

Report on	RDP Co-operation projects: Davagh archaeological trail (in partnership with SW Mayo LEADER)
Date of Meeting	13 June 2019
Reporting Officer	Michael Browne
Contact Officer	

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	<p>To seek members approval for Council to take forward an application for Rural Development Programme funding under the Local Action Groups Co-operation Scheme where Council will act as lead partner with Mid Ulster Rural Development Partnership (the LAG) as co-applicant.</p> <p>The application will relate to the Davagh Archaeological Trail and is to be developed in partnership with the SW Mayo LAG.</p>
2.0	Background
2.1	<p>Mid Ulster Rural Development Partnership (MURDP) has a budget of £600,000 within its Local Rural Development Strategy to implement co-operation projects in partnership with other LAG's.</p> <p>For co-operation activities, Council is required to act lead applicant with the LAG as co-applicant.</p>
2.2	<p>MURDP (the LAG) has been engaging in networking activities with SW Mayo who are developing a similar project on Achill Island which aims to improve access to important archaeological sites on the island.</p> <p>The project proposed at Davagh Forest links into the Heart of Ancient Ulster Landscape Partnership Scheme where the focus is on connecting people and communities with the unique natural and archaeological heritage of the area. Improving access to natural and build heritage is recognised as a key objective by Council in both the Community Plan and Tourism Development Plan for allowing the public to gain a better appreciation and understanding of these assets.</p> <p>The project will seek to improve physical access to two important ancient archaeological sites within Davagh Forest. Alongside physical access works, the use of digital technology will be explored through the use of 3D modelling to bring these sites to life, allowing visitors to see how they would have looked in ancient times. This will complement the approach to be used for the Dark Skies programme and will build the overall offering available to visitors coming to Davagh.</p>

3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p>Application process The application process for RDP funded projects requires all applicants to follow a procurement process ahead of submitting the application to demonstrate reasonableness of costs. This requires full technical designs to be finalised and tendered before an application for funding is submitted.</p> <p>Technical issues: It is proposed that an external design consultancy team be appointed to complete technical design work required for finalising specifications for this project. Thereafter, specifications are to be tendered to complete the procurement process needed to satisfy RDP application requirements.</p> <p>Legal issues: All physical works will take place under the current licence in place between Council and Forest Service NI. In the main it is expected that trail improvements will be carried out on existing trails. Forest Service will be consulted on any new sections of trail needed but it is expected that this will be minimal and accommodated within the existing licence.</p>
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	<p><u>Financial & Human Resources Implications</u></p> <p>Project cost will be eligible for 75% funding through the Rural Development Programme. The remaining match funding will come from Council.</p> <p>Pre-development costs i.e. design team fees are also eligible for inclusion within overall project costs provided they are procured in line with RDP requirements.</p> <p>Human: Staff time.</p>
4.2	<p><u>Equality and Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>In accordance with council policies and procedures.</p>
4.3	<p><u>Risk Management Implications</u></p> <p>In accordance with current Council risk management procedures</p>
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	Approval for Council to progress a RDP Co-operation Scheme funding application on the Davagh Archaeological Trail project acting as lead partner with Mid Ulster Rural Development Partnership as co-applicant.
5.2	Approval for Council to appoint an external design consultancy team(s) to prepare design specification for the co-operation project named above. Design team consultancy costs will be met from council budgets and will be included as eligible expenditure within the applications for funding to the LAG.

6.0	Documents Attached & References
6.1	NA