

Tourism Event Funding Programme	12th March 2019
To: The Leisure and Development Committee For Decision	

Linkage to Council Strategy (2015-19)	
Strategic Theme	Promote our tourist offer locally and internationally
Outcome	Improve prosperity
Lead Officer	Head of Tourism and Recreation
Cost: (If applicable)	£250,000 Revenue Cost (within forecast budget)

The purpose of this report is to present the process for assessment / scoring of applications made to Council's Tourism Event Funding Programme for April 2019 - March 2020. Approval is sought from Members to allow the allocation of funding to successful applicants as detailed in Table 1.

Background

The Tourism Event Fund is administered as a competitive process via the Council's online funding hub. The fund is established for the purpose of supporting new and existing event organisers, with outputs that align with the aims and objectives of the Council's Destination Management Strategy.

In 2015 NW200, Armoy Road Races, Supercup NI and the Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association NI were awarded a three year deal which has now ended. The 2019/20 process allows for an application for three years, subject to a Council evaluation being completed to assess the benefit of the event and, in addition, must include the submission of a Development Plan. In 2019/20 the budget for the Tourism Event Fund is forecast at £250,253.

2019 / 2020 Application Process

Facilitated by the Funding Unit invitations to the competitive process were issued in November 2018. Advertisements were placed in local newspapers, the Council's website and social media channels. Mailshots were also distributed to Council's mailing lists.

Council Officers organised a series of information events on the 4 & 5 December (4 in total). These information events provided more in-depth assistance and guidance for applicants to the Council's grant funding programmes. The Tourism and Recreation (large and small events) application process opened on 4 December 2018 and closed Friday 18 January 2019.

Event Funding Eligibility

The outline criteria for each fund are listed below for information.

Small Tourism Events Fund – Events with a budget between £10,000 and £30,000 which attract more than 2,000 visitors to the Borough, takes place over 2 days and includes overnight stays. Events must have a start and end date and run for consecutive days. Applicants are required to prove that their event attracts visitors / overnight stays from outside the Borough. In addition they must demonstrate their return on investment on the funding requested (3:1 ratio), and how they will promote the area in national and local markets. The level of grant award available is up to 50% of total project costs, up to a maximum grant award of £15,000.

Large Tourism Events Fund – Events with a budget greater than £30,000 which attract more than 5,000 visitors, takes place over at least 2 days generating overnight stays. Events must have a start and end date and run for consecutive days. Applicants will be required to prove that the event attracts visitors / overnight stays from outside the Borough. The large events must demonstrate their return on investment on the funding requested (5-1 ratio), and how they will promote the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council area in international, national and local markets. The level of grant award available is up to 50% of total project costs, up to a maximum grant award of £100,000.

Assessment Process

The Tourism and Recreation Large and Small Events fund uses a two stage approach with Stage 1 identifying those applicants that meet the minimum eligibility criteria before progressing to Stage 2 for detailed assessment of the application. Applicants are assessed on a number of criteria, including event management, budget management, return on investment, media and marketing impact, addressing sustainability and event development and growth. Each criteria within the scoring matrix is weighted and a minimum threshold pass rate is applied at 65% as per Council policy. Successful applicants must attend a project initiation meeting and are offered detailed feedback on their application, the scores awarded and areas that could be improved on in the future. Unsuccessful applicants are offered an opportunity for feedback on improvement if they wish to apply in the future.

A summary of the applications received, with scoring is detailed in **Table 1** below.

For Consideration:

In the period 18/19 the allocated budget for the Tourism Event Funding Programme was £250,253. The following allocations are based upon a planning assumption that this sum remains the same for 19/20, subject to the rates setting process.

After assessment of all applicants the amount requested was oversubscribed by £45,525.

Proposed reductions

A sliding scale of a percentage reduction has been applied to all successful applications as detailed in Table 1. For applications that scored 75% or above a 5% reduction was applied. For applications who scored 70% to 75% a 10 % reduction was applied. For applicants below 70% a 23% reduction was applied.

Elected Members are asked to consider the findings from the assessment of the Tourism Event Programme applications.

Proposed reductions

Subject to the Rate Setting process, if the Tourism Event Funding Programme is reduced beyond the 18/19 sum of £250,253, it is proposed that a pro-rata reduction is applied accordingly to all applicants.

Recommendation

Council's approval is sought to allocate Tourism Event Funding to successful applicants for the Tourism and Recreation Events Grant Programme as detailed in Table 1, and subject to the reductions outlined.

TABLE 1

Large Events Grants 2019-2020	Score	Event Total Cost	Requested	Recommendation
NW200	84%	£991,950	£82,875	£78,731
Stendhal Festival	70%	£496,000	£58,500	£52,650
Foyle Cup	66%	£157,000	£22,000	£16,940
Armoy Road Races	65%	£115,500	£16,000	£12,320
Supercup NI	67%	£351,500	£90,000	£69,300
Ballymoney Show	51%	£51,550	£8,425	£0
Heart of Glens	46%	£32,230	£14,700	£0
Outdoor Recreation NI	Ineligible	£71,000	£8,000	£0
Total			£300,500	£229,941

Small Event Grants 2019-2020	Score	Event Total Cost	Requested	Recommendation
RSPBA NI Pipe Band Championships	65%	£26,000	£11,150	£8,585
Pirates Off Portrush	66%	£30,000	£15,000	£11,550
Co Londonderry Agricultural show	48%	£29,847	£6,650	£0
Danny Boy Jazz and Blues	49%	£17,500	£8,500	£0
Roe Valley International Folk festival	39%	£19,930	£9,830	£0
Ballylough Living History	48%	£30,000	£15,000	£0
NI Tug of War	Ineligible	£10,100	£1,500	£0
Lacada Brewery	Ineligible	£10,305	£5,070	£0
Total			£72,700	£20,135

Three year award 2019/2022

As part of the evaluation process no applicants were awarded a three year deal.