

Report on	Lough Neagh Partnership Core Funding 2020/21
Date of Meeting	10 September 2020
Reporting Officer	Michael Browne
Contact Officer	Allison O'Keefe

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 approve annual contribution for year 2020/21 towards the core running costs associated with Lough Neagh Partnership (LNP) in the delivery of marketing tourism, recreational, environmental and heritage activities on Lough Neagh (LN) and the shoreline on behalf of Mid Ulster District Council .
2.0	Background
2.1	<p>LNP is the main co-ordinating body for tourism, environmental, heritage and marketing activities on Lough Neagh, delivering projects and programmes on behalf of local and central government. Funding is sought to operate a continuous marketing plan for LN, including areas within Mid Ulster.</p> <p>LNP receives funding toward core running costs from five Council's around the Lough Shore for the co-ordination of substantial development, promotion and marketing of LN.</p>
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p>Funding primarily contributes towards core staff costs (Manager, Marketing Officer and Admin/Finance Officer), development/ delivery of programmes and office running costs.</p> <p>LNP will continue to identify and secure additional investment to the region to assist in addressing social, environmental and economic issues around the Lough. As part of the funding LNP will offer Mid Ulster District Council continued coordination and marketing around Lough Neagh and its Waterways and continue to develop the Lough as a tourism destination.</p> <p>The overall cost of the project is £73,000 and funding is conditional to requests being made to the other five Councils around the Lough Shore, pro-rata in accordance with the approximate amount of shoreline and/or activity hubs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid Ulster District Council £22,000 • Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council £22,000 • Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council £22,000 • Mid & East Antrim Council £3,500 • Lisburn & Castlereagh Council £3,500

	Measurable targets and quantifiable outputs attached in Appendix 1.
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	<p><u>Financial & Human Resources Implications</u></p> <p>Financial: £22,000 which has been identified in the 2020/21 budget and will be paid in 2 stages:</p> <p>Stage 1 payment covering period 1 April – 30 August 2020</p> <p>Stage 2 payment covering 1 September – 31 March 2020</p>
4.2	<p><u>Equality and Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>Ensure effective co-ordination of activities on LN and its shoreline and deliver social, economic and cultural benefits within MU. LNP is committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity in all its activities with a focus on all citizens living within the Mid Ulster area of LN.</p>
4.3	<p><u>Risk Management Implications</u></p> <p>LNP has been in existence since 2003 with experience in managing risk. Funding has been secured with 4 Councils surrounding Lough shore therefore minimising risk to MUDC. Monitoring and verification of original invoices, payslips and corresponding bank statements, as well as, quarterly reports and site visits will be carried out to minimise risk.</p>
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	Recommend Mid Ulster District Council fund Lough Neagh Partnership £22,000 as requested subject to funding being secured from all five Councils on the shores of Lough Neagh.
5.2	Recommend that the Lough Neagh Partnership submit a quarterly update to MUDC.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
6.1	Appendix 1 - LNP Application Report for Funding 2020/21



LOUGH NEAGH PARTNERSHIP CORE FUNDING 2020/21 - £22,000
MID ULSTER DISTRICT COUNCIL ANNUAL FUNDING MEASUREABLE TARGETS AND QUANTIFIABLE
OUTPUTS

Targets	Target Date 31/03/2021	Quantifiable Outputs
<p>1. Landscape Partnership Project Deliver Year 2 of the Lough Neagh Landscape Partnership project</p>		<p>Implement projects as agreed in HLF plan for 2020/21 e.g. signage project, manage Brookend and Derryloughan nature reserves.</p> <p>The Partnership is working with local communities and the Council in helping develop a community buy out of Derrytrasna land owned by DEL. This is a major environmental conservation project within the Mid Ulster Area and includes a major effort to conserve Curlews that breed in the bog area. This is one of the last breeding areas for Curlew around the shores of the Lough and an important site.</p> <p>The Partnership has also worked with local communities and Mid Ulster council to address peatland fires at Derrytrasna. This has been a serious problem in the area.</p> <p>The Partnership has also been liaising with the planning section regarding illegal extraction of peat in the area. Overall the Partnership has been working closely with the Council in this area.</p>
<p>2. Destination Marketing Plan Working with Mid Ulster Council and stakeholders, identify and help develop new tourism products on Lough</p>		<p>Develop and promote two new major Lough Neagh Tours, two of which relate to and promote the Mid Ulster Tourism development product.</p> <p>The Partnership has been working closely with the Mid Ulster Council to develop an “Embrace the Spirit” Experiential Tourism project with Mid Ulster. This is building on the work of the Partnership in developing the Food and Craic tours around the western shores of the Lough and Lough Beg. The new potential programme will work with local private businesses in the mid ulster area and at the same time promote the wider Lough as an important place to visit.</p> <p>The Partnership has also helped Mid Ulster with implementation of their tourism strategy particularly in the area of built heritage and heritage signage. The signage project will be implemented around the shoreline in 20/21 period.</p>

<p>3. General Marketing and Promotion of Lough Neagh</p> <p>Ensure that VICs provide event information to Tourism NI on regular basis</p> <p>Co-ordination of Tourism NI marketing features for LN work includes co-ordination of marketing features for Tourism NI productions/advertorials. Production & distribution of Lough Neagh E-Newsletter for stakeholders & consumers online.</p> <p>Trade fairs and exhibitions</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum of 20 events per District • MUDC events submitted to TNI will be featured on Discover Lough Neagh website & app • 2 advertorials - Spring and Autumn • 3 stakeholder newsletters - Quarterly • Minimum 6 press releases • Review other content on website & update • Issue of event updates and press releases. • 200 posts for consumer and trade pages on Facebook & Twitter <p>Lough Neagh Partnership will attend trade fairs and exhibitions with Mid Ulster staff where opportunities arise to promote the destination and its events.</p>
<p>4. Lough Neagh Artisan Food Programme</p> <p>Implement a Lough Neagh Artisan Food project</p>		<p>Implement an artisan food branding project and help group members in Mid Ulster area. There are six businesses in total, two of which are in the Mid Ulster area. The purpose of the project is to help train the businesses and create a supply chain for the artisan products. It is now in the second year of the programme.</p>
<p>5. Liaison with MUDC</p> <p>Ongoing liaison MUDC</p>		<p>The Partnership manager meets regularly with Mid Ulster Council officers to update on progress and assistance in any joint projects</p>
<p>6. NIEA Shoreline plan</p> <p>Attract new funding and engage with farmers and landowners on the western shore to improve condition of western shore</p>		<p>Lough Neagh Partnership staff will help implement and administer funding of £73,000 which has been secured for a second year from NIEA towards the development and implementation of management plans for Special Protected Areas (SPAs). A large part of this project will relate to the Mid Ulster Council Area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor all birds on Loughs western shore. • Monitor condition of all small Islands on western shore. • Monitor all main important beaches for invertebrates. • Monitor any habitat changes in western shores

		<p>This is a very important service that could help the Council as it provides an indication of the health of its Lough shoreline in terms of habitats and species.</p> <p>The Partnership has also applied for assistance to carry out a study into the impact of climate change on the Lough and again Lough Neagh Partnership will liaise closely with Council when it is implemented.</p>
<p>7. Implement 2 Group Farm Schemes on Lough Neagh 2 new Group Farm Schemes set up.</p>		<p>The Partnership manages and administers a £200,000 DAERA Group Farm Scheme for Lough Neagh with main focus area in western shores/ mid ulster area giving help and assistance to over 16 new farmers along the mid ulster shoreline on Lough Neagh. Over 50 farmers within the Council area are included in the scheme which helps farmers better manage their land in an environmentally sensitive way and received income for this. Over £1.27 million of investment has been brought into the area through the Environmental Group Scheme and this offers great value to the Council area. The partnership would be very willing to deliver a presentation to the Council on this project.</p> <p>A new extension farm management programme will begin on 1 September 2000. This will cover the rivers in the east side of Lough Neagh.</p>
<p>8. Lough Neagh Planning Assist Mid Ulster Council Planning Group to develop new planning zone designation for Lough Neagh</p>		<p>Lough Neagh Partnership staff to attend any Lough Neagh Planning meetings led by Mid Ulster District Council and give advice and assistance on the development of a new co-ordinated Lough Neagh plan. It has also liaised closely with Council regarding the illegal extraction of peat in the southern area of the lough.</p>
<p>9. EU Life Plus Project and NPA application</p>		<p>Lough Neagh Partnership has applied for a Life Plus project with support from Mid Ulster Council.</p> <p>The Partnership will also apply for 3 other funding projects which have been discussed with Mid Ulster Council.</p>
<p>10. Coalisland HLF Great Places Project Make application</p>		<p>Lough Neagh Partnership is in the second year of implementing the Great Places project in Coalisland and wider area. Up to £500,000 will be invested in the area working with local people to protect and celebrate its industrial heritage. The Coalisland Museum has been restored and is now open for planned visits. Communities have worked closely to complete this project. The Project has been impacted by Covid, however a great deal of work has been taking place on-line and an extension is expected. It is estimated that the programme will allocate over £100,000 spend in 2020/21.</p>

11. Lough Neagh Interdepartmental Committee and Ownership		Work with political parties to develop an interdepartmental committee and ownership for the Lough. This is an important project that the Council should become involved in.
12. Moil Cattle Scheme		Develop a Moil Cattle scheme on the shores of Lough Neagh with focus on western shores. The partnership has received a small grant to develop a moil cattle scheme. The intention is to create a bank of 6 farmers who have moil cattle and create a supply chain. Two farmers will be from the Mid Ulster area.
13. Navigation scheme and Black water mouth		The Partnership will attempt to improve navigation of Lough Neagh and Mid Ulster Rivers. The partnership will implement feedback from recent Lough Neagh Conference, e.g. dredge mouth of Blackwater to try and develop a Navigation sub authority for the Lough.
14. Common Tern Project		Lough Neagh Partnership staff intend to assist with the implementation and administration of Interreg Water Quality Programme (Waterpro) relating to the whole of Lough Neagh but parts will relate to the Mid Ulster area.