

Report on	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Events to Celebrate International Women's Day 2023 2. Tourism Development Group Minutes – 25.01.23 3. UK Tentative List Process of World Heritage Sites Update 4. Mid Ulster Town Centre Summer Saturdays
Date of Meeting	15 June 2023
Reporting Officer	Colin McKenna, Economic Regeneration Service Manager Mary McKeown, Tourism Service Manager

Is this report restricted for confidential business? If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	Yes	
	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>Events to Celebrate International Womens Day 2023.</p> <p>Mid Ulster District Council organised two events to celebrate International Women's Day 2023. The events took place on Wednesday 8 March 2023 at the Terrace Hotel, Magherafelt and Wednesday 15 March 2023 at Ryandale Inn, Moy.</p>
2.2	<p>Tourism Development Group Minutes – 25.01.23</p> <p>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>
2.3	<p>UK Tentative List Process of World Heritage Sites Update</p> <p>The Department for Communities contacted Mid Ulster District Council via letter dated 28 March 2022 to make us aware that the UK Government had launched</p>

<p>2.4</p>	<p>an exercise to review and renew the UK Tentative List of World Heritage sites. This list is reviewed every ten years, an Expression of Interest form was submitted on Friday 6 May 2022, with the final application submitted on 15 July 2022.</p> <p>Mid Ulster Town Centre Summer Saturdays</p> <p>To support our local communities and to attract footfall into our town centres, a range of activities has been arranged across the District's five largest towns (Dungannon, Cookstown, Magherafelt, Coalisland and Maghera) on a dedicated Saturday during August and September 2023.</p>
<p>3.0</p>	<p>Main Report</p>
<p>3.1</p>	<p>Events to Celebrate International Women Day 2023.</p> <p>Two successful events to celebrate International Women's Day 2023, took place on Wednesday 8 March at 6.30pm in the Terrace Hotel, Magherafelt and Wednesday 15 March, at 6.30pm in the Ryandale Inn, Moy. All funds raised was donated to the then Council Chair's (Councillor Corry) chosen charity, ie, 'Causeway and Mid Ulster Women's Aid'. Over 140 women attended over the two evenings. The events celebrating International Women's Day 2023 supported this year's theme, 'Embrace Equity'.</p> <p>At the first event on Wednesday 8th March at the Terrace Hotel, Magherafelt, Orla McKeating and Siobhan Kearney took to the stage along with Emma Louise Johnston, MC for the night.</p> <p>Orla McKeating is an entrepreneur, speaker and Business Developer at 'Diversity Mark'. Orla took the opportunity to chat about lessening stigma, encouraging inclusion and acceptance and creating a just and sustainable society where every person is seen, heard and valued.</p> <p>Siobhan Kearney as the force behind 'At One Wellbeing' provided guidance around mental health of staff in the workplace and encouraging companies to adopt a menopause friendly workplace.</p> <p>The second event on Wednesday 15 March at the Ryandale Inn, Moy, Annette Kelly and Claire O'Hanlon were the main speakers with Carol Doey as the MC.</p> <p>Claire from Coalisland is well known for her charity work and tireless campaigning. Claire provided an insight into her life and that of her son, who suffers from Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy. As a highly skilled business consultant, Claire also encouraged potential entrepreneurs on giving it a go as a new start-up.</p> <p>Annette Kelly renowned for her work with 'Little Penny Thoughts', shared stories that were inspiring with an aim to encourage confidence and promote wellbeing within others.</p>

A representative from 'Causeway and Mid Ulster Women's Aid' also spoke at each event and highlighted the significant challenges facing the charity with growing numbers of women coming forward for help.

Both nights ended with a light supper and refreshments.

The total proceeds raised via ticket sales and donations over the two nights was £973.49. (Tickets cost £5 per person and the total ticket sales were £630.81. Donations into the collection buckets totalled £342.68).

3.2

Tourism Development Group Minutes – 25 January 2023

To present the minutes of the Tourism Development Group and Officer Cluster Reports meeting held on 25 January 2023. These were subsequently approved at the Tourism Development meeting held on 29 March 2023.

3.3

UK Tentative List Process of World Heritage Sites Update

Each country is required by UNESCO to maintain a 'Tentative List' of potential world heritage sites and to review this list every ten years. As part of the process, an expert panel reviewed applications to the UK list. Councils and site management organisations were free to nominate a cultural or natural site that they feel might meet the 'Outstanding Universal Value' test for addition to the World List.

To be considered for the UK's Tentative List, Council firstly submitted an Expression of Interest form on 6 May 2022, with the final application submitted on 15 July 2022. The application to the UK Tentative List of World Heritage Sites was for the 'Heart of Ancient Ulster' site located within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, incorporating OM Dark Sky Park, area around Davagh Forest and Broughderg in the Sperrin Mountains.

In accordance with recent practice, the UK continue to nominate only one new site to UNESCO every other year. A rigorous tentative list process is therefore needed to avoid nugatory and expensive work by sites keen to progress.

On 10 April 2023 the Department for Culture, Media and Sport contacted the Council to inform us that our application had been unsuccessful on this occasion and provided the following feedback from the Independent Expert Panel;

- *This is an undeniably impressive and beautiful area. However, the high level of elements that remain unknown and lie beneath ecologically important peat bogland, mean it is difficult to assess the potential to demonstrate Outstanding Universal Value of this site. There was insufficient evidence to demonstrate global significance beyond the undoubted national significance of the site.*

- *The panel felt the issue of 60% of the site being under a peat bog was a considerable hindrance to assessing Outstanding Universal Value, particularly given current natural guidance is towards restoring peat bogs, which the application didn't reflect (although it was noted there are non-destructive methods to research deposits). As a result, this made it hard to make the case for the potential to demonstrate Outstanding Universal Value.*
- *Concerns were raised about the risks the site and its wider landscape is facing and that the private owners' support was unclear, noting that World Heritage site nomination should not be seen as a route for preserving a site, as this should already be identified and in place.*
- *There were also questions around the boundary definition, as to the rationale of what was outside the boundary and hadn't been included*
- *The panel noted that this was a remarkable and beautiful site, and clearly of great national significance and importance, but that the application did not demonstrate sufficient potential Outstanding Universal Value to be included on the list.*

This will come as a disappointment after the hard work that was put into the application. As the review panel have noted, the bar for World Heritage Status is extremely high, and they only include a limited number of sites on the Tentative List.

The public announcement for those sites included on the Tentative List was confirmed on 10 April 2023.

3.4

Mid Ulster Town Centre Summer Saturdays

Within the five Town Centres a number of activities are planned to take place to create an ambiance, attract footfall and support the high street. One Saturday will be dedicated to each town during August and September 2023 with activities commencing from 12 noon – to 3pm.

- Saturday 5 August 2023 Dungannon
- Saturday 12 August 2023 Coalisland
- Saturday 19 August 2023 Cookstown
- Saturday 2 September 2023 Magherafelt
- Saturday 9 September 2023 Maghera

The activities, subject to procurement and availability, may include but are not limited to:-

- Town Centre Music
- Mobile Face Painters
- Character Walkabouts
- Pop Up Aquarium
- Caricaturist
- A variety of interactive shows

4.	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial: Events funded from existing Departmental budgets.
	Human: Officer time
	Risk Management:
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & Good Relations Implications:
	Rural Needs Implications:
5.0	Recommendation(s)
	It is recommended that Members;
5.1	Events to Celebrate International Women's Day 2023 Note update on International Women's Day Events 2023.
5.2	Tourism Development Group Minutes – 25 January 2023 Note minutes of Tourism Development Group and Officer Cluster Reports held on 25 January 2023.
5.3	UK Tentative List Process of World Heritage Sites Update Note that Council's application to the UK Tentative List of World Heritage Sites for the 'Heart of Ancient Ulster' was unsuccessful, however, other funding avenues will be explored.
5.4	Mid Ulster Town Centre Summer Saturdays Note update on Mid Ulster's Town Centre Summer Saturdays.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	Appendix 1 - Tourism Development Group Minutes & Cluster Reports – 25.1.23