

Report on	Autumn Corporate Events 2020
Date of Meeting	Thursday 9 th July 2020
Reporting Officer	Michael Browne
Contact Officer	Sharon Arbuthnot

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

1.0	Purpose of Report																														
1.1	To provide an update and recommendations on the autumn corporate events 2020.																														
2.0	Background																														
2.1	The Covid-19 pandemic has prompted Council to re-assess the delivery of the autumn corporate events programme due to Government Guidelines and Social Distancing Safety Measures. It is evident that the way in which Council would have previously celebrated these events has to change for the foreseeable future.																														
2.2	The table below details the corporate events programme, planned prior to the COVID-19 epidemic. .																														
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Date</th> <th>Event</th> <th>Location</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>29 October 2020</td> <td>Dungannon Halloween</td> <td>Dungannon</td> </tr> <tr> <td>30 October 2020</td> <td>Maghera Halloween Hooley</td> <td>Maghera Leisure Centre</td> </tr> <tr> <td>30 October 2020</td> <td>Maghera Fireworks</td> <td>Maghera</td> </tr> <tr> <td>31 October 2020</td> <td>MUSA Halloween</td> <td>MUSA</td> </tr> <tr> <td>31 October 2020</td> <td>Coalisland Halloween</td> <td>Coalisland</td> </tr> <tr> <td>27 November 2020</td> <td>Cookstown Switch On</td> <td>Cookstown</td> </tr> <tr> <td>28 November 2020</td> <td>Dungannon Switch On</td> <td>Dungannon</td> </tr> <tr> <td>28/29 November 2020</td> <td>Dungannon Magical Kingdom</td> <td>Hill of The O'Neill</td> </tr> <tr> <td>28 November 2020</td> <td>Magherafelt Christmas Lights Switch On</td> <td>Magherafelt</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Date	Event	Location	29 October 2020	Dungannon Halloween	Dungannon	30 October 2020	Maghera Halloween Hooley	Maghera Leisure Centre	30 October 2020	Maghera Fireworks	Maghera	31 October 2020	MUSA Halloween	MUSA	31 October 2020	Coalisland Halloween	Coalisland	27 November 2020	Cookstown Switch On	Cookstown	28 November 2020	Dungannon Switch On	Dungannon	28/29 November 2020	Dungannon Magical Kingdom	Hill of The O'Neill	28 November 2020	Magherafelt Christmas Lights Switch On	Magherafelt
Date	Event	Location																													
29 October 2020	Dungannon Halloween	Dungannon																													
30 October 2020	Maghera Halloween Hooley	Maghera Leisure Centre																													
30 October 2020	Maghera Fireworks	Maghera																													
31 October 2020	MUSA Halloween	MUSA																													
31 October 2020	Coalisland Halloween	Coalisland																													
27 November 2020	Cookstown Switch On	Cookstown																													
28 November 2020	Dungannon Switch On	Dungannon																													
28/29 November 2020	Dungannon Magical Kingdom	Hill of The O'Neill																													
28 November 2020	Magherafelt Christmas Lights Switch On	Magherafelt																													

	28-29 November 2020	Magherafelt Market	Magherafelt
	04 December 2020 (under review)	Coalisland Christmas Lights	Coalisland
3.0	Main Report		
3.1	As part of Council's Recovery plan, it will be essential that consultation with the Town Centre Forums, Town centre businesses and local Community Organisations takes place early in the planning process in order to generate further discussions/ideas amongst these stakeholders, thus ensuring that business and community are fully engaged.		
3.2	Safety is paramount in addition to rebuilding the confidence of our community, whilst supporting the health and wellbeing of our local residents within the district. Internal team discussions have taken place to consider celebrating Halloween and Christmas, in a new creative format which could also help to rebuild civic pride and confidence and not require mass gatherings of people, given the current restrictions relating to COVID-19.		
3.3	<p>The proposed new formats would also take into consideration each of the sites individually and may result in a reduction of events, change in dates and/or maybe a longer duration of a celebration, ensuring the event is appropriate for the site.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dungannon Halloween The main concept includes Virtual Halloween Stories. An initiative run in partnership between five local primary schools and town centre businesses. Two stories from each school; ten in total would be read/recorded and published online. The Ten stories could also be published in a book, which could be sold with the proceeds to donated back into the participating schools, supporting the local communities. • Coalisland Halloween As with previous Halloween celebration events; a strong community involvement should continue consulting and working with local community groups to ensure community engagement and the delivery of community planned activities. It is recommended that Council link with OGRAS and develop a virtual ghost trail using local folklore stories. • Maghera Halloween Utilising the local Largantogher Walk in Maghera, create an outdoor Halloween trail. The trail could run over a number of days, to enable local residents to visit whilst adhering to Social Distancing Guidelines. Local residents could get involved in decorating the pathway. • MUSA Halloween Mid Ulster Sports Arena site lends itself well for the creation of a Halloween 		

Trail. The area is large enough to manage the social distancing. Partnerships could be developed with local theatrical groups to develop the walk, either inside or outside.

- **Magherafelt Christmas**
Investigate Projection lighting on the Bridewell or lighting display on Broad Street which links with the town Centre brands and existing lighting features and public art. Invite Local artists to participate in recording a Christmas song, bringing together people from within the town. This song could be recorded and uploaded onto Spotify or similar with all proceeds donated to a local charity. A Virtual Christmas Lights switch on, could launch the lighting display which could remain in place for a number of weeks.
- **Cookstown Christmas**
The concept would be developed around the Twelve days of Christmas. The virtual switch on would launch the celebration, enhancing the atmosphere within the town. For 12 days local pre-recorded messages will be aired 12 gifts would be distributed daily for the 12 days. Selection boxes distributed via the primary schools in the town.
- **Dungannon Christmas**
A Virtual switch on with a difference. Investigations to be made regarding having this virtual event assessed for a Guinness World Record for the most amount of people turning on the Christmas Lights at the same time. Festive Themed Laser light Show in Market Square.
- **Coalisland Christmas**
Christmas Lights could be turned on 'Virtually' at the same time by the children from Coalisland and surrounding areas. Build upon the existing storytelling theme currently being carried out by local primary schools with the theme of Christmas stories.
- **Maghera Christmas**
Work with local businesses and the Town Centre Forum in the town regarding rolling out an initiative to encourage people to visit local shops. This would also link with small business Saturday. A virtual switch on could take place in the evening as the finale to the day.

3.4

All of the above concepts will be developed in full and will be enhanced with supplementary activities. Ideas include:

- Seek support from an innovative and experienced professional company with concepts.
- Livestream the Christmas Switch On to Council's Instagram/Facebook/Twitter pages so families can watch the display online.
- Drive by Santa's in residential areas within our town centres.
- Online or ticketed workshops based on social distancing measures.
- Local town centre walks themed and promotions.

3.5	To adhere to Government advice and social distancing measures, the officers would recommend that we keep firework displays and mass gatherings under review and plan and prepare Halloween and Christmas events in line with current government advice.
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial: Within existing budget.
	Human: Internal officers.
	Risk Management: n/a
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: N/A
	Rural Needs Implications: N/A
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	To approve the new creative formats of the corporate events for Halloween and Christmas 2020.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	N/A