of Mid Ulster product for their clients	MUDC	TDG, PS, TNI	1 - 5
7: Dispersal of Visitor Spend and Supporting Local Communities				
32.	Local facilities: develop itineraries and clusters of facilities to encourage dispersal of visitation across Mid Ulster	MUDC	TDG, PS, TNI	1 - 5
33.	Local hubs and regeneration, through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop plans and investment programmes for village hubs around which outdoor facilities or history and heritage product are clustered • Support for local clusters of tourism operators • Develop a toolkit for use by local communities to assist them develop and exploit their local identities and tourism assets 	MUDC	TDG, PS	1 - 5
34.	Itineraries: develop packages, bundles and itineraries to encourage visitors to experience the best the destination has to offer	MUDC	TDG, PS	1, 2



Comhairle Ceantair
Lár Uladh
Mid Ulster
District Council

Tourism Strategy and Action Plan, 2016 – 21
for

Mid Ulster District Council

Volume 2
Appendices

June 2016



Tourism Strategy and Action Plan, 2016 – 21
for Mid Ulster District Council
Volume 2 - Appendices

Contents	Page
1. Policy context	1
2. Market Segments and Motivators	4
3. Outdoor Activity market	5
4. Tourism trends	7
5. Report on survey of the tourism trade	9
6. SWOT analysis	14
7. Sperrins Actions	16
8. Sources	17
9. Consultations	19

Appendix 1

Policy Context

The strategic context for destination development in Northern Ireland is conditioned by the Department for the Economy and Tourism Northern Ireland's two-tiered approach to tourism delivery¹. In this two tiered framework, the Department for the Economy, other Government agencies, Tourism Northern Ireland, Tourism Ireland (TIL) and Invest Northern Ireland (INI) have strategic NI-wide responsibilities – setting overall policy, direction, determining key markets and investment priorities, while at the local level responsibilities for tourism delivery fall to the LAs, tourism partnerships or visitor and convention bureaus (where they exist), and to tourism operators, responsible for the quality of the visitor experience and destination competitiveness. Significantly, the two tier structure is not affected by the recent review of tourism delivery structures (the Hunter Review). The structure is illustrated below.

Responsibilities for Tourism Development in NI		
<p><u>Strategic Tourism Context</u></p> <p>Department for the Economy Other Government departments</p>		
<p><u>Tourism Northern Ireland</u></p> <p>Lead agency for tourism development in NI</p>	<p><u>Tourism Ireland</u></p> <p>Overseas promotion of island of Ireland</p>	<p><u>Invest Northern Ireland</u></p> <p>Tourism accommodation grants and business support</p>
Mid Ulster Tourism Delivery		
<p><u>Local Authority</u></p> <p>Local lead on tourism strategy, development, marketing and delivery</p>	<p><u>Statutory agencies and Public-Private Partnerships</u></p> <p>Contribute to strategic direction and delivery</p>	<p><u>Tourism Operators (+ Community & Voluntary agencies)</u></p> <p>Services and facilities essential to destination competitiveness and quality of visitor experience</p>

The outcomes of the current Department for the Economy and TNI review of tourism in NI are as yet unknown at the time of writing.

Department for the Economy **Tourism Strategy**

The current NI Executive's (draft) Tourism Strategy aims do not change, until such time as the updated Strategy for Tourism is published². The strategic context then for tourism development and delivery in Mid Ulster remains the current (draft) Department for the Economy Tourism Strategy:

- Increase visitors in NI from 3.2m (in 2010) to 4.5m by 2020;

¹ We illustrate this in the appendices

² Due later in 2016

- Increase earnings from tourism from £529m to £1 billion by 2020;
- Progressively accelerate spend by visitors;
- Target specific markets and market segments;
- Support indigenous high quality businesses to grow; and
- Be “visitor inspired” in all our actions, by which we mean visitor responsive and aware.

This strategy will need to be looked at again in the light of the outcomes of the current Department for the Economy /TNI review of strategic priorities.

Local Policies and Priorities

The new Council has extended powers and the remit to safeguard and support tourism development within its area. The establishment of the new Council, with a wider remit and stronger powers, offers opportunities to redefine the coordinating and management role of the Local Authority.

There are a number of local strategic contexts, which impact and influence this Tourism Development Strategy and the subsequent actions that emanate from it; these are:

1. The plans and priorities of the new authority include the Council’s Corporate Plan, the Community Plan and the Economic Development Plan. Tourism is recognised as a major economic activity, with growth potential.
2. The Regional Development Strategy and Regional Planning Policy Statements provide a framework for strong sustainable economic growth and recognises that a growing regional economy needs a co-ordinated approach to the provision of services, jobs and infrastructure. They highlight the opportunity for policies and proposals to be brought forward to address development such as farm diversification, agriculture and forestry development, tourism/holiday accommodation and the re-use/conversion of existing buildings.
3. Local plans and strategies of the former authorities (legacy councils) include regeneration frameworks for Cookstown (Cookstown Area Plan 2010), Dungannon and South Tyrone (Area Plan 2010) and Magherafelt (Area Plan 2015). These articulate aspirational, built environment and land use enhancements to improve the quality of life and wellbeing in and around the main towns.
4. Tourism plans have been developed for Tyrone and the Sperrins and for specific tourism segments:
 - Tyrone and The Sperrins Tourism Destination Management Plan (2013)
 - Wild Adventure in Tyrone & Sperrins, 2015
 - Cookstown District Council - Action Plan for Recreational Management of Cookstown Forest Parks (Draft Report) (2013)
 - Dungannon & South Tyrone - Outdoor Recreation NI (on behalf of Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council) - Forest Recreation Audit (2013)
5. The Sperrins and Lough Neagh also have tourism related plans and policies:
 - Sperrins Region Outdoor Recreation Action Plan (2013)
 - Outdoor Recreation NI (ORNI) - Assessing the Current and Potential Outdoor Recreation Facilities and Opportunities Around Lough Neagh, October 2014
 - Lough Neagh Partnership - Lough Neagh Cultural Heritage Audit and Strategic Action Plan, for DCAL, 2013
 - Lough Neagh Partnership – Traad Point Nature Reserve Feasibility study, March 2014
 - Lough Neagh Partnership – Destination Marketing Plan 2015/16

6. Tourism Northern Ireland's preliminary research on Mid Ulster's strengths and market opportunities is also relevant. In mid-2015, Tourism NI identified the challenge facing the District:
 - Relatively few visitors (141,000) and spend (£23m) – 3% of total NI overnight trips and spend
 - Large proportion of day trips and those visiting friends and relatives
 - Magherafelt and surrounds: "Strong potential with Heaney Centre." "Currently some niche tourism appeal which can be further encouraged with the right kind of tourism investment / development"
 - Cookstown and surrounding area "Currently limited capacity to appeal to overseas visitors but performs well as a hub town for the wider region and domestic market. Niche tourism opportunities should be explored"
 - Dungannon and surrounds: "Currently limited capacity to appeal to overseas visitors but potential to develop the domestic market due to good transport links. Also some potential as a stop-off point for FIT visitors to Northern Ireland"
 - TourismNI identified with the Council the potential for development of three tourism propositions – Seamus Heaney, Outdoor Activities and "Linkages with Irish heritage experiences".

7. ICBAN identified the cross border region as having the potential to develop further its unique tourism offering of coastline, lakes, inland waterways and hills, to the benefit of both residents and visitors. ICBAN's Strategic Framework for the Central Cross Border Region 2013-27 identifies, amongst other things, the need for a cross-border regional tourism strategy. ICBAN recognises that no single tourism strategy will be applicable to all parts of the area, but that there are elements which are common across the Region, including the rich natural environment and cultural and heritage. ICBAN also initiated a cross border literary trail.

Appendix 2

Market Segments and Motivators

The following table highlights the target segments for Mid Ulster, based on Tourism Ireland and Tourism Northern Ireland's market analyses.

Mid Ulster Market segments		
NI & ROI	Great Britain, Germany, France, North America	Niche Segments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time Together • Mature Cosmopolitans • Family Fun • Young and Lively (ROI only) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Energisers • Culturally Curious • Great Escapers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literary Tourism • Ulster Scots • Travel trade • VFR³

The following table highlights the target markets' motivations:

Mid Ulster Market Segments	
NI & ROI	
Market segment	Motivators
Time Together	Romance, cool nightlife, gentle walking, shopping, relaxation, good quality food and drink, natural scenery, contemporary cultural experiences, landmarks.
Mature Cosmopolitans	Curiosity, authenticity, insight, exploration, eating out, natural beauty, relaxation, good quality food and drink, scenic drives, theatre experience, authentic pub experience.
Family Fun	Fun, quality time, safe, child orientated attractions and entertainment, memories, value for money offers, family accommodation, café, activities.
Young and Lively (ROI only)	Entertainment, cool nightlife, the 'wow' factor, city experience, contemporary culture and music festivals, events, the local scene, street animation.
Great Britain, Germany, France, North America	
Social Energisers	Lively pubs, good food, talking to locals, festivals, entertainment, street art, comedy, the cool places to eat and shop, fun visitor attractions
Culturally Curious	Older, travel as couples or on their own; want to broaden their minds by exploring new landscapes, history and culture. They want authenticity; they make decision based on the experience not on brands or trends They love to discover history, arts, bookshops, museums
Great Escapers	Breathtaking landscapes, remote and exciting places, fun evening in an authentic pub, gentle exploration – walking, cycling, boating

³ Visiting friends and relations

Appendix 3

Outdoor Activity Market⁴

The international context for adventure tourism⁵ is set by estimates of its value. In 2010, the Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA) estimated global adventure tourism to be worth US\$89 billion (£57 billion at today's currency exchange rate), rising to US\$263 billion in 2013 (£170 billion). This 195% increase in three years can be attributed to:

- An increase in international departures (overall tourism); ·
- An increase of travellers going on adventure trips; ·
- An increase in average spending⁶.

In 2013 Fáilte Ireland estimated activity tourism to be worth €851m (£629m at current exchange rates) to the Irish economy in the previous year. The activity sector is considered a high-yield segment with the average activity-seeker considered to be spending 40% more than the average holidaymaker. In 2012, approximately 919,000 activity tourists visited Ireland from the following markets:

- Europe – 415,000 (45%)
- Britain – 297,000 (32%)
- North America – 176,000 (19%)
- Other areas 31,000 (4%)

The outdoor adventure tourism sector was estimated by Mintel to be worth €128m in NI in 2013. Looking ahead, Mintel predicts that the value of the outdoor adventure tourism industry will grow by 14% on an all-Ireland basis over the period 2014-18, from €327 million in 2014 to €367 million in 2018, with c. €146m of this expenditure occurring in NI. The largest growth can be expected to come from 'soft' adventure activities such as walking and cycling, which provides an opportunity for unique and attractive natural environments.

The existing market for adventure tourism activity in Tyrone and Sperrins rests with visitors to the area – both those staying overnight and day trippers – and residents. Tyrone and Sperrins is perceived as a day trip destination, with 2014 estimates that 55% of NI and 16% of ROI visitors were on a day trip away from home.

Segmented data about who is participating in hard and soft activity or adventure tourism is not readily available in NI, other than through surveys of individual sites or attractions and through estimates of NI residents' participation rates in various sports and recreational activities. The 2014 visitor attitude survey identified that 39% of visitors visited a forest, park or garden; 19% were engaged in hiking or walking; but only 1% were engaged in cycling or in other outdoor activities; proportions are significantly below those of other NI destinations and have major marketing implications.

⁴ Information from Wild Adventure in Tyrone and Sperrins Report, 2015

⁵ Made up of hard activities (such as climbing and trekking) and soft activities (e.g. walking, bird watching and safaris)

⁶ Source: NITB - Activities Tourism – Sharing Success 2011 and UNWTO report on adventure tourism 2014

Outdoor and Activity Tourism Market Trends

Outdoor tourism used to be a small, niche segment of the travel industry, thought to be only for backpackers and fitness-freaks willing to endure hardship and discomfort to get an authentic experience. As ATTA has highlighted (see above), this tourism activity now attracts mainstream groups – professionals, families, groups of friends and a far wider range of people concerned with health and wellbeing.

However, pre-family and family life stage groups are flat or declining in terms of population growth. The third age and retired groups are forecast to grow at a much faster rate. There are already more people aged over 60 than under 16s and by 2025 there will be more over 60s than under 25s.

Mintel⁷ reports that continuing growth in the activity market is likely to come from:

- Family adventure market;
- Older demographic groups;
- Customers becoming more involved with packaging breaks as co-creators of their holidays/breaks;
- Short intense activity breaks as an alternative or adjunct to city breaks;
- Combination of activity and luxury.

Other drivers relevant to the outdoor tourism sector are as follows:

- Interest in healthy life styles and wellbeing (amongst some market segments);
- A desire to experience something different (experiential travel), particularly amongst ABC1s
- Changing demographics, particularly in relation to the increasingly health conscious, environmentally aware ageing population;
- Increasing levels of disposable income, which have helped to make taking part in activity tourism affordable (along with, in some instances, decreasing cost of equipment);
- Increasing awareness of activity tourism via the Internet;
- Growth of tour companies specialising in activity tourism and increasing professionalism in the sector;
- Greater awareness amongst consumers of the environmental impacts of tourism, particularly overseas travel, perhaps, leading to an increase in domestic UK tourism;
- Economic reasons for increase in the “stay at home holiday” market.

⁷ www.mintel.com

Appendix 4

Tourism Trends

Tourism trends impacting Mid Ulster are global, society, technological and demographic.

Tourism trends identified at ITB include⁸:

Global tourism shakes off crises, despite threats to safety and worldwide economic factors, with 2015 reporting a worldwide 4.5% increase in international visitation, with predictions that this will continue in successive years.

Slower world economic growth is not deterring optimism about the future, nor impacting travel.

World outbound travel stays on the growth path, with one impact of terrorism being a concertation on “safe” destinations. Europe showed an uncharacteristic rise of over 4% growth in international visitation in 2015.

Asia and North America drive global growth, with Asia Pacific (+5%) and North America (+5%) leading growth, while South America (+4%) and European outbound travel grew by a good 4.5%. The Middle East grew by a strong 9%.

Top 6 outbound markets - By trips	Top 6 outbound markets- By spending
1. Germany	1. USA
2. USA	2. China
3. UK	3. Germany
4. China	4. UK
5. France	5. Japan
6. Canada	6. Canada

City trips and cruises drive market growth; more people are travelling abroad on holiday, with 34% growth between 2007 and 2014. Cruise holidays have boomed with a dynamic 248% increase over the seven years while city trips have soared by 82% to reach a 22% share of all holidays.

Europeans switch destinations but keep travelling, prompted by improving economic conditions. Both inbound and outbound tourism has grown for Europe, with a strong outlook for 2016.

Asia Pacific remains the world growth driver, despite the slowdown in the Chinese economy.

North Americans head for foreign shores; North America outbound travel beats forecasts, being up 5% in 2015, prompted by a strengthening US economy and strong US dollar.

High-spending Arab tourists go on more diverse holidays and young well-off travellers go on long expensive trips. The Arabian market is looking for shopping, entertainment and health interests.

City trips drive world travel growth - they are the fastest-growing part of the international leisure travel market as Europeans, Asians, North and South Americans head for attractive destinations in nearby countries and also overseas. Many cities around the world are profiting from higher visitor numbers, although concerns are increasing about the impact of large masses in very popular destinations.

Digital reviews and blogs play an increasing role in travel decisions. Social media influence one in four international trips, especially travellers’ choice of destination and accommodation, according to

⁸ The ITB Berlin is the world's largest travel trade fair. Each year the ITB (short for Internationale Tourismus Börse) welcomes around 10,000 exhibitors from more than 180 countries and regions.

figures presented at the 23rd World Travel Monitor Forum. The internet is by far the most important source of information, with about 75% using online information as part of their trip planning compared to about one third for travel agencies and about one fourth using information from friends. Review sites, blogs and forums influence choice of destination and accommodation. A key question, of course, is whether information on social media is merely helpful or actively influences travellers' decisions. The answer, according to the World Travel Monitor, is clear. "In general, about 70% of international travellers say that social media influence their travel decisions."

Users - There were an estimated 1.55 billion active monthly users on Facebook; 1 billion on YouTube; 540m on Google+, 400m on Instagram and 320m on Twitter and 187m on LinkedIn.

Other technology changes relate to data push technology and to seamlessly communicating with customers; integration of travel planning, booking tickets and hotels, a guide on arrival and for follow up on return home, instead of using different media or apps; new payment mechanisms to complete transactions when travelling; niche and personalisation of products and prices.

New technology based operators like Airbnb and Uber have completely different business models compared to traditional travel companies. They are technology platforms that market privately-owned assets or resources and are attractive because they offer lower prices, better accessibility, great flexibility, ease of use, including transparency and interactive communications.

Packaging - Mintel reports that more travellers are packaging their own breaks and are thus co-creators of their holidays.

Demographics - changing demographics, particularly in relation to the increasingly health conscious, environmentally aware ageing population are influencing destination and experience choices. There is growth in outdoor and activity tourism, from adrenaline fuelled to concerns about health and wellbeing.

Luxury travel is robust and all travellers look for service, quality and value for money.

Travel has become a means of self-expression, self-definition and a whole fashion in itself. Holidays define our taste, status and how other people view us.

Sustainability and waste - Consumers are more concerned about eliminating waste and are increasingly aware of the environmental impacts of tourism, resulting in a boom of green travellers and eco-travel.

On the up:

- Competitive air access will remain a critical factor in Northern Ireland. The new Ryanair routes to Alicante, Berlin, Krakow, Lanzarote, Malaga, Milan and Tenerife from Belfast International and increased flights to London Gatwick offer new opportunities for visitation.
- "Doomsday" Tourism (see it before it vanishes), Religious Tourism, Food Tourism, Wellbeing, Film, Sports and Literary Tourism are all on the up.
- Authenticity - holidaymakers crave engagement with locals, as it makes holidays more interactive and gives them stories to bring home and tell to others;
- Budget hotels, VFR, Quality Hostels, Camping / Glamping and Couchsurfing.
- Gay and lesbian travel market.

Appendix 5

Report on Survey of the Tourism Trade, December 2015

Introduction

BTS conducted an electronic survey of the tourism trade in Autumn 2015 and reported to the LA in December 2015. This Appendix provides a summary of the survey results, which fed into the analysis and preparation of the tourism strategy for Mid Ulster.

Responses and Profile of Respondents

Invitations to participate in the survey were sent out to the local authority database, with two further reminders sent. In total 54 respondents opened and started the survey and 28 completed it. While this is a disappointing number, the information provided is rich and useful.

50 respondents told us where they were located:

- 13 were located in the former Magherafelt area (Bellaghy, Maghera, Draperstown etc.)
- 13 were from the former Cookstown area
- 24 indicated they were from the former Dungannon area, with a spread into Clogher, Fivemiletown, Ballygawley etc.

We asked respondents what sort of business they are: retailers were the largest respondent group, followed by visitor attractions, restaurants, cafes and bars, then Bed & Breakfasts, self-catering and hotels.

With retail the largest single respondent group, and town centre or ancillary tourism services being so strong, the distribution of the invitation to the survey through town centre managers seems to have been the most successful distribution mechanism⁹.

We asked for information about our respondents so we could profile them:

- 36 respondents told us they employed 492 (plus some part time or casual staff).
- 15 respondents told us their last year's turnover, which aggregated to £11.285m, or just over £750,000 p.a. each. Smaller operators by and large didn't advise us of their turnovers (only 8 reported turnovers of less than £100,000), so there is a bias towards larger operators responding
- 11 respondents told us that they were accommodation providers and have 340 beds. (We think there is a bias towards smaller operators. Only one operator recorded more than 100 beds.)

Tourism Markets

Over 60% of respondents generate more than half their trade from within NI.

Comments to this question included

- *Primarily NI market*
- *Motor home clubs from France and Germany this year*
- *Difficulty in attracting business from outside NI*
- *Biggest customer is Southern people working in the area*

⁹ This would be worth noting when communication and engagement mechanisms are developed by the local authority, associated with delivery of the tourism strategy and e.g. marketing campaigns

- *Our Game of thrones tours while not taking anyone to destinations in Mid Ulster has boosted our international customer base.*

Business Challenges

We wanted to understand what the respondents to the survey saw as their main business challenges so we could see whether and how the tourism strategy could address these. The items of highest concern are (in order):

- Overhead costs
- Marketing the area
- Not enough visitors
- Signage and sign posting
- Marketing my business
- Revenue, sales

Amongst comments made were the following:

- *.....we have little funds for marketing.*
- *VAT is my biggest problem.*
- *Sourcing good quality chefs/cooks is a major problem - not enough young talent coming through.*
- *I feel the lack of accommodation in the Dungannon area is concerning...t*
- *Increased wages, overheads and loss of income due to (regulations) biggest concerns at present.*
- *One of the key factors in increasing visitor numbers has been the economic downturn. Unfortunately I see little evidence of improvement*
- *Very difficult to bundle packages together – e.g. offer a total holiday experience, due to lack of support/ red tape.*

Top Attributes and Worst Factors Affecting the Area

The purpose of this section of the survey was to understand how respondents saw the attributes and the negatives of the area. While there is a litany of negatives, these are countered by the identification of positive attributes. The main strengths identified by respondents were as follows:

- The Sperrins
- Great scenery and landscape
- Seamus Heaney
- Heritage/ Historical/archaeological sites of interest (Fort, Cross, Stone Circles)
- Central location in NI
- Outdoor Recreation
- People
- Having so many unique and individual none chain stores
- Linen Green Shopping centre
- Food

While the negatives identified by respondents were around the following¹⁰ (in addition to the weather¹¹):

- "Cost of tourism" experience
- Aesthetics - litter, lack of colour in the towns
- Signage
- Lack of accommodation (no hotels outside of Cookstown; no accommodation in the Dungannon area)
- Parking facilities
- General road infrastructure
- Lack of marketing – this area not well advertised, remote
- Events aren't advertised enough
- Empty/unused grubby properties in towns and villages
- Retail weaknesses -retail layouts, parking restrictions, choice of retail facilities in some places
- Not enough attractions to entice visitors initially

Major Priorities for Growing Tourism in the Area

The tourism strategy will be founded in part on survey respondents' views. So we wanted to understand what they saw as the MAJOR PRIORITIES for growing tourism in the area. Top priorities are (in order):

- Promoting the area's natural environment
- More marketing of the area
- Culture and heritage of the area
- Better signposting for tourists
- More business investment
- More use of the Web & social media
- More collaboration between businesses
- The image and character of the area

Amongst the comments were:

- *More focus on different age groups and how they like to spend their time.*
- *Better branding/ marketing of the area. Cohesive approach from businesses. Promotion of evening entertainment (this will aid town centres as well). Family packages.*
- *Lough Beg deserves to be more widely known. Wildlife and wetland sanctuaries such as those in England could provide ideas for developing interest.*
- *More family oriented events and facilities combined with good retail experience*
- *Need signage on the roads promoting everything that would interest a tourist*
- *Use of the area for a film. Launch of Heaney country*
- *Mid Ulster has stunning scenery, excellent activities (etc.).... it is time to reboot the area to match the new council area.*

Intervention and Support for the Tourism Sector

¹⁰ These are a summary only

¹¹ Interestingly, no mention is made of currency rate (£:€) and VAT as constraints

We are conscious of the coming together of three former local authority areas in the new Mid Ulster District and that a challenge for the new authority is to support/ intervene in the tourism sector in a way that adds value throughout the areas while ensuring that differences across the area can also be addressed. We therefore asked what actions should be taken across the area in order to boost tourism : we asked the question related to

- Boosting marketing (24 responses) = predominantly responses around more campaigns, more joint initiatives, more and unique events, focus on culture & heritage
- Supporting product development (17) - training for staff (Including World Host training for staff), events tied into new product developments, support local business, LA support (e.g. grants, workshops)
- Helping businesses grow (18) - promote the area, networking support, encourage shop local schemes

Regional Brands and Membership Organisation(s)

We also asked about the relevance of various geographical and destination brands (or potential brands), to be able to understand operators' views.

- What relevance does the Tyrone & Sperrins "brand" have to your business? (26 responses) Responses ranged from "None" (6 responses) to "very little" (4 response) to "very important".
- What relevance does the Lough Neagh "brand" have to your business? (26) Again the responses varied from "none" or "minimal" (11 responses) through to "very relevant"
- Could the Flavour of Tyrone membership model be extended across the whole area - to include all of Mid Ulster? (26) There was a lot of positive support for this action, from those that elected to answer this question: 17 people gave an absolute "Yes", three were neutral, and a small number were antagonistic.
- What relevance might a Mid Ulster "brand" have to your business? (24) 10 businesses didn't feel that a Mid Ulster brand would work, while 14 were supportive.

Tourism Themes

Three potential tourism themes had been identified for growing tourism in Mid Ulster and we asked respondents for their reactions to them ("In your opinion how relevant are these themes to the Mid Ulster "brand"?) The themes are Outdoor Activities; History and Heritage and Seamus Heaney

Amongst our respondents there was strong support for each (28 respondents)

We asked if there were other attributes ESSENTIAL to a Mid Ulster "brand". A sample of responses was as follows:

- *Food, retail, nightlife*
- *Proper way word marked paths on mountain walks*
- *Sporting*
- *Accommodation & business/shop attraction to local towns*
- *welcoming and local knowledge and pride*
- *Scenery and environment*

Single Action to Boost Tourism

When asked what SINGLE action respondents considered would boost tourism most, the 26 respondents answers included:

- *Marketing - Mid Ulster (currently) best kept secret*
- *Has to be internet... broken down into Counties.....*
- *Improved accommodation*
- *A regular high profile event with lots of publicity ...*
- *Joined up approach*
- *Get a positive outlook*
- *Expanding town centre*
- *Consistent marketing and good communication throughout the area to include all relevant businesses*
- *More signage and advertising material around the town*

Organisation and Management of Tourism

The delivery of the tourism strategy for Mid Ulster will be conditioned by structures and management of tourism development, marketing and promotion and visitor management. We wanted to ascertain respondents' views about the best way to organise tourism in the area.

– "Tourism is best delivered through....."	Total No.	Weighted Average
Public private partnership(s)	26	4.08
Advisory group of operators to communicate with the new Council	26	3.96
Local area groups/clusters of operators	26	3.96
The new Council sets the strategy and priorities	27	3.96
Informal partnerships of operators	26	3.42
Private sector leadership	26	3.08

Conclusion

We want to thank the large number of respondents who have contributed and participated in the survey. We've tried to reflect the wide variety of views and opinions – many given very robustly and with lots of enthusiasm.

Appendix 6

Mid Ulster SWOT Analyses

The SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) reviews the market environment.

Mid Ulster SWOT Analysis	
Strengths	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beauty of landscape, unspoilt countryside and scenery • Great and landscape • Seamus Heaney • The Sperrins • Lough Neagh, Lough Beg and the Lower Bann • Strength and number of archaeological and historic sites • Outdoor recreation and activity tourism- walks, cycling ,angling • Some excellent outdoor hubs – Davagh, Blessingbourne • Two very strong activity tourism providers - Jungle NI and Todds Leap • Food offer (and engagement of food operators) • Events programme • Quantity and quality of natural environment sites across the area • Genealogical and family heritage • Historic properties • Central location in NI • Comparatively strong town centres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Council, with enhanced tourism and other powers • Public sector support for business formation and tourism development • Economic forecasts and growth prospects • Demand for outdoor, cultural, heritage etc. breaks • Establishment of Seamus Heaney HomePlace and trails • More marketing of the area, especially through digital and social media channels • Promoting the area's natural environment and outdoor activities • Enhance broadband infrastructure • Town and village regeneration • Enhanced countryside access through negotiation • Development of visitor hubs across area • Develop better itineraries, clustering and linking tourism product and generating stronger visibility in the market • Develop history, heritage, archaeological and genealogical tourism products • Stimulate more collaboration and networking between businesses • Build on the success of Flavour • Improved standard of welcome and customer • Better signposting for tourists • Using events to stimulate better perceptions of the area and off peak visitation • More and better market research (e.g. of visitors' preferences) • Camping and caravanning base
Weaknesses	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism performance of the area • Strong dependence on VFR and day visitors • Limited overnight stays • Visitors not staying long enough • Hotel sector successful with business sector, puts tourism as a lower priority • Accommodation base to attract visitors • Broadband penetration and efficiency throughout local area • Mid Ulster not a recognised destination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource availability in the future • Weather • £/ € exchange rates • Disparities of VAT rates in UK and ROI • Economic situation • Destination as a daytripper experience rather than stopover • Limited accommodation base • Inactivity by LA and tourism trade to tackle issues affecting tourism

Mid Ulster SWOT Analysis

- 2 of TNI's tourism destinations linked to Mid Ulster are the weakest from a market point of view and have administration spread across a number of council areas
- Sperrins AONB has no management plan
- Seasonality/ Short season
- Outdoor activities and History and heritage products not articulated, with limited itineraries
- Difficulties of engaging wider community in tourism matters
- Comparatively low occupancy levels in self-catering
- Poor directional and brown signage
- No ground handlers or agents located in the area
- Lack of evening and wet weather facilities
- Opening times of attractions, retail, etc.
- Limited digital marketing of the area
- Commitment to engage and communicate with the tourism trade
- Level of partnership and collaboration across tourism sector

Appendix 7

Sperrins Actions

While the assessment of the governance and landscape management arrangements in the Sperrins is not part of our brief, the fact that these were highlighted often on our consultations, suggests that action needs to be taken for the area, not least because these have implications on the tourism profile, attraction and performance of the area.

The coordination of product development and marketing now falls as the responsibility of four Councils¹². Each authority necessarily focuses on its own administrative area. The Outdoor Recreation Action Plan for the Sperrins highlights that the area is the only AONB in the UK that does not have a management plan and an integrated management body.

The implication is that there is a policy vacuum and no focused mechanisms for delivering pan-Sperrins actions.

Actions

Actions which we recommend should be considered by Mid Ulster District Council together with the other local authorities with responsibilities in the area are:

- Review landscape management arrangements in the Sperrins with other local authorities and interested stakeholders;
- Consolidation of the various Sperrins plans into one development plan with agreed management and maintenance arrangements between the 4 councils and other stakeholders;
- Developing a MOU between the 4 local authorities for this purpose;
- Exploring options and mechanisms for providing liability insurance to overcome landowners' perception of the risk of liability associated with visitor access;
- Further partnership work between the local councils for tourism product development;
- Sourcing funding for appointment of a Project Officer to support and implement tourism product development and marketing activity.

¹² Mid Ulster District Council, Fermanagh & Omagh District Council, Derry City & Strabane District Council, Causeway Coast and Glens District Council

Appendix 8

Sources

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- United Nations World Tourism Organisation - UNWTO Tourism Highlights 2015
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Appendix 9

Consultations

Consultation workshops were held:

- Monday 10th November 2015 Glenavon Hotel, Cookstown
- Tuesday 11th November 2015, Quinns Corner, Dungannon
- Tuesday 11th November 2015, Mary's Bar, Magherafelt
- Tuesday 17th November 2015, Heritage Cluster Group, Council offices, Cookstown
- Wednesday 18th November 2015, Flavour of Tyrone, Quinns Corner, Dungannon
- Thursday 28th April 2016, Burnavon Arts & Cultural Centre, Cookstown

Alan Abraham	Annaginney Fishery & Caravan Park	Dungannon
Neil Hydman	The Auction Room	Castledawson
Assumpta O'Neill	Ballynagilly Community and Heritage Preservation Group	Cookstown
Richard Mulholland	Ballyscullion Park	Bellaghy
Rosalind Mulholland	Ballyscullion Park	Bellaghy
Colleen Lowry	Blessingbourne Country Estate	Fivemiletown
Sandra Mortimer	Caledon Regeneration Partnership	Caledon
Claire Doherty	Carntogher Community Association	Maghera
Mary Gervin	Chocolate Fountains WPM	Dungannon
Kelly Hann	Drumnaph Community Nature Reserve	Maghera
Neil Somerville	Chairman, Flavour of Tyrone	
Paula Wilson	Glenavon Hotel	Cookstown
Shane Campbell	ICBAN	Enniskillen
Bobby Bell	J&K Coaches	Dungannon
Joan Kelly	The Jungle NI	Moneymore
Dorothy Coulter	Killymoon Castle	Cookstown
Tony McMinn	Lissan House	Cookstown
Audrey Johnston	The Homecoming Barn	Clogher
Cathy Chauhan	Lough Neagh Eels	Toome
Eimear Kearney	Lough Neagh Partnership	Ballyronan
Charles Monaghan	Lough Neagh Partnership	Ballyronan
Barbara McIntyre	B McIntyre Studio & Gallery	
Christine McGowan	Millbrook B and B	Dungannon
Dympna Condra	Monaghan County Council	Monaghan
Claire Anthony	National Trust	Springhill

Edward Mason	National Trust	Argory and Springhill
Chris Scott	Outdoor Recreation NI	Belfast
Hugh McCloy	Quinns Coach Hire	Ardboe
Michael Quinn	Quinns Coach Hire	Ardboe
Paudge Quinn	Quinns Corner	Dungannon
Patsy Ward	Ronan self-catering cottage	Magherafelt
Brian Ward	Ronan self-catering cottage	Magherafelt
Tanya Thom	The Royal Hotel	Cookstown
Catherine Donnelly	Secrets Night Club and Mary's Bar	Magherafelt
Colin Doyle	Shepherd's Rest	Draperstown
Fiona Bryant	Sperrins Gateway Landscape Partnership	Draperstown
Graham Mawhinney	Chairman, Sperrins Gateway Landscape Partnership	Draperstown
Mike McClure	SportNI	Belfast
Shirley O'Hanlon	Todds Leap	Ballygawley
Ben O'Hanlon	Todds Leap	Ballygawley
Patrick Rafferty	Todds Leap	Ballygawley
Geraldine Eagan	Tourism Ireland	Dublin
Aubrey Irwin	Tourism Ireland	Coleraine
Kathleen McBride	Tourism Northern Ireland	Belfast
Laura McCorry	Tourism Northern Ireland	Belfast
Adrian Martin	Tullylagan Country House Hotel	Cookstown
Andrew McIvor	Tullylagan Country House Hotel	Cookstown
Breda Traynor	Tyrone Farmers Market	Monaghan
Joan Boyd	Tyrone Farmers Market	Fivemiletown
Kate Cairns	Ulster Farmers Union	Belfast
Lisa Williamson	Valley Hotel	Fivemiletown
Beryl Suitor	Suitor Gallery	Ballygawley
Wilfred Mitchell		

Mid Ulster District officers and elected members consultations:

Elected member consultation workshops were held:

- 10th November 2015, Cookstown
- 11th November 2015, Dungannon

Sharon Arbuthnot	Mid Ulster District Council
Charmain Bell	Mid Ulster District Council
Genevieve Bell	Tourism Officer, Mid Ulster Council
Michael Browne	Head of Tourism, Mid Ulster District Council
C'llr Wilbert Buchanan	Mid Ulster District Council
C'llr Frances Burton	Mid Ulster District Council
Anne-Marie Campbell	Director of Culture and Leisure, Mid Ulster District Council
C'llr Sean Clarke	Mid Ulster District Council
C'llr Walter Cuddy	Mid Ulster District Council
C'llr Mickey Gillespie	Mid Ulster District Council
C'llr Mark Glasgow	Mid Ulster District Council
Liam Glavin	Head of Leisure, Mid Ulster District Council
Nigel Hill	Head of Parks, Mid Ulster District Council
John Howard	Mid Ulster District Council
C'llr Martin Kearney	Mid Ulster District Council
Ursula Mezza	Head of Marketing and Communications, Mid Ulster District Council
C'llr Sharon McAleer	Mid Ulster District Council and Flavour of Tyrone
Tony McCance	Head of Arts and Culture, Mid Ulster District Council
Devina McCartney	Mid Ulster District Council
Adrian McCreesh	Director of Business and Communities, Mid Ulster District Council
C'llr Christine McFlynn	Mid Ulster District Council
Mary McGee	Business Engagement Officer, Mid Ulster District Council
C'llr Ronan McGinley	Mid Ulster District Council
C'llr Brian McGuigan	Mid Ulster District Council
C'llr Sean McGuigan	Mid Ulster District Council
Mary McKeown	Tourism Manager, Mid Ulster District Council
C'llr Derek McKinney	Mid Ulster District Council
C'llr John McNamee	Mid Ulster District Council
C'llr Barry Monteith	Mid Ulster District Council
C'llr Robert Mulligan	Mid Ulster District Council
Charlene Mullan	Mid Ulster District Council
Alison O'Keefe	Mid Ulster District Council
C'llr Malachy Quinn	Mid Ulster District Council
C'llr Wills Robinson	Mid Ulster District Council

Anthony Tohill	Chief Executive, Mid Ulster District Council
Martina Totten	Mid Ulster District Council
Caroline Sheehy	Mid Ulster District Council
C'llr Trevor Wilson	Mid Ulster District Council

G

Subject Lough Neagh Partnership Core Funding

Reporting Officer Michael Browne

1	Purpose of Report
1.1	To receive a request from the Lough Neagh Partnership to Mid Ulster District Council for core funding for 2016/17.
1.2	To review the operational plan for delivery of marketing tourism, recreational, environmental and heritage activities on Lough Neagh and the Lough Neagh shoreline.

2	Background
2.1	Over the past twelve years, Lough Neagh Partnership has carried out successful co-ordination, promotion and development work on Lough Neagh, including a major £3.8 million Rural Development Programme and more recent Lough Neagh Co-Operation Programme implemented in partnership with the Council's and Local Action Groups around the Lough's Shores.
2.2	The Partnership is also currently working up a major new £3million Heritage Lottery Landscape proposal for the Lough and is already discussing possible joint projects, which could be developed with Councils.
2.3	Over the years, the Lough Neagh Partnership has received core funding from the seven legacy councils and, since last year, the five new councils around the Lough for these core co-ordination and marketing roles. They have worked in partnership with local Council's to attract significant additional investment, jointly developed major infrastructure projects, organised significant events, improved safety and navigation, liaised with Government Departments to ensure the conservation of the Lough's unique environment, promoted the Lough as a significant tourism destination and lobbied government bodies to take a more strategic and integrated role in addressing the real needs of the Lough.
2.4	Under the new Council structure, the five Councils have an interest in the development of the Lough. Of these five, three Council's (Mid Ulster, Armagh/Banbridge/Craigavon and Antrim/Newtownabbey) have a major part of the shoreline whilst the remaining two (Mid/East Antrim and Lisburn/Castlereagh) have smaller but important portions.
2.5	The Lough Neagh Partnership Ltd is a company limited by guarantee with Directors from local authorities, community sector, business sector and special interest groups. Lough Neagh Partnership has a part-time manager, a marketing officer and an administration/finance officer funded by councils up to end of March 2017

3	Key Issues
3.1	Funding is requested for staff, development and delivery of programmes and office costs associated with the structure and it's more robust and integrated role.
3.2	<p>Funding requests to each of the five Councils, which are pro rata based in accordance with the approximate amount of shoreline and / or activity hubs are outlined below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid Ulster Council £25,000 • Antrim/Newtownabbey £25,000 • Armagh /Banbridge/Craigavon £25,000 • Lisburn/Castlereagh £3,500 • Mid/East Antrim £3,500 <p>The above levels of funding requested have not increased from 2015/16</p>
3.3	As part of this funding the Lough Neagh Partnership will offer Mid Ulster District Council continued co-ordination and marketing of activities around Lough Neagh and its Waterways.
3.4	Lough Neagh Partnership will also continue to develop Lough Neagh as a Tourism Destination.
3.5	Lough Neagh Partnership will continue to identify and apply for funding to develop and promote the region.

4	Resources
4.1	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>£25,000 which has been identified in the 2016/17 budget and will be paid in 2 stages:</p> <p>Stage 1 payment – 31 July 2016</p> <p>Stage 2 payment – 31 January 2017</p>
4.2	<p><u>Human</u></p> <p>N/A</p>
4.3	<p><u>Basis for Professional/ Consultancy Support</u></p> <p>N/A</p>
4.4	<p><u>Other</u></p> <p>N/A</p>

5	Other Considerations
5.1	N/A

6	Recommendations
6.1	Recommend Mid Ulster District Council fund Lough Neagh Partnership £25,000 as requested and subject to funding being secured from all five Lough Neagh Council's.
6.2	Recommend that the Lough Neagh Partnership submit a quarterly update to Mid Ulster District Council.

7	List of Documents Attached
7.1	Appendix 1 – Lough Neagh Partnership Work Plan

Lough Neagh Partnership. Progress report for Quarter 1 (up to 21st June 2016)

Targets	Quantifiable Outputs	Progress at 20 th June 2016
<p>1. Landscape Partnership Project Deliver Year 1 of the Lough Neagh Landscape Partnership project</p>	<p>As outlined in Landscape Partnership Action Plan. Overall benefit to MUDC £1 million.</p> <p>The salaries of the Landscape Partnership Implementation staff will be covered by HLF but the Lough Neagh Partnership manager will have an overseeing role for the entire project</p>	<p>Formal Permission to Start received from HLF on 14th June.</p> <p>Landscape Partnership Finance and Admin Officer commenced 14th June.</p> <p>4 other LP Jobs advertised in NI Jobfinder on 17th June</p> <p>Meeting in Derrylaughan on 6th June re Royal School lands attended by Michael Browne, DEL, RSPB and LNP.</p>
<p>2. Destination Marketing Plan Working with Mid Ulster Council and stakeholders, review the Destination Management Plan in order to clearly identify tourism product and devise a tourism marketing plan. Four themes: Lough Neagh Food, Lough Neagh Heritage, Outdoor Activities (Shoreline) including eco-tourism and Outdoor (Lough and river based)</p> <p>(The Heaney theme is primarily the responsibility of MUDC but will be included in the revised DMP)</p> <p>Develop the tourism and cultural tourism skill base of local tourism providers and communities in accordance with Theme 3 of the DMP Action Plan by implementing a digital</p>	<p>Initial review of DMP with Tourism NI carried out and agreed that it was necessary to establish Themed Groups.</p> <p>Four Themed Cluster Groups established and Action Plans for each theme developed (throughout 2016/17)</p> <p>Revised Destination Marketing Plan developed</p> <p>10 businesses complete digital marketing programme by March 2016.</p> <p>10 tourism/hospitality/recreational businesses within MUDC will be</p>	<p>Scheduled to commence August 2016</p>

<p>marketing skills programme for 10 businesses within the MUDC area by end March 2017.</p> <p>Programme consists of 3 No half day modules businesses. All Mid Ulster businesses will be attending the same sessions.</p>	<p>equipped to grow their businesses through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing online presence and becoming more competitive. • Finding and engaging with new customers • Increasing their customer base • Widening their geographical reach • Accessing new markets • Improving sales and profits 	
<p>3. Marketing</p> <p>3.1 Ensure that VICs provide event information to TourismNI on regular basis</p> <p>3.2 Co-ordination of NITB marketing features for LN Work includes co—ordination of marketing features for NITB productions/ advertorials.</p> <p>3.3 Production & distribution of Lough Neagh E-Newsletter for stakeholders & consumers online.</p> <p>3.4 Review other content on website & update through new content management system.</p> <p>3.5 Issue of event updates and press releases.</p>	<p>Minimum of 20 events per District</p> <p>MUDC events submitted to TNI will be featured on Discover Lough Neagh website & app</p> <p>2 advertorials - Spring and Autumn</p> <p>4 stakeholder newsletters - Quarterly</p> <p>The website & app have just been rebuilt, they will be updated weekly</p> <p>Minimum 6 press releases</p>	<p>Responsibility of VICs</p> <p>1 advertorial issue April</p> <p>2 stakeholder newsletter, April and May. 3 consumer newsletters, April, May and June</p> <p>Website live and working. Still working on final content. Updated twice weekly. App developed and waiting to be submitted to app stores.</p>

3.6 Consumer & Trade pages on Facebook & Twitter		2 issued to date, May and June
3.7 Electronic Christmas colouring competition for schools	200 posts for facebook/twitter	45 posts across all media channels to date
3.8 Blog Competition	<p>Blog Competition (replacing photography competition) this will encourage visitors to Lough Neagh to write about their trip to the destination and include photography and/or videos. 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>November 2016</p> <p>Autumn 2016</p>
3.9 Trade fairs and exhibitions	<p>Lough Neagh Partnership will attend trade fairs and exhibitions where opportunities arise to promote the destination and its events. We do not envisage taking destination stands of our own as this would be cost prohibitive. We are looking at promoting the destination/events at Garden Show Ireland, Balmoral show, St Georges Market, River to Lough Festival (managed by LNP) and hopefully</p>	<p>St Georges Market</p> <p>Garden Show Ireland</p>

	Lumarina - these will be dependent on councils giving LNP permission to promote from their stand. Colouring competition completed July/August 2013	
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	Throughout 2016/17	Scheduled for December 2016
5. Lough Neagh Community Trust Work with Development Trust NI to ensure that the “shadow” Community Trust (which was established in March 2016) becomes operational	Target is to have Community Trust operational by end March 2017	Waiting on new DAERA Minister for details of how Development Trust will proceed. Ongoing discussions with Development Trust NI
6. Lough Neagh Cooperation Project Facilitate the securing of a Rural Development Project in conjunction with Mid Ulster Council and Mid Ulster Local Action Group to bring benefits to the Mid Ulster District in terms of loughshore facilities owned by Council. Proposal to be submitted to Mid Ulster LAG. Will include proposals for repairs to jetties and slipways in consultation with MUDC.	Rural Development Programme Cooperation project secured	Meeting of 5 LAGs scheduled for 29 th June to discuss LN Co-operation Project. LNP to make presentation
7. Lough Neagh Food Programme Develop strategy for lough Neagh food with particular emphasis on LN fish with a view to securing EU or RDP funding for a food programme. Involve Sperrins and Donegal Enterprise in proposal	Identification of partners Development of funding proposal Submission of proposal when programme opens.	September 2016

[illegible]

H

Subject	Community Development Report – Community Grants Peace IV Local Shared Space Projects and Proposed Regional Shared Space Project Good Relations Community Development Update
Reporting Officer	Claire Linney, Head of Community Development

1	Purpose of Report
1.1	To seek approval for community grant award recommendations.
1.2	To seek approval for the regional Peace IV strategic shared space proposal and local shared space concepts.
1.3	To seek approval for Good Relations Project as part of the GR Plan.
1.4	To update on progress relating to the Community Development Section.

2	Background
2.1	Community Grants The Grant Aid Programme for the 2016/17 financial year facilitates applications being made on a rolling basis for Sports Representative (see Sports and Leisure report), Community Festivals and Good Relations.
2.2	Peace IV As part of the Peace IV programme Council has a potential funding allocation of £3mn, based on the submission of an application and action plan in line with the programme guidelines and criteria. As part of the application a number of urban and village spaces have been identified for shared space projects, pending SEUPB agreement. The Peace IV Regional Shared Space project is also opening to applications later in September. The key criteria for the regional shared space project are: A Shared civic space that will reduce segregation and transform local area and having regional significance, be of a quality design and link to the area of impact, have an experienced partnership and lead to deliver a project of regional significance.
2.3	Good Relations Co-operation Ireland has approached Mid Ulster Council to support their Amazing Space Project, led by Cooperation Ireland, to engage young people in the United Nations International Day for Peace.
2.4	Community Development Update An update is provided on the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Support – Grants, Community Support, Advice, Village Planning, Community Centres PCSP DSD Neighbourhood Renewal Good Relations Community Planning (facilitation for Council)

3	Update
3.1	<p>Community Grants</p> <p>Good Relations - a total of 7 Good Relations grant award recommendations. Community Festivals – a total of 10 Community Festivals grant award recommendations, one application was ineligible due to double application. See attached paper.</p> <p>To seek Committee approval for 7 Good Relations and 10 Community Festivals grant award recommendations.</p> <p>As part of the Grant Aid process an appeal process is in place regarding eligibility process. A total of 3 grant decisions were appealed on eligibility. The Grant Aid appeals for two applications under the Arts & Culture programme provided clarification on eligibility that was not clear from the application. The applications for CRAFT and Kings Street Parent and Toddler Group have been confirmed as eligible as they are not core activity; one is taking place outside of core hours and the second relates to preschool child development however this is not funded as part of the PAEGs mainstream activity. Lissan Cross Community Playgroup decision was upheld due to funding sought for activity relating to core curriculum time</p>
3.2	<p>Peace IV</p> <p>The update Peace IV application has been submitted to SEUPB as of the 21st June. Pending the outcome from SEUPB the action plan will be submitted in September and will be presented to members at this time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dungannon, Cookstown, Magherafelt - Development of shared space initiatives to link to the public realm works example projects: Shambles Lane link, Art piece at Magherafelt Roundabout, Cookstown civic space. • Other villages – development of river walks and river amenity access in villages with assets, recreation and play extension, public art and civic street scape, nature trails and green space development. <p><u>Regional Peace IV</u></p> <p>From initial analysis of the Regional Peace IV Shared Space Grant criteria of; need for shared space scheme initiative and having elements of regional significance; and analysis of potential local schemes, it is proposed that the Pomeroy Forest Development and linkages to the wider community could be further explored in relation to funding under this grant.</p> <p>Opening date for calls 6th September with submission of Stage 1 application by 18th October 2016 or January 2017 with project notification June or September 2017.</p> <p>As part of the application a business plan is required for the project. An initial concept business plan is in place however this will require a full update alongside a detailed project development application.</p> <p>It is proposed to explore the potential of the Peace IV funding for this project and if there is potential for submission to develop an update business plan and scheme to bring back to members for agreement.</p> <p>As part of the Peace IV regional shared space project it is proposed to explore further development of Pomeroy Forest and shared space concept linking the forest development to the facilities of the village.</p>

3.3	<p>Good Relations</p> <p>The Amazing Space Project is being led by Cooperation Ireland and is bringing schools together across Mid Ulster to celebrate the United Nations International Day of Peace. The project will be youth-led and will provide opportunities for schools in the area to come together to plan and implement an event, which celebrates young people's role in peace-building. Prior to the event young people from local schools will come up with a series of peace pledges sharing their visions for a peaceful future. The final event will be hosted in St Mary's Grammar School Magherafelt and will be streamlined to a large scale Peace Day event held at the Eikon Centre, Maze Long-Kesh, hosting 3,500 young people with representation from Mid Ulster.</p> <p>Council works with schools on the International Day of Peace as part of their aim towards Children and Young People; to date the project has focused on 6 schools within Mid Ulster along with the Dungannon and Cookstown Clergy Forum and it is planned to roll this out further across the Mid Ulster area as part of the agreed GR Plan.</p> <p>Participating schools to date: Magherafelt PS, St Mary's Grammar Magherafelt, Sperrin Integrated College, Rainey Endowed School, St Pius X College, St Columba's PS, PS Magherafelt, Kilronan School, Gaelscoil an tSeanchai, Aughamullan PS Coalisland, Cookstown PS, Phoenix Integrated PS, Holy Trinity College Cookstown, Holy Trinity PS, St Patrick's College Dungannon, St Mary's (Cabra), Donaghmore PS, Sperrinview Special School, Walker Memorial PS, The Royal School Dungannon, Integrated College Dungannon, St Malachys Glencull PS, St Patrick's PS Dungannon.</p> <p>The Amazing Space Project allows for Council and Cooperation Ireland to work together and allow for local led activity in areas across Mid Ulster with a larger event in Magherafelt. The total amount requested is £5000 to link to the main events (funding has been provided by EANI £23,000 and OFMDMF £189,000 to the overall project.</p>
3.4	<p>Community Development Update</p> <p>Grants support and assessment is ongoing for rolling programmes.</p> <p>Grant development and support to Arts and Culture and Leisure regarding the development and delivery of the strategic sports and arts grants and capital sports grant.</p> <p>PCSP</p> <p>The delivery of the PCSP plan is ongoing. All sub group activity has commenced on ASB with projects in key areas. Night time economy project has commenced and fear of crime initiatives commenced including working and supporting Agewell.</p> <p>Discussion with members on the future provision of CCTV is taking place with a further meeting being scheduled with PSNI for end of July, date to be confirmed.</p> <p>Good Relations</p> <p>The delivery of the Good Relations Plan is ongoing. A number of projects and programmes have commenced, including: The schools programme engagement programme and music programme, International Day of Peace project, Clergy and Churches Forum projects, Migrant and BME project, shared space projects Railway Park, Seamus Heaney, Pomeroy and The Hill of O'Neill, local projects with groups via grants, and cultural activities including Pipe Band, commemorations. Development of other projects and programmes is ongoing.</p>

	<p>Neighbourhood Renewal The delivery of the Neighbourhood Renewal Plan is ongoing. The capital schemes are in progress for the recreational sites in Coalisland, the play park is near completion at Annaghsshee, the education, health and social engagement programmes are all in progress and links established to employability projects.</p> <p>Community Planning Meetings on the development of the Plan are ongoing, the proposed outcomes, indicators and strategic actions are near completion for further discussion with members; date to confirmed.</p>
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4	Resource Implications
4.1	<p><u>Financial</u> Community Grants £10,895 Community Local Festivals & £7,061 Good Relations Arts and Culture £850 Good Relations £5000 as per the Good Relations Plan and 75% funding from OFMDFM Peace IV £10,000 for support for the development of a business plan pending further exploration on the potential of a Regional Peace IV Shared Space Project</p>
4.2	<p><u>Human</u> None.</p>
4.3	<p><u>Basis for Professional/ Consultancy Support</u> To support in the development of a business plan for a proposed Peace IV Regional Shared Space project.</p>

5	Other Considerations
5.1	None

6	Recommendations
6.1	To approve the Good Relations and Community Festivals grant award recommendations.
6.2	To agree the Amazing Space Project support.
6.3	To agree the Peace IV local shared space initiatives and proposed development of a Regional Peace IV Shared Space Proposal.
6.4	To note the community development update.

7	List of Documents Attached
7.1	List of grant funding recommendations.

Grant Recommendations

Community Local Festival – July 2016

	Organisation Name	Project Title	Bands	Amt Award
1	Fivemiletown Women's Institute	Fivemiletown's WI Anniversary Project	6	£500.00
2	Friends of the Somme MU Branch	Battle of the Somme 100 Years on	6	£300.00
3	MU Old Time Horse & Pony Club	Moneymore Horse & Community Festival	4	£700.00
4	*Moneymore Cultural Dev Assoc.	11th July & HM Queen Elizabeth's Birthday	5	£600.00
5	Naomh Colum Cille CLG	Campa Colum Cille	6	£500.00
6	O'Donovan Rossa GAC	Community Fun & Sports Day	5	£600.00
7	Sperrin Harriers	Stanley Reid 5 Mile Annual Race & Family Run	4	£700.00
8	St Michael's GAC, Lissan	St Michael's GAC, Lissan Community Festival	3	£800.00
9	Sandholes Community Group	10 th Anniversary Celebration Event	6	£450.00
10	*Castledawson Cultural Group	Community Fun Day	6	£500.00

Note: * On Council facilities updated group need permission

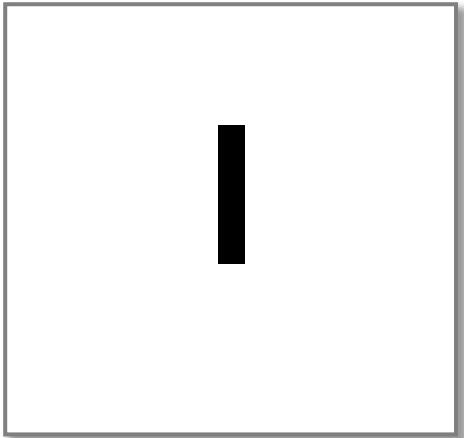
Slatequarry Development Association	Slatequarry Festival of Fun	Ineligible Double application
Bands	Award	
7	40%	
6	50%	
5	60%	
4	70%	
3	80%	
2	90%	
1	100%	

Good Relations Grants - July 2016

No	Organisation	Project Detail	Band	Amount Awarded
1	All Set Cultural Project	All Set Donaghmore	3	£800.00
2	Rock & District Historical Society	Our Shared past	5	£600.00
3	Rock Community Association	Charity Cycle Run & Tractor	5	£600.00
4	Granaghan & District Women's Group	Gran Horizons to Upper Boundaries	5	£600.00
5	Gaelscoil an tSeanchaí Teaghlaigh & Cairde Le Cheile	Spraoi Samhraidh - Summer Fun BBQ	7	£400.00
6	Cookstown Community Allotments	Our Allotments – Our Community	5	£480.00
7	Superstars	10 Pin Bowling	4	£700.00
	Bands	Award		
	7	40%		
	6	50%		
	5	60%		
	4	70%		
	3	80%		
	2	90%		
	1	100%		

Arts & Culture Application Appeals

	Organisation Name	Project Title	Bands	Amt Award
1	Kings Street Parent & Toddler Group	Introduction to Creativity	5	£400.00
2	CRAFT	World Festival	4	£450.00
3	Lissan Cross Community Playgroup	Emmillio Reggio Workshops		Decision upheld
	Bands	Amount		
	6	£350.00		
	5	£400.00		
	4	£450.00		
	3	£500.00		
	2	£550.00		
	1	£600.00		



Subject	Parks Service Progress Report
Reporting Officer	Nigel Hill, Head of Parks

1	Purpose of Report
1.1	To update Members of the progress being made regarding activities and associated to Parks Services and highlight events or consultations that will be occurring in the future

2	Background
2.1	Mid Ulster District Council recognises the important role that Parks, Countryside recreation and play has in today's society and the ease of accessible, open space can have on basis quality of life issues and the health and wellbeing of the local community. The facilities and programmes provided in Mid Ulster are designed to maximise participation from all sections of the community and provide opportunities to maximise quality outdoor experiences for our residents across Mid Ulster District Council.

3	
3.1	<p>Blue Flag Marina Status 2016 Awarded</p> <p>Ballyronan Marina has been awarded with the Blue Flag Marina status for 2016 at the recent awards ceremony on the 1st June at the Arcadia Portrush. This is the 7th year in a row that the prestigious award has been given to the Marina. The first award was received in 2010 and at that point where the only Marina in Northern Ireland to be awarded this. It is currently only 1 of 2 Blue Flag Marinas in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>The award is given for excellence in following 4 categories: 1. Environmental Education & Information, 2. Water Quality, 3. Environmental Management, 4. Safety Services.</p>
3.2	<p>Dogs Trust Free Chipping Service</p> <p>In May 2016 the dogs trust held a 3 day event from the 9th to 11th. The Dogs trust was on site giving out information to dog owners and offering free microchipping to dog owners. This service was well received by the public with a good number of dogs receiving microchips over the 3 days.</p>



3.3 **Geotech Core Sampling Lough Neagh**

Geotech are undertaking core sampling of the lough bed in June from Toome bay to the Battery, during this time they will be using Ballyronan as a base camp to moor their vessels.

3.4 **Dog Lifesaving event June-September**

Sperrin Valley Dog Sports Club is planning to hold dog lifesaving in the marina through June to September 2016. The club wanted to get this up and running after the recent tragedy in Buncrana. The course will facilitate dog owners to have their dogs trained in lifesaving by being able to tow an adult, child or infant ashore.

3.5 **Summer Water Sports**

As part of the summer sports programme Ballyronan will be offering 2 courses for sailing and canoeing for 11-16 year olds.

- Get Active Canoeing 4th – 8th July
- Get Active Sailing 16th, 23rd, 30th July 6 & 7th August

3.6. **Music in the Park**

In July and August Ballyronan will host a number of outdoor concerts in jazz, blues and silver band music.

- 31st July
- 7th August
- 21st August (Lumarina Festival Weekend)

3.6. **National Play Day**

Play day is the National Day for Play in the UK, traditionally held on the first Wednesday in August. This year's Play day takes place on Wednesday 3rd August. Ballyronan Marina will have a varied range of activities for children to get involved in on the day. The event is free.

3.7	<p>Lough Neagh Triathlon</p> <p>The Lough Neagh Triathlon will take place on Saturday 13th August. This year there will have a sprint distance race as part of the Triathlon Ireland National Series. There will also be a super sprint distance - perfect for first timers/beginners in the sport of triathlon. A children's aquathon with several age categories will be held on the Friday Night on the 12th August. Lough Neagh Triathlon promises to be a great event for all abilities of triathlete and a great weekend for the whole family.</p>
3.8	<p>Lumarina Festival</p> <p>The Lumarina festival will be held at Ballyronan Marina from the 19th - 22nd August. This event is anticipated to host a wide range of activities such as a raft race, fun fair, storytelling, music, fireworks and much more.</p>

4	Resources
4.1	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>N/A</p>
4.2	<p><u>Human</u></p> <p>N/A</p>
4.3	<p><u>Basis for Professional/ Consultancy Support</u></p> <p>N/A</p>
4.4	<p><u>Other</u></p> <p>N/A</p>

5	Other Considerations
	None

6	Recommendations
6.1	Members are asked to note the content of this report.

7	List of Documents Attached
	None

J

Subject	Pop in the Park
Reporting Officer	Michael Browne
Contact Officer	Sharon Arbuthnot

1	Purpose of Report
1.1	To report, and inform Council of the proposed Pop in the Park Event to take place on 13 August in Railway Park.

2	Background
2.1	On Saturday 13 August, we propose to organise the first “Pop in the Park” at Railway Park in conjunction with the 2 nd annual Busking Festival in Dungannon Town Centre.
2.2	We aim to market the events together as a package to encourage visitors to visit both events, and to showcase the recent refurbishments in Railway Park and encourage shoppers to Dungannon Town Centre.
2.3	Pop in the Park will kick off at 3pm with a fun filled afternoon with children’s activities programmed until 6pm. From 6pm until 9pm we plan to have an evening of music which will include the Winner’s from the Busking Festival in town Centre.

3	Key Issues
3.1	To ensure both events complement each other, and encourage footfall on both sites.
3.2	The opportunity to perform on a stage to an audience of over 1,000 is a fantastic opportunity for an up and coming artist/bands. We hope this will attract artists from outside the District. Artist TBC.
3.3	By continually aspiring to grow the events portfolio both in quality, and in frequency, this will regenerate a more positive reputation for the District and help increase the tourist/visitors potential.

4	Resources
4.1	<u>Financial</u> All events proposed can be delivered within existing budgets
4.2	<u>Human</u> Officer commitment from various different departments.
4.3	<u>Basis for Professional/ Consultancy Support</u> <u>N/A</u>
4.4	<u>Other</u>

5	Other Considerations
5.1	To ensure the planned activities will not have an adverse impact on the Public Realm Schemes in Dungannon.

6	Recommendations
6.1	For members information.
6.2	

7	List of Documents Attached
7.1	

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Subject **Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme 2014-2020**

Reporting Officer **Adrian McCreesh**

1	Purpose of Report
1.1	To update members on progress with the interim rural development strategy for Mid Ulster.
2	Background
2.1	All contractual agreements relating to delivery of the LAG interim strategy have now been signed between Council, the LAG and DAERA.
3	Key Issues
3.1	<p>Members are asked to note progress on the roll out of the strategy schemes as follows:</p> <p>Rural Business Investment Scheme A first call for applications will close on 20th June 16 at 3:00pm. This call is specific to businesses engaged in the engineering/manufacturing sector. It is envisaged assessment of applications by the LAG will be on going during July, August and September.</p> <p>A second round of mandatory funding workshops for Rural Business Investment will be organised for late summer/ early autumn which will focus on the Rural Innovation and Rural Youth themes of the Scheme.</p> <p>Rural Basic Services Scheme A first series of mandatory funding workshops were hosted during the first and second week of June with just over 100 groups/organisation attending.</p> <p>The first call for applications under Rural Services will relate to technical assistance funding which will assist potential applicants to develop their project idea through feasibility or technical studies. This will then be followed by a call for capital assistance later in 2016 or early 2017.</p> <p>Village Renewal A management and delivery action plan is being prepared to timescale key tasks and identify in-house resource requirements for the roll out of village renewal over the next three to four years.</p>

	<p>Rural Broadband Delivery options for the roll out of the rural broadband scheme are still in discussion at this stage.</p> <p>Co-operation A LAG Co-operation sub group has been established which will take responsibility for identifying potential co-operation projects. Opportunities to link with potential themes emerging from Councils tourism strategy are being explored.</p>
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4	Resources
4.1	<p><u>Financial</u> NA</p> <p><u>Human</u> NA</p> <p><u>Basis for Professional/ Consultancy Support</u> NA</p> <p><u>Other</u> NA</p>

5	Other Considerations
5.1	None

6	Recommendations
6.1	Members are asked to note the progress outlined above.

7	List of Documents Attached
	NA