

<b>Report on</b>	Autumn Corporate Events Update
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> October 2020
<b>Reporting Officer</b>	Michael Browne
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Sharon Arbuthnot

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

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	To provide the Council with an update on autumn corporate events and identify savings to be reallocated to the COVID-19 Response Fund.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Background</b>
2.1	The planning for all autumn corporate events has been a challenging and a fluid environment, as a team we are re-evaluating our plans daily to ensure the safety of the rate payer and protect the reputational and financial interests of the Council.
2.2	The recovery of our town centre businesses and the safety of our residents and visitors to the district are paramount and is at the forefront of all our planning.
2.3	The increase of positive COVID-19 cases within the Mid Ulster District Council area and Northern Ireland has been fully considered and is continually being monitored.
2.4	The introduction of recent restrictions and possible further restrictions over what is known as the "Flu" season has also been carefully considered and has influenced the proposals and planning of the Halloween and Christmas events.
2.5	The corporate events teams have also been working very closely alongside other councils' events teams over the last number of months, sharing ideas and concerns which now reflects a collective approach in the delivery of safe events to mark Halloween and Christmas.
2.6	Prior to and during events, the teams are always advised by the Mid Ulster Council Corporate Health & Safety team and other agencies, to ensure the highest level of health and safety, when planning major events.

<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	Christmas celebrations will be different in Mid Ulster this year. With the recommendation of no mass gatherings of people, but in a safe way enhancing the atmospheres within our town centres and instilling civic pride with our residents amidst these uncertain times.
3.2	The objective this autumn/winter will be to support the town centre recovery plans with ongoing consultations being held with our Town Centre Forums.
3.3	The switching on of town centre Christmas lights cannot be promoted with the concern of large numbers of people gathering in our town centre to watch the lights coming on. The marketing message will be to support our town centre businesses on the run up to Christmas. Enhanced lighting; pop up entertainment; Drive by Santa; window dressing competitions with businesses etc., will form the Christmas celebrations for 2020. All other safe options and suggestions from stakeholders will be considered within the timescales and reduced budgets.
3.4	In addition to the above we also recommend enhanced festive lighting on Council buildings, which we are currently investigating across Mid Ulster to encourage people to visit our town centres during the festive period.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Other Considerations</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Financial, Human Resources &amp; Risk Implications</b>
	Financial:  Savings from the Halloween & Christmas events of £110,000 (across Corporate Events and Town Centre Budgets) have been identified. This money will be reallocated to Council's COVID-19 Response Fund.
	Human: n/a
	Risk Management: Adhering to the Executive guidance and advice from our Health and Safety team is paramount.
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Screening &amp; Impact Assessments</b>
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: N/A
	Rural Needs Implications: N/A

<b>5.0</b>	<b>Recommendation(s)</b>
5.1	The Council don't organise any formal or planned events that will bring people together in numbers and may potentially encourage none adherence to the current government guidance and measures across all towns for both Halloween and Christmas.
5.2	Reallocate savings of £110,000 from town centre and events budgets to the Council's COVID-19 Response Fund.
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached &amp; References</b>
	N/A