

<b>Report on</b>	Mountain Bike NI Consortium Proposal 2023-24
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	14 <sup>th</sup> September 2023
<b>Reporting Officer</b>	Kieran Gordon, Assistant Director Health, Leisure & Wellbeing
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Martin Conlan, Recreation & Countryside Officer

<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 seek Council approval to commit to Mountain Bike NI Marketing Consortium Campaigns for 2023 – 2024.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Background</b>
2.1	Mountain Bike NI Consortium was established to raise the profile of Northern Ireland's new mountain bike trail centres within the UK and Republic of Ireland markets.
2.2	Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland (ORNI) have developed marketing expertise and knowledge of the mountain bike market to deliver the Mountain Bike NI Consortium (a partnership between four local authorities) with the collective aims to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote Northern Ireland as a World Class Mountain Bike Destination</li> <li>• Oversee activation of MountainBikeNI.com brand across each trail centre to increase 'cross-sell' opportunities</li> <li>• Secure a major sponsor for Northern Ireland's new National mountain bike trail centres</li> <li>• To combine budgets to deliver specialist targeted marketing campaigns in partnership with Tourism Ireland</li> </ul>
2.3	In 2016 / 2017, ORNI successfully established the Mountain Bike NI Marketing Consortium to ensure local authorities could continue to benefit from the success of MountainbikeNI.com, previously funded by government departments, by continuing to contribute to the Mountain Bike NI Consortium – local authorities can reap the following benefits:
2.4	A consortium approach provides the following benefits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economies of scale in campaign costs, project costs such as MTB Research</li> <li>• The ability to cross sell between trail centres i.e. consumers interested in or visiting the Mourne based trails will learn about the Davagh Trails and vice versa</li> <li>• A greater potential to attract (via tender) a sponsor</li> <li>• Improved brand, destination and product recognition</li> </ul>

2.5	Within Mid Ulster District Council – <a href="http://mountainbikeni.com">mountainbikeni.com</a> and <a href="http://Outmoreni.com">Outmoreni.com</a> incorporates detailed information on the two Mountain Bike Trail centres, Blessingbourne and Davagh.
2.6	Further details on the Mountain Bike NI Consortium Proposal is contained within Appendix A.
2.7	Previously in November 2022, Members at the Development committee resolved to approve Mid Ulster Districts Council’s participation as a consortium partner for the 2022/23 year with financial support totalling £10,500 (minute reference: D173/22). Annual Consortium Report 2022/23 included in Appendix B.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	Outdoor Recreation NI will continue to assign staff resources to the MountainBikeNI Consortium in order to continue to promote Northern Ireland as a ' <i>must visit mountain bike destination</i> '. Whilst promotion will take place under the MountainBikeNI umbrella brand each destination will be clearly differentiated within marketing activity.
3.2	The focus of marketing activity will be within Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland in order to deliver on key objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase number of visits within each trail centre</li> <li>• Increase the engagement of mountain bikers with the local economy i.e. increase economic impact</li> </ul>
3.3	Leading on from previous Council commitment towards this partnership for the 22/23 year, it is recommended to continue the partnership with a Council contribution of £10,500 for the 23/24 year.
3.4	The MountainbikeNI.com consortium will be managed by ORNI’s Marketing Manager who will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree an annual work programme including KPIs</li> <li>• Provide Quarterly progress reports</li> <li>• Hold two meetings per year to report on progress, discuss campaigns etc.</li> </ul>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Other Considerations</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<p><b>Financial, Human Resources &amp; Risk Implications</b></p> <p>Financial: Proposal to contribute £10,500 as a participating Consortium Partner. Can be derived from existing revenue budgets.</p> <p>Human: Existing staff resources sufficient to coordinate project support. No additional staffing resource required.</p> <p>Risk Management: Considered in line with relevant Council policies and procedures.</p>

<b>4.2</b>	<b>Screening &amp; Impact Assessments</b>
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: None anticipated at this juncture.
	Rural Needs Implications: None anticipated at this juncture.
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Recommendation(s)</b>
5.1	To note the contents of the reports and give approval for Mid Ulster District Council to participate as a Consortium Partner with the Mountain Bike NI Marketing Consortium and contribute £10,500 to 2023-24 campaign.
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached &amp; References</b>
6.1	Appendix A: Proposal for the delivery of the MountainBikeNI Consortium 2023 - 2024 Appendix B: Annual Consortium Report 2022 - 2023