

Report on	<p>1. Meet the Buyer 2022</p> <p>2. Tourism Development Group Minutes 03.02.2022</p> <p>3. Cookstown Town Centre Forum Minutes 19.01.2022</p> <p>4. Events to Celebrate the Achievements of Women</p>
Date of Meeting	12 May 2022
Reporting Officer	Assistant Director of Economy, Tourism & Strategic Programmes

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

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To provide Members with an update on key activities as detailed below.
2.0	Background
2.1	<p>Meet the Buyer 2022 Meet the Buyer is Northern Ireland's flagship b2b networking event and provides an ideal opportunity for the NI Travel Trade to showcase their tourism business to a pre-qualified group of international travel buyers.</p> <p>After two years of delivering the event virtually, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this year saw the return of the face-to-face Meet the Buyer in the ICC Belfast, on Tuesday 29th March 2022 from 8.30am to 8.30pm.</p> <p>In advance of the event, NI trade request pre-scheduled 1-2-1 meetings with international tour operators from 17 destinations via an online platform.</p> <p>Meet the Buyer Fam Trips As part of the event, Tourism NI host several Meet the Buyer familiarisation (fam) trips for the international tour operators to visit tourist attractions across NI. These familiarisation trips are an essential opportunity for tour operators to get a sample of NI tourism experiences.</p> <p>To be eligible to participate in Meet the Buyer, tourism businesses must be based in NI, have sufficient capacity to facilitate tour groups, have a focus on international markets, have development plans in place, and be registered with Tourism NI's Good to Go scheme.</p>

<p>2.2</p> <p>2.3</p> <p>2.4</p>	<p>This year the event was free to attend as part of Tourism NI's commitment to support industry recovery, post COVID-19.</p> <p>Tourism Development Group Minutes 03.02.2022 The Tourism Development Group (TDG) was established to create a working forum between Council and private sector businesses. The TDG will assist with policy development and support the implementation of Council's Tourism Strategy and associated work in order to create economic growth, increase visitor numbers and create employment. The group meet on a bi-monthly basis and as per the agreed Terms of Reference, all business will be reported to Council through the Development Committee.</p> <p>Cookstown Town Centre Forum Minutes 19.01.2022 Cookstown Town Centre Forum was established in 2002 to develop a partnership approach for the development and delivery of key town centre initiatives. The Forum meets at regular intervals throughout the year.</p> <p>Events to Celebrate the Achievements of Women Mid Ulster District Council organised two events to celebrate the achievements of women highlighting accomplishments throughout the past 100 years right through to the present day. The events took place on Tuesday 29 March 2022 at Corick House Hotel and Spa, Clogher and Thursday 31 March 2022 at the Terrace Hotel, Magherafelt.</p>
<p>3.0</p>	<p>Main Report</p>
<p>3.1</p>	<p>Meet the Buyer 2022 Meet the Buyer had a strong representation from Mid Ulster tourism trade: Council attractions included: OM Dark Sky Park & Observatory, Seamus Heaney HomePlace and Hill of the O'Neill.</p> <p>Private sector: Glenshane Country Farm, Bakehouse NI, Lough Neagh Stories, Lough Neagh Tours, Embrace Tours, River Bann Tours, Friels Famine Story, The Jungle, Walsh's Hotel, Blessingbourn Estate, and Quinn's Coach Hire.</p> <p>Council's Tourism Development Officer attended on behalf of OM Dark Sky Park & Observatory. 22 meetings took place with international tour operators from USA, Canada, Australia, India, France, Germany, Belgium, Austria, UK and Ireland.</p> <p>One German Tour Operator is scheduling a tour for December 2022. Four additional tours are being planned for 2023.</p> <p>Meet the Buyer Fam Trips As part of the Meet the Buyer Event, there were four familiarisation (fam) trips which took place within Mid Ulster in 2022:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saturday 26th March – 16 tour operators visited Beaghmore Stone Circles and OM Dark Sky Park & Observatory. • Sunday 27th March – 15 Tour Operators visited Glenshane Country Farm.

- Monday 28th March – 14 Tour Operators visited Bakehouse NI & Glenshane Country Farm.
- Monday 28th March – 16 Tour Operators visited Seamus Heaney HomePlace, Seamus Heaney Open Ground, Lough Neagh Stories, Ballyronan Boat Houses, Rosehill House, Stewartstown.
Tourism trade exhibiting at Rosehill House included:
 - The Immigrants Walk Experience
 - Symphonia Gin – An Apple A Day Experience
 - Poems & Painting Experience
 - Tyrone Glass Cutting demo

Feedback from the tour operators who attended the fam trips were extremely positive, resulting in several discussions with tour operators planning tours for late 2022 and next year 2023.

3.2 **Tourism Development Group Minutes 03.02.2022**

A copy of the Tourism Development Group minutes dated 3rd February 2022 are contained on **Appendix 1**.

3.3 **Cookstown Town Centre Forum Minutes 19.01.2022**

A copy of Cookstown Town Centre Forum minutes held on the 19th January 2022 are attached at **Appendix 2**.

3.4 **Events to Celebrate the Achievements of Women**

Two successful events were held on Tuesday 29 March 2022 at Corick House Hotel and Spa, Clogher and Thursday 31 March 2022 at the Terrace Hotel, Magherafelt. Over 140 women attended over the 2 events.

The Hub's Carol Doey acted as MC at both events, which ran from 7pm-9pm.

On each night, different inspirational guest speakers took part. At Corick House Alison Chestnutt was first to regale the audience with her journey on how she became the first female Captain of Dungannon Golf Club in the club's 132-year history.

This was followed by Deirdre Chestnutt, Unique Personal Stylist "Owning the skin you're in" who entertained the audience with the story of her journey from rural Mid Ulster to becoming one of the most followed fashion bloggers in Northern Ireland.

At the Terrace Hotel, following the same format, Caroline O'Neill founder of Digg Mama and Digg for Success shared her business journey.

Nuala McMenamin, Adorn Bespoke Styling, spoke encouraging women to feel confident within themselves.

At both venues, the Council's Deputy Chief Executive and Strategic Director of Environment, Anne-Marie Campbell, provided a presentation focusing on the empowerment and development of women over the last Century.

	<p>The night ended with light refreshments.</p> <p>If anyone was unable to attend, the videos of each event can be accessed at;</p> <p>Corick House Hotel and Spa, Clogher https://youtu.be/WPF97M9U750</p> <p>Terrace Hotel, Magherafelt https://youtu.be/bKGA1Y_L9OY</p> <p>The total proceeds raised via ticket sales and donations over the two nights was £1,820. All funds were officially handed over by the Council Chairman, Cllr McLean, to representatives from the Air Ambulance NI (see Appendix 3).</p>
4.	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	<p>Financial:</p> <p>Meet the Buyer 2022 Officers' travel to event</p> <p>Tourism Development Group Minutes 03.02.2022 Within Council Budget</p> <p>Events to Celebrate the Achievements of Women Within Council Budget</p>
	<p>Human:</p> <p>Meet the Buyer 2022 Officers' time to attend event</p> <p>Tourism Development Group Minutes 03.02.2022 Officers time</p> <p>Events to Celebrate the Achievements of Women Officers time</p>
	Risk Management: N/A
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: N/A
	Rural Needs Implications: N/A

5.0	Recommendation(s)
	It is recommended that Members;
5.1	Meet the Buyer 2022 Note update.
5.2	Tourism Development Group Minutes 03.02.2022 Note Tourism Development Group minutes held on 03.02.2022
5.3	Cookstown Town Centre Forum Minutes 19.01.2022 Note Cookstown Town Centre Forum minutes held on 19.01.2022.
5.4	Events to Celebrate the Achievements of Women Note update.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	Appendix 1 - Minutes of Tourism Development Group 03.02.2022 Appendix 2 – Minutes of Cookstown Town Centre Forum 19.01.2022 Appendix 3 – Presentation of Cheque to Air Ambulance NI following Women's Events.