

**LEISURE & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY 18 AUGUST 2020**

Table of Recommendations

No	Item	Summary of key Recommendations
2.	Declarations of Interest	Councillors Beattie; McAuley and Schenning
3.	Minutes of Meeting held 18 March 2020	Confirmed
4.	Minutes of Meeting held 16 June 2020	Confirmed
5.	Officers will provide a verbal update on the reinstatement of the Sport and Wellbeing Facilities	Received
6.	Annual Business Plans for 2020/21 Annual Business Plans for 2020/21	Approve
7.	Community Festival Fund 2020/21	Approve Option 2. Suspend the Community Festivals Fund for 20-21, in line with the policy direction of DfC. Allocate the budget of £35,730 towards meeting the budget deficit in the Leisure & Development directorate.
8.	Transfer of Funds from Workforce Development to Advice Services	The Prosperity and Place budget contributes £10,000 from its budget for enhanced advice services, to be provided through the Causeway Coast

		<p>and Glens Advice Consortium.</p> <p>This funding will be monitored for best use – either through immediate enhanced hours, or hours enhanced throughout the remainder of the financial year, depending on demand.</p> <p>Reporting will be made through existing channels through Community & Culture.</p>
9.	Impact of COVID 19 on Halloween Events Programme	<p>Approve. Option 2: Deliver revised format for Halloween focusing on a wider cultural and living history approach across a range of activities</p>
10.	Stendhal Festival 2020	<p>In line with awards made in June 2020 to cancelled events for eligible expenditure, agree to permit the use of the grant award for Stendhal to cover eligible expenditure incurred up to the date of cancellation of the event.</p>
11.	Ballykelly Community Portacabin	Information
12.	DfC COVID 19 Recovery Funding	Information
13.	Economic Development Strategy Emerging Themes	Information

17.	Notice of Motion proposed by Councillor Mulholland, seconded by Councillor McCaw, deferred from the 18 th March 2020 Leisure and Development Committee	Withdrawn
	IN COMMITTEE (Items 18-19)	
18.	Christie Park Minor Works	Approve the appointment of the most economically advantageous tender from JS Dunlop Ltd at £22,920 plus VAT and to advance to and complete on Stage 3 of the Capital Works Process.
19.	Portaneevy Trailhead and Scenic Viewpoint Stage 3	Approve the advancement and completion of Stage 3 of the Capital Works Process for Portaneevy, Ballintoy. Connolly and Fee Ltd are the preferred contractor at a tender figure of £431,883.24. Approve investment decision for match funding this project at £26,993
20.	Any Other Relevant Business	
	20.1 Sandhill Drive Air-de-Service, Portrush (Councillor McCaw)	Information

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF
THE LEISURE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
IN CIVIC HEADQUARTERS AND VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE, COLERAINE ON
TUESDAY 18 AUGUST 2020 AT 7:00 PM**

In the Chair: Councillor Nicholl (C)

Members Present: Alderman Baird (C), Hillis (R) and McCorkell (R)
Councillors Anderson (C), Bateson (R), Beattie (R), Callan (R), Holmes (C), Knight-McQuillan (R), McAuley (C), McCaw (C) Schenning (R), and Watton (C)

Officers Present: R Baker, Director of Leisure and Development (C)
W McCullough, Head of Sport & Wellbeing (R)
P Thompson, Head of Tourism & Recreation (R)
P Beattie, Head of Prosperity & Place (R)
J Welsh, Head of Community & Culture (R)
S Duggan Civic Support & Committee & Member Services Officer (C)
A McCloskey, Community Facilities Development Officer (R)
K McMullan, Acting Events Manager (R)
L Scullion, Community Development Manager (R)

In Attendance: J Winfield, ICT Operations Manager (C)
A Lennox, Mobile Operations Officer (C)
C Thompson, ICT Operations Officer (C)

Press (2 no)
Public (1 no.)

Key: (C) Attended in the Chamber
(R) Attended Remotely

SUBSTITUTION: Councillor Beattie substituted for Councillor MA McKillop for the duration of the meeting.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were recorded for Councillors C McShane and Wallace.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declarations of Interest were recorded for:

- * Councillor Beattie in Community Festivals Fund 2020/21 (Agenda Item 7).
Councillor Beattie did not leave the meeting during consideration of the Item.

- * Councillor McAuley in Community Festivals Fund 2020/21, Councillor McAuley left the meeting during consideration of the Item.
- * Councillor Schenning in Community Festivals Fund 2020/21 (Agenda Item 7), and Transfer of Funds from Workforce Development to Advice Services (Agenda Item 8). Councillor Schenning left the meeting during consideration of the Items.
- * **Councillor Beattie arrived at the meeting at 7.09PM.**

3. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 18 MARCH 2020

The Minutes of the Leisure and Development Committee meeting held Wednesday 18 March 2020 were confirmed as a correct record.

4. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 16 JUNE 2020

The Minutes of the Leisure and Development Committee meeting held Tuesday 16 June 2020 were confirmed as a correct record.

5. OFFICERS WILL PROVIDE A VERBAL UPDATE ON THE REINSTATEMENT OF THE SPORT AND WELLBEING FACILITIES

The Head of Sport and Wellbeing updated Committee on the proposed opening of Leisure Centres and Minor Sports Centres for 26th August 2020.

The Head of Wellbeing and Sport responded to Councillor Anderson in relation to water testing protocols and time periods.

6. ANNUAL BUSINESS PLANS FOR 2020/21

Report, previously circulated, presented by the Director of Leisure & Development to present an Outline Business Plan for the service areas within the Leisure and Development Directorate, for the remainder of the 2020/21 Financial Period, following the Covid 19 Pandemic.

1.0 The Lockdown Period

Working principles and activities from March to July 2020 – See Annex A (circulated).

2.0 The Recovery Period

As Council enters in the Recovery Period, the Fundamental Principles regarding the continuation of existing services, opening of facilities and the initiation of projects / programmes / events is the prioritisation of key services within the context of the affordability of the 20/21 Revenue Budget.

3.0 Income Loss

As a direct consequence of the UK Government Guidance, applied by the NI Executive in order to inhibit the transfer of Covid 19, the Leisure and Development income generating services and programmes have been curtailed since the later weeks of March 2020. During the period of complete lockdown, a general estimate is that L&D is losing £500k income each month.

4.0 Cost Mitigation

Savings to offset the lost income will be derived from:

- Furloughed Permanent Staff.
- Furloughed Agency Staff undertaken by Grafton Recruitment.
- Utilities costs reduced as a consequence of closing facilities (albeit essential maintenance continues).
- Minimal additional staff costs resulting from mileage, expenses and overtime.
- Programmes and activities.
- Supplies and services.
- Events (March to September).
- NI Executive Covid 19 Support from DfC / DAERA /SEFA.

5.0 The Financial Approach During Covid 19 Recovery

The Council agreed net budget position for each directorate and service area remains as the 20/21 annual target budgetary position. (Circulated)

Furthermore budget management is allowing the corporate body to rebuild General Reserves, therefore stringent financial analysis and cost control are an absolute necessity.

6.0 The Approach

Financial Analysis and Planning. Accurately understand the net budgetary shortfall by Directorate, Head of Service Area, Tier 4 Service Area and Programme, Project and Activity.

- Monthly income shortfall through management account analysis.
- Proactive cost mitigation planning and controls.

Whilst the net budget position for the directorate remains as the 20/21 annual target budgetary position, service area prioritisation will necessitate budget transfers within the directorate.

The Reinstatement of Services. Council has now agreed the opening of facilities, from which modified services will be delivered.

Service Prioritisation. The reinstatement of services, activities and programmes is based upon prioritised recovery themes:

- The economic recovery of the Borough.
 - Phase 1. 18 to 36 month recovery and renewal.
 - Phase 2. Investment & Regeneration to create resilience and growth.

- The Social welfare of the citizens of the Borough.
 - Community Development initiatives, especially in areas of social deprivation.
 - Community support activities, utilising central government statutory programmes and funding.
- The health and wellbeing of the citizens of the Borough.
 - The continuation of the 'In-House Transformation' Process of Council's Major, Minor Leisure Facilities and Sports Development Unit.
 - Activities which contribute to the physical and mental wellbeing of the citizens of the Borough. A focus should be on 'high risk' individuals / communities. Minimal additional costs should be incurred. Partnership projects are to be prioritised.
 - Maximise the benefits of the Borough's outdoor environment.
 - Recovery Planning. The financial and practical planning necessary to allow for the considered reinstate of facilities and activities based upon affordability and the functions to allow safe public use.

Based upon the above prioritisation, the necessary expenditure reduction will be applied as a directorate and not arbitrarily for each service area.

7.0 CAPEX

Consider the affordability of CAPEX within the context of Council's limits on capital expenditure and the prioritisation of Capital Projects.

8.0 The Opportunity

The Recovery Period must establish a 'new normal', allowing the cultural challenges of the past to be reset. Positive change through innovation, technology, leadership and staff engagement / ownership presents a real opportunity for service improvement and efficiency.

Service Area Recovery and Outline Business Plans were circulated for each of the following, detail within the reports.

- Prosperity and Place.
- Sport and Wellbeing.
- Community and Culture.
- Tourism and Recreation.
- The Funding Unit.

Recommendation

Council is requested to consider the service area business plans for the remaining period of the 2020/21 Financial Period.

In response to Councillor Baird, the Head of Community and Culture clarified that DfC had not changed its Policy on Neighbourhood Renewal Areas of Deprivation.

Councillor Bateson requested clarification of Item 5, '*closing facilities*'. The Director of Leisure and Development advised the term was in relation to the reduced cost of utilities from mid-March 2020.

Going forward after the reopening of sport, recreation and community facilities, Arts and Cultural facilities are closed until 1st January 2021, subject to the, 'Call In'.

In response to Councillor McCaw, the Director of Leisure and Development advised Council had agreed to transfer Waterworld to Land and Property for the Disposal Process and the matter was currently with Legal Services, an update would be obtained from Council's Solicitor.

An explanation was provided to Councillor Anderson regarding a different position with the Dunluce Centre, which was subject to a Development Brief.

The Chair underpinned the activities of the Funding Unit.

Proposed by Councillor Baird

Seconded by Councillor Watton and

AGREED – to recommend that Council approve the service area business plans for the remaining period of the 2020/21 Financial Period.

- * **Councillor Schenning having declared an interest, left the meeting at 7.24PM.**
- * **Councillor McAuley having declared an interest, left the meeting at 7.24PM.**

7. COMMUNITY FESTIVAL FUND 2020/21

Report, previously circulated, presented by the Head of Community and Culture to provide Elected Members with an update on the current position and to request a decision about the Community Festivals Fund for 2020-21.

In March of this year Council approved recommendations for funding for the three Community Development Grant Programmes for 2020-21, *subject to receipt of offers of match funding to Council* from the Department for Communities (DfC).

Applications are invited each year in advance of confirmation of DfC match funding to allow sufficient time for preparation of applications and so that successful applicants can be advised of their funding awards in advance of, or early in the financial year.

Match funding for the Community Development Support Grant and Social Inclusion Grant come from DfC's Community Support Programme. Match funding for the Community Festivals Fund (CFF) comes from a separate DfC Community Festivals Fund Programme.

Current Position

The proposed CFF grants budget for 20-21 was £64,530. This included expected match funding of £28,800 from DfC, based on previous year's figures. This resulted in a proposed net cost to Council of £35,730 which was agreed in Council's budget for 20-21.

The other two grant programmes progressed with confirmation of DfC match funding received. Following several requests from Council officers for clarification, DfC issued a letter to Council on 17th July to advise that due to the uncertainty created by the last four months, the difficulty this has created for delivering events, combined with the overall financial pressures resulting from the emergency response, it will not be possible for DfC to run the Community Festivals Fund Programme this year. A copy of the letter is attached at Annex A (circulated).

The Community Development team undertook engagement with applicants to the programme in June to find out if they still intended to organise a community festival this year. Of the 38 successful applicants, at the time of contact, eight

had made a definite decision to cancel their festival. The remainder of the successful applicants suggested they may wish to run their festival on a different date, if the Government guidance at the time allowed.

If these 30 successful applicants, who wish to still organise a community festival at a later date or in a different format during this financial year, were to do so, and assuming that their costs were the same as applied for, then the uptake of the grant offers would be £40,370.

Proposed CFF Grants budget for 20-21	£64,530
Expected match funding from DfC (based on 19-20 figure)	£28,800
Proposed Net Cost to Council (agreed in Council budget for 20-21)	£35,730

No. of successful applications (scoring 65% and above)	38
Total value of CFF funding approved in principle by Council in March '20	£52,270

No. of community festivals cancelled	8
No. of organisations that would like to reschedule festivals (if Government guidance allows)	30
Value of CFF funding approved for those festivals that would like to reschedule	£40,370
Shortfall in budget for amount required by festivals wishing to proceed (£40,370- £35,730)	£4,640

Options for Consideration

Two options have been identified and a consideration of the benefits and issues of each are detailed in Table 1. In summary these options are:

Option 1: Operate a Community Festivals Fund for 20-21, without DfC match funding, using only Councils agreed budget of £35,730. Issue letters of offer to those Festival organisers who wish to organise a Festival within current Government guidance before 31st March 2021.

Option 2: Suspend the Community Festivals Fund for 20-21, in line with the policy direction of DfC. Allocate the budget of £35,730 towards meeting the budget deficit in the Leisure & Development directorate.

Table 1 circulated, benefits and Issues.

Recommendation

Members are asked to consider the options identified and make a recommendation on a preferred option.

No questions were put.

Proposed by Alderman Hillis
Seconded by Councillor Callan and

AGREED – to recommend that Council approve Option 2: Suspend the Community Festivals Fund for 20-21, in line with the policy direction of DfC. Allocate the budget of £35,730 towards meeting the budget deficit in the Leisure & Development directorate.

Councillor Baird declared she would abstain from voting.

The Chair put the proposal to the Committee to vote.

7 Members voted For; 3 Members voted Against; 1 Member Abstained.

The Chair declared the motion carried.

* **Councillor McAuley re-joined the meeting.**

8. TRANSFER OF FUNDS FROM WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT TO ADVICE SERVICES

Report, previously circulated presented by the Head of Prosperity and Place to seek Members' permission to use £10,000 of existing budget, from the Workforce Development Group activities, to further support advice services in the Borough as the employment schemes and furlough programmes come to an end.

Background

As part of the Prosperity and Place programme for the current year, budget has been set aside for Workforce Development projects, generally developed in-year from submissions from Workforce Development Group members.

In April, Prosperity and Place developed a series of activities in response to the emerging and ongoing Covid crisis. This included extensions and increased activity in the Alchemy and Digital Causeway Programmes, extensive survey work from Town and Village Management, and response actions to those who needed assistance to access government funding.

Further to those proposed actions, the team had discussions with local advice service providers about increased advice services which could be available in the third quarter of the year. This was also in line with recovery actions undertaken in previous large scale closures – for example, the closure of the Seagate plant in 2008 – or as part of recovery actions undertaken after the last recession.

The current situation for jobs and business is unprecedented, however the current NISRA figures for claimant count show some fluctuations (table circulated).

The claimant count for the Borough dropped by around 200 in the June/July period, but is likely to increase further as furlough and other schemes come to a close.

In summary:

- Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme will continue until end of October.
- Furloughed workers across UK will continue to receive 80% of their current salary, up to £2,500.
- However, new arrangements will be introduced from August, and as employer contributions commence as part of this scheme, there may be an increase in redundancies.

A recent Ulster University study completed in July, states that the most vulnerable sectors, even with a reduction in social distancing, will be wholesale & retail, accommodation and food, manufacturing, "other service sectors" and administration. These are key sectors within Causeway Coast and Glens.

Budget Proposal

The funding will provide additional advice services to:

- Small business advice for those experiencing difficulty.
- Extra assistance toward Universal Credits claims from same, and others as furlough schemes wind up.

It is proposed that £10,000 is allocated from the Workforce Development Group budget currently held by the Strategic Projects Manager. The funding will support existing staff salaries to provide extra hours of service.

Funding could be used either over the remainder of the financial year, or to deal with any upsurge in specific claims for Universal Credit and other benefits. It is expected that as furlough periods begin to wind down, the demand for assistance in completing UC forms and other challenges will start to rise – debt management, especially for the self-employed.

While the general economic development budget has put in place several actions to assist businesses, the Unit recognises that in the face of job losses, which are currently occurring and yet to transpire, this would be a tangible help to those most in need.

Budgets are limited, however, in consultation with advice service staff, £10,000 will provide a further 680 hours to deal with an additional 400 enquiries.

Although funding will come from this year's Workforce Development Programme, it will still maintain budget for other reactive programmes as lockdown eases and suggested programmes come forward from WDP group members.

Very recent feedback from the existing advice service provision was as follows:

"We started to see a change in our trends shortly after lockdown began, with increased queries from lone traders and small businesses regarding accessing government schemes, responsibilities towards employees, dealing with debt and accessing benefits. This has continued throughout the last four/five months. We expect a further increase as schemes come to an end. NI wide debt services are set to expect a sharp increase in demand from September, including queries from businesses and sole traders."

Council's services which have been provided to businesses in distress during the lockdown period will also continue – the proposed recommendation will be in addition to those services.

It is recommended that:

- The Prosperity and Place budget contributes £10,000 from its budget for enhanced advice services, to be provided through the Causeway Coast and Glens Advice Consortium.
- This funding will be monitored for best use – either through immediate enhanced hours, or hours enhanced throughout the remainder of the financial year, depending on demand.
- Reporting will be made through existing channels through Community & Culture.

Councillor Anderson questioned whether £10,000 would be enough.

Councillor Bateson sought a monthly update for Committee in order to help service users.

The Head of Prosperity and Place advised recent figures had neither rose nor fallen, however, Schemes were coming to an end but this would assist if there was an upturn in figures. The Head of Prosperity and Place advised the figures

were one month behind and could be included for Committee's information each month.

Councillor Knight-McQuillan stated there may be a significant rise in the coming months, she raised concern and urged those who had never sought advice before, to do so.

Proposed by Councillor Knight-McQuillan
Seconded by Councillor Beattie and

AGREED -The Prosperity and Place budget contributes £10,000 from its budget for enhanced advice services, to be provided through the Causeway Coast and Glens Advice Consortium; This funding will be monitored for best use – either through immediate enhanced hours, or hours enhanced throughout the remainder of the financial year, depending on demand; Reporting will be made through existing channels through Community & Culture.

* **Councillor Schenning re-joined the meeting.**

9. IMPACT OF COVID 19 ON HALLOWEEN EVENTS PROGRAMME

Report, previously circulated, presented by the Head of Tourism and Recreation, to outline delivery options for Council's Halloween Events Programme.

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council has within its Tourism and Recreation remit a policy to deliver quality events across the area, inspiring visitors to stay and spend within the economy.

During the week commencing 23 March 2020, the Events Team cancelled all Council managed events scheduled to take place between April and June 2020. This was a direct result of Public Health Agency (PHA) guidance in relation to Covid - 19, and in particular as a result of a government ban on events and 'mass gatherings'. The events affected were Ballymoney Spring Fair, Easter Seasonal Programme, Rhythm of the Bann, NW200 Race Week Festival, Rathlin Sound Maritime Festival and Salmon and Whiskey Festival.

At the May Leisure and Development meeting, the decision was taken to further cancel all Tourism and Recreation Events due to take place between June and September (namely Seasonal Summer Street Theatre Programme, Summer Fireworks Evening (Finale of Red Sails) Portstewart Summer Entertainment and Fireworks Evening Portrush and the Auld Lammas Fair).

Table 1 (circulated) detailed the Council managed events programme for 2020/21 and shows those that have been cancelled as a result of COVID19.

Table 1: Events Cancelled and Events remaining scheduled were circulated.

Latest Government Advice/Guidance

The legislation on permitted activities has seen a significant degree of alteration in recent weeks. This legislation and related advice has been fluid and at the time of writing a further relaxation on the numbers of people permitted for indoor and outdoor gatherings has changed.

The Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (No.2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) was updated on Friday 24th July by the NI Executive. The legislation states that *'the 30 limit for both indoor and outdoor gathering does not apply where a gathering which is organised or operated for cultural, entertainment, recreational, outdoor sports, social, community, educational, work, legal, religious or political purposes and which fulfils the conditions in paragraph (4). The focus is very much on the event organiser carrying out the relevant risk assessment processes, taking into account venue capacity and also complying with departmental guidance.'*

In respect of this 'departmental guidance' as detailed above, Council is, as of 29 July awaiting receipt of this, with no timeframe detailed by the Department for dissemination as yet.

Furthermore, Departmental guidance in respect of events currently states that 'singing, music and dancing are not advised. The scientific understanding continues to develop and further guidance will be issued when possible.'

Council Officers are keen to plan for the autumn scheduled events in a manner which reduces the potential impact from large gatherings whilst COVID 19 presents a threat to the community. Halloween traditionally attracts large crowds and in the absence of Departmental advice Officers believe a cautious approach is prudent.

Approach for Delivery

The Tourism Events Team have been investigating a fresh approach for the delivery of Halloween festivities that fits with the Destination Management approach of encouraging bed nights and visitor spend whilst accounting for the potential restriction on large gatherings of people at cultural/tourism festivals and events. In previous years Halloween attracted crowds varying between 3,500 – 10,000 visitors.

As of late July, Government guidance states that *'the 30 limit for both indoor and outdoor gathering does not apply where a gathering which is organised or operated for cultural, entertainment, recreational, outdoor sports, social, community, educational, work, legal, religious or political purposes'*.

However, the focus is very much on the event organiser carrying out the relevant risk assessment processes, taking into account venue capacity and also complying with departmental guidance'. Council currently awaits the issue of this guidance to assist the health and safety planning and risk assessment of all events moving forward.

Under normal circumstances, the lead-in time for the delivery of Halloween events is between 8-12 weeks for event programming, health and safety planning, public and statutory consultation. When Departmental guidance is issued in respect of entertainment events, Council Officers will require additional planning time to make the necessary changes to event planning and delivery processes to ensure compliance with the legislation.

Events planned beyond October 2020 (namely Christmas Light Switch On's and Atlantic Sessions) will be subject to ongoing review and a further report for Christmas will be brought to Members for decision in the coming months. Atlantic Sessions is currently being planned to take place within the scheduled venues (adhering to guidelines, advice and legislation) and additional pre-event activity will allow for a virtual roll-out via social media and other channels to ensure a successful festival weekend.

Halloween Delivery Options

Elected Members are asked to consider the following options with regards to Halloween festivities:

Option 1: Cancel delivery of Council managed Halloween festivities.

This option will mitigate for ongoing and potential future Government guidelines and restrictions. It will also represent a saving in the Tourism and Recreation budget. It does not however assist with the Council's efforts to support the local tourism and hospitality sectors by the promotion and delivery of events and hence assist the local economy.

Option 2: Deliver revised format for Halloween focusing on a wider cultural and living history approach across a range of activities

This proposal would entail running a ten day programme of Halloween events in a restricted venue and virtual form. Proposals include the following:

- Halloween 'storytelling sessions' with a 'Myths and Cultural' flavour from within the Borough.
- Halloween theme evening town/village walking tours.
- Packaged 'Who Done It' in conjunction with hotel and self-catering trade.
- Halloween themed food trails.
- Virtual tour of the 10 'most haunted locations'.
- School and community involvement with arts and crafts.

This approach will allow the Council to reinstate its event programme with a view to supporting our visitor economy into the autumn/winter period. This will compliment Council's marketing initiatives to promote the area as a short break destination to key segments in the Northern Irish and Republic of Ireland markets.

Council will be able to maintain the reputation for delivery of Halloween events in the Borough, albeit in a varied form for 2020. This proposal will also allow residents within the Borough to benefit from a Halloween event schedule that shares local stories from the past and the joint heritage of the Council area. This approach also allows Officers to test the viability of a changing approach around traditional mass gathering events for future years.

Further information on the suggested schedule of activities was presented at the Committee meeting.

Alderman Hillis congratulated the Events Team on their very imaginative schedule.

Councillor Callan sought information on how the 10 most haunted areas had been developed. Councillor Callan referred to the rise in Coronavirus cases and that events may require to be restricted and virtual.

The Head of Tourism and Recreation outlined the 10 haunted geographic areas across the Borough. The Head of Tourism and Recreation outlined the Statutory Agencies that had provided Advice to Council, the benefit was the virtual, contingency Events plan.

Proposed by Councillor Schenning
Seconded by Alderman Hillis and

AGREED – to recommend that Council approve Option 2: Deliver revised format for Halloween focusing on a wider cultural and living history approach across a range of activities.

* **Councillor Watton left the meeting at 7.45PM-7.50pm during consideration of the Item.**

10. STENDHAL FESTIVAL 2020

Report, previously circulated, presented by the Director of Leisure and Development, to update Members on the cancellation of the Stendhal Festival and to make recommendations on the award of grant-aid for eligible expenditure.

In March 2020 officers presented the Tourism Events Funding recommendations for the 2020-21 period. This report was not ratified by Council due to the Covid19 pandemic. Subsequent to the report, all of the events, with the exception of Stendhal, were cancelled by the event organisers.

In June 2020 Council agreed awards for the events cancelled as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic. Successful applicants were awarded funding towards eligible expenditure incurred up to a maximum of the grant recommended to the Leisure & Development Committee in March 2020. (Table 1 circulated)

As Stendhal had not notified council of a cancellation the decision to award the full letter of offer for Stendhal in the amount of £60,000 was agreed.

On 14th August 2020 the Directors of Stendhal Ltd notified Council of their decision to cancel this year's planned festival. The decision was taken based on advice given to Stendhal Ltd from the Chief Medical Officer, Dr Michael McBride and the Chief Scientific Officer, Professor Ian Young.

It is recommended that Elected Members, in line with awards made in June 2020 to cancelled events for eligible expenditure, agree to permit the use of the grant award for Stendhal to cover eligible expenditure incurred up to the date of cancellation of the event.

Councillor Callan thanked Officers for updating the Limavady DEA Councillors whom were all very supportive of the event.

Proposed by Councillor Callan
Seconded by Councillor Schenning and

AGREED – to recommend that, in line with awards made in June 2020 to cancelled events for eligible expenditure, agree to permit the use of the grant award for Stendhal to cover eligible expenditure incurred up to the date of cancellation of the event.

The Director of Leisure and Development advised the following Items 11-12 inclusive were for information only.

11. BALLYKELLY COMMUNITY PORTACABIN

Information report, previously circulated, to provide Elected Members with information about a community portacabin located on Council owned land in Ballykelly.

Background

The portacabin is situated at 75 Tully Road, Ballykelly, BT49 9HW on Council owned land. Council is the freehold owner of the lands which form park of Kings Lane Playing fields. The portacabin was gifted by the Ministry of Defence for community benefit.

The land was leased to Ballykelly Youth and Community Association Limited for a period of 99 years on 15 November 2003. Once the portacabin was sited on Council land it essentially becomes part of that land as a 'fixture'.

In January 2017, having failed to return appropriate paperwork to Companies House the lessee became a dissolved Company and the remaining term of lease and leasehold interest reverted to Crown. The Ballykelly Youth and Community Association Limited continued to operate from the Cabin until late 2019, when all activities for community benefit ceased apart from youth activities which were operated by volunteer leaders who retained a key.

Current Situation

A new group, Ballykelly Residents Association formed with local residents and the local youth leaders in early 2020, and when they expressed an interest in taking the portacabin on, it transpired that the previous group had in fact dissolved and leasehold interest (land and cabin) had reverted to the Crown.

Advice was sought from Council's legal team in March 2020 on correct procedure to follow, and a letter was sent to the Crown to seek Crown disclaimer of the lease to allow the leasehold interest of land (including portacabin) to merge and be re-incorporated into Council's freehold folio and that the cabin be insured.

The merger of the leasehold folio is required to release Councils' freehold folio from the burden of the lease and to allow future use of the site through a new lease or Shared Management Agreement.

The Crown has disclaimed their interest in the lease, however paperwork has not yet been received to merge the leasehold folio into Council's freehold folio at the Land Registry.

The new group has retained the key and has building and contents insurance for the portacabin, however due to Covid-19, the portacabin has not been in use.

Council has included the portacabin in its insurance schedule. An initial Fire Risk Assessment has been carried out and there are remedial Category 'A' works that would need to be addressed prior to formally handing over to the residents group on a lease or Shared Management Agreement.

Since lockdown there has been a significant increase in the frequency and severity of anti-social behaviour in the area beside the portacabin, which has been reported to the PSNI and the PCSP.

Next Steps

In line with Councils procedures for assessing need for community facilities, the next step is to carry out a Strategic Outline Case to define the current position and to carry out an initial consideration of the options to allow Council to decide on how best to proceed.

The Strategic Outline Case will consider:

- The need within the area for a facility of this nature.

- A review of current provision, services, facilities, gaps and duplication.
- An exploration of key strategic issues.
- Options and recommendations for next steps.

At this initial stage the options that may be considered are:

- Completion of remedial fire and Legionella works and make good and offer the lease to the newly formed Ballykelly Residents Association;
- Completion of remedial fire and Legionella works and make good and enter into a Shared Management Agreement with the newly formed Ballykelly Residents Association;
- Removal of portacabin from site.

A further report will be provided to committee following the completion of the Strategic Outline case.

In response to questions, the Head of Community and Culture advised small remedial works were referred to the Facilities Team. Further information was provided in relation to recent anti-social behaviour at the site.

12. DFC COVID 19 RECOVERY FUNDING

Information report, previously circulated, to inform members of the development of a Covid Recovery Programme for town centres and rural businesses.

Background

On 19 June, Council was informed of the Department for Community's intention to provide funding for town centre recovery actions. The proposal was to fund the scheme in two tranches - Tranche 1 for immediate and urgent support and Tranche 2 for aspects of town actions that are more medium term or require a longer time to design and/or procure. Some guidance that was given included:

- Councils will be expected to absorb delivery costs – in Council's case, this is staff cost only.
- Monitoring and evaluation will be the responsibility of the Council – outcome report card has been developed by the Department and surveys will be provided
- Expenditure must be incurred by March 2021 with final PPE completed by March 2021.

A timeline for progression of this funding package is included at the end of this report at Annex A (circulated). The submissions to the Department were based on initial findings during lockdown from research undertaken by Town and Village Management at Annex B (circulated).

Covid Recovery Programme

Tranche 1 – Immediate Spend

As guided by the lead Department for Communities, Tranche 1 was aligned to immediate relief efforts, and was to represent no more than fifty percent of funding from the package, if used for grant assistance purposes. This initially represented £340,000 from the Department. An additional £109,000 was allocated from the Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs.

After a quick turnaround of application form, guidance notes, and other material, the fund was launched on 3 August at 10:00am.

The funding was distributed via a Small Grant Scheme, covering two levels of capital investment. Business owners could apply for up to £500 for PPE equipment, hand sanitisers, internal social distancing measures, Perspex screening, signage, contactless payment or app development for booking systems. Alongside this, grants of up to £1000 were to be available for outdoor seating, heaters, front-of-house barriers, awnings or canopies where this would be appropriate. (Neither list was promoted as being exhaustive, and in terms of the larger grant, applicants were informed that additional permissions may be needed for any structural work to premises)

A snapshot of funding applications will be provided at Committee. Publicity was by direct email, social media, press release and linkages to group bodies such as Chambers, Invest NI, and others.

This is a rolling fund, which allows for letters of offer to be released on the same basis as applications are received. This helps towards a quick distribution of funds at a time of most need, and a final paper on the allocation will be brought back to Committee upon completion. At the end of the first day of application opening, Council had received 138 applications, with 78 still in draft.

Tranche 2 – Spend aimed at mid-term recovery

Tranche 2 is based around longer term initiatives to assist town centre recovery. It is solely funding from Department for Communities at this stage. Staff have returned an expression of interest based on the request from Department for Communities, with indicative actions, which included:

- Creation of 'Meanwhile Spaces' by adapting gap sites, public space – for cultural and/or economic use. To adhere to government guidelines on Covid-19 and create safe environments - outdoor furniture, canopies, PA systems, planters, lighting, street dressing, event equipment.
- Parklets – reconfiguration of pavement, public space and/or carriageways within town centres to facilitate outdoor hospitality, distancing measures, and social interaction whilst adhering to disability guidance. Modular system which could be adapted to location and need.
- Access & navigation to town centres ; physical and digital projects:
 - Cycle parks or routes to town centres. Include cycle infrastructure.
 - Feasibility study of pedestrian areas in the 6 main towns- current & additional spaces.
 - Enhancement of existing planned digital platform to encourage positive town centre experiences.
 - Digital signage.
- Expansion of outdoor market infrastructure to ensure continuity throughout the year.
- Data Collection - expansion of the digital footfall monitoring infrastructure across the borough. To include Portrush & Portstewart and additional counters in the 4 main towns.

This will require input from Planning, Environmental Health, Roads, Police and other stakeholders. If any of these actions prove to be successful with full buy-in from other departments or stakeholders, it is unlikely that activities will be on the ground for some months to come. There has been early engagement with local representative bodies, and some positive thoughts have come forward from Ballycastle Chamber in the first instance.

Progress papers will be brought to Committee as Tranche 2 proceeds. Final grant allocations will also be brought for information.

13. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY EMERGING THEMES

Information report, previously circulated, to inform Members as to the current position of the development of the new Economic Development Strategy.

Current Position

Despite the break since March, work has continued on the development of a new economic development strategy for the Borough. This strategy will take the Borough until 2030. However, there will be relevant pause points to review.

The economic strategy and action plan for the Causeway Coast and Glen's council area was envisaged in a vastly different context, one where the global and local economies were in relatively positive growth territory, albeit with a range of long standing and emerging challenges in play. While many of our economic challenges hold, Covid-19 changed everything. It is appropriate to acknowledge the long-standing challenges our economy faces, take the economic lessons from the Covid-19 crisis and strive to meet them head on.

It is within this new operating context that this economic strategy for the Causeway Coast and Glen's area has been developed. This Strategy sets out to understand and evaluate the economic position of the Causeway Coast & Glens area and give recommendations for the council with a horizon of 2035. This strategy and action plan will be used by the Council to lead the Borough in achieving its full potential in order to deliver inclusive and sustainable wealth and well-being for its citizens.

Themes

Building on the series of consultations and body of supporting work undertaken in support of the development of this strategy, including comprehensive data analysis and an assessment of policy initiatives elsewhere, the following areas of focus are proposed. The six areas of focus for recovery and renewal are presented below, with a commentary on their rationale for inclusion. Each theme for action aims to deliver on an ambition to deliver a green, connected and fair economy in Causeway Coast and Glens.

The new strategy will be based on (1) Renewal and (2) Recovery.

The themes cover both existing and new areas of work for the Borough including:

1. Continuing Business Start and enhancing the provision for those who require more in-depth assistance.
2. Continuing the ongoing Business Support through some form of Alchemy programme.
3. Support for job-matching and community employment programmes.
4. Product and Process Innovation.
5. Continued focus on communications infrastructure.
6. Developing the Circular Economy, retro-fitting, and other renewable actions.

A short section on Growth Deal will also be included, and consultees will be invited to put forward any ideas they may have around the emerging themes and subsequent potential growth deal projects.

Next Steps

The themes presented in Annex A (circulated) now form part of an open consultation which commenced earlier this month and will run through to the end-September. The next steps are as follows:

- Share with Elected Members through the Growth Deal Sub Committee, Leisure and Development Committee, wider Council staff stakeholders.
- Consultation Period – 3 August to 25 September 2020.
- Review any further emerging actions and assimilate, if relevant – this will take place as the consultation proceeds, and with a final review at end-September.
- Consideration of action plan, resourcing and potential budget – end-October (internal process).
- Further Elected Member workshop/review, depending on request from members – November 2020.
- Adoption, if agreeable, by Full Council in December.

For the period to 25 September, the material presented will be available, with a questionnaire, on social media and Council's website. It will be distributed via the Unit's own extensive ezine database. In addition, staff telephone numbers will be included for one to one contact, and if requested, staff will also be available for meetings, either in person or online. Members are encouraged to feed back any thoughts and the Unit's staff are on hand for any group or individual meetings.

14. CORRESPONDENCE

There were no items of correspondence.

15. MATTERS REPORTING TO THE PARTNERSHIP PANEL

There were no matters for reporting to the Partnership Panel.

16. CONSULTATIONS

There were no Consultation Documents.

17. NOTICE OF MOTION PROPOSED BY COUNCILLOR MULHOLLAND, SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR MCCAWE, DEFERRED FROM THE 18TH MARCH 2020 LEISURE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

"This Council notes the contribution that young people make to community and civic life in Causeway, Coast and Glens; encourages schools, youth groups and community organisations to become more involved in the life of local government and; resolves to establish a Youth Shadow Council to enhance civic engagement and improve public services that affect young people across this new Council Borough".

The Director of Leisure and Development advised the Notice of Motion had been withdrawn.

MOTION TO PROCEED 'IN COMMITTEE'

Proposed by Alderman Baird
Seconded by Councillor Schenning

AGREED – that the Committee move '*In Committee*'.

* **Press / Public left the meeting at 8PM.**

18. CHRISTIE PARK MINOR WORKS

Confidential report, previously circulated and presented via PowerPoint by The Head of Tourism and Recreation, to seek approval from Elected Members to advance to Stage 3 of the Capital Works process for a path improvement scheme at Christie Park Coleraine.

Recommendation

The Leisure and Development Committee is asked to approve the appointment of the most economically advantageous tender from JS Dunlop Ltd at £22,920 plus VAT and to advance to and complete on Stage 3 of the Capital Works Process. All statutory requirements and consultations have taken place.

Councillor Baird recalled a recent Notice of Motion to protect indigenous trees.

The Head of Tourism and Recreation clarified as many trees as possible were being protected.

Proposed by Councillor Anderson
Seconded by Councillor Baird and

AGREED – to recommend that Council approve the appointment of the most economically advantageous tender from JS Dunlop Ltd at £22,920 plus VAT and to advance to and complete on Stage 3 of the Capital Works Process. All statutory requirements and consultations have taken place.

19. PORTANEEVY TRAILHEAD AND SCENIC VIEWPOINT STAGE 3

Confidential report, previously circulated, presented via PowerPoint by the Head of Tourism and Recreation, to seek approval from Elected Members to proceed to, and complete on, Stage 3 of the Council's Capital Works process for works at Portaneevy Ballintoy. Elected members are also asked to make a decision for match funding this project at a cost of £26,992.70. Confirmation of external funding of £404,890.54 from RDP has been received.

Recommendation

The Leisure and Development Committee is asked to approve the advancement and completion of Stage 3 of the Capital Works Process for Portaneevy, Ballintoy. Connolly and Fee Ltd are the preferred contractor at a tender figure of £431,883.24.

Elected members are also asked to make an investment decision for match funding this project at £26,993.

Councillor Baird thanked Officers for their work, a very important asset in Causeway Coast and Glens coastal area.

Alderman Hillis looked forward to the stunning views. Alderman Hillis sought an update on the Magheracross scheme.

The Director of Leisure and Development advised Magheracross was being brought to the next Leisure and Development Committee meeting.

Councillor McAuley reflected on the state of Riverside Park, Ballymoney, he expected a level of maintenance had been considered for this scheme. The Director of Leisure and Development confirmed this and invited the Head of Tourism and Recreation to outline the aesthetics of the Scheme for Members' information.

Alderman McCorkell welcomed the Scheme and looked forward to seeing significant progress in the delivery of the Limavady Accessible Play Park.

The Director of Leisure and Development advised a report will be brought to the next Committee meeting to progress the Limavady Accessible Play Park to the next stage.

Proposed by Councillor Baird
Seconded by Alderman Hillis and

AGREED – to recommend that Council approve the advancement and completion of Stage 3 of the Capital Works Process for Portaneevy, Ballintoy. Connolly and Fee Ltd are the preferred contractor at a tender figure of £431,883.24; that Council make an investment decision for match funding this project at £26,993.

The Chair commended the value of Rural Development Programme.

MOTION TO PROCEED 'IN PUBLIC'

Proposed by Councillor Baird
Seconded by Councillor McCaw and

AGREED – that the Committee move '*In Public*'.

20. ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS NOTIFIED IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER 12. (O)

20.1 Sandhill Drive Air-de-Service, Portrush (Councillor McCaw)

Councillor McCaw submitted the following matters, responded to by The Head of Tourism and Recreation as detailed below.

- *“Is the closure of this facility on a temporary basis and, if so, can we please have an update on the expected length of closure and the specific reasons for this”?*

The Head of Tourism and Recreation advised, yes the facility had been closed temporarily since the previous day. A large number of campervans had been parking outside the Motorhome facility in an authorised area, mostly in the coach parking area. Vandalism and misuse of the sluice facilities had meant that Officers have had no alternative but to temporarily close the facility. The expected length of closure was to hope to reopen by Thursday morning at the latest.

- *“What is the predicted loss of revenue to Council of this closure”?*

The Head of Tourism and Recreation advised, this was not a high earning facility for Holiday and Leisure Parks and estimated the loss of income between £70 £100. (figures from post-monitoring report 42% of annual visitors between July and September — total income £1200)

- *“What specific alternatives have been put in place and how are we mitigating potential overcrowding/social distancing issues at these alternative sites”?*

The Head of Tourism and Recreation advised, like touring vans, motorhomes or campervans could make a booking for one of the 200+ pitches available at Council's HALPs at Carrick Dhu and Juniper Hill and in addition to this the private sector section in the locality. With the closure Officers have also made available temporary hard-standing spaces for non-serviced overnight parking at Juniper Hill.

Council has the necessary six meter spacing in place at all of Council's managed sites and have prevented the continued overnight parking of unauthorised vehicles at Sandhill Coach Park to prevent the inadequate social distancing and lack of appropriate spacing between vehicles.

- *“What progress has been made in terms of development of additional facilities for camper vans/caravans following the adoption of the related Council Motion on 26th February”?*

The Head of Tourism and Recreation advised, two sites had been identified for the temporary provision of facilities to cater for a large influx of motorhomes at large events such as NW200. These were the Bowl Portrush and the Ballyreagh Field between Portrush and Portstewart. Whilst the Bowl could provide a temporary solution at major events, Officers were exploring the longer term potential for other sites in the area to accommodate on a seasonal basis both additional touring vans, camping and motorhomes.

- *“What progress has been made in the exploration of methods of carrying out enforcement of restrictions on caravans and overnight camping following the adoption of the related Council Motion on 26th February”?*

The Head of Tourism and Recreation advised, that regarding Item 16 of the February Leisure and Development Report 2019, Councillor McCaw referred to exploration of methods of enforcement of restrictions on caravans and overnight camping. From a Tourism and Recreation point of view Officers have seen a significant increase in overnight camping and unauthorised parking on Council property in recent years, and a particular spike this summer. Officers have had to take a 'site by site' and 'case by case' approach:

- Council has powers under the Unauthorised Encampments (NI) Order 2005 whereby Officers can give 24 hours notice to leave and can call on PSNI advice to assist in vacation of sites. There has to be 6 or more vehicles or a case of documented damage or threatening behaviour.
- Council also have a bylaw for Seashores under 2005 Bylaws from the legacy Council Coleraine and in pursuance sections 82 & 83 of the Public Health Act 1907. This states that a person shall not drive or park any vehicle in an area that is prohibited by Council.
- More often than not the most common method of enforcement of unauthorised parking is to allow Officers to adhere to health and safety. As a Council we cannot allow vehicles to encamp to a degree that effectively means the Council is operating an unlicensed campsite. Without adequate spacing and facilities and management Council has to protect all the public including those camping without permission. This is often difficult and Officers are often put in a position of conflict. It can be very time consuming and costly particularly if Officers have to put in physical measures to deter repeat unauthorised parking. Barriers and signage also are unsightly and attract from the quality of the overall visitor experience.

The Head of Tourism and Recreation further advised, that despite notices and attempts to act on Bylaws and Health and Safety regulations, determined offenders know that Council's power to follow through is thwarted; small claims courts etc are only an option with repeated offenders. The Head of Tourism and Recreation advised he was pursuing a longer term solution and would be seeking advice from the Head of Service for Health and Built Environment and Council's solicitors.

There being no further business the Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 8.45PM.

Chair

Unconfirmed