

Title of Report:	Council Managed Tourism Event Programme 2022
Committee Report Submitted To:	Leisure & Development Committee
Date of Meeting:	15 March 2022
For Decision or For Information	For Decision

Linkage to Council Strategy (2019-23)	
Strategic Theme	Promote our tourist offering locally and internationally
Outcome	Improve prosperity To provide a balanced portfolio for major events across the Borough and facilitate partnership with other event promoters
Lead Officer	Head of Tourism and Recreation

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	£420,900 Air show £400,000 – (reserves)
Included in Current Year Estimates	YES
Capital/Revenue	
Code	
Staffing Costs	

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/No	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present Members with proposals for a Council-led event programme for 2022. The report references the uncertainties around legislation and advice pertaining to COVID19, and how this potentially may impact on event delivery. Outline details of dates and budgetary requirements are provided for Elected Members consideration in advance of budget finalisation.

2.0 Background

The December 2021 Council meeting approved the adoption of a 10 year strategic approach for the Tourism Event remit. A key recommendation was that the Council need to provide a balanced approach to event development, facilitation and delivery. With an increasing number of external event providers, the role of Council is more important than ever in terms of being supportive and allowing other event providers to develop the sector. It is recognised that Council will still be an event provider but recommends that to achieve a balance, Council delivered events should be fewer, better resourced and promoted more effectively.

The Tourism Events team are now in a position to implement the 3 recommended steps; Reset, Revive and Restage. This year provides an opportunity to work with key stakeholders, including Elected Members to assess the viability of Council's current portfolio of tourism events and agree opportunities for adjustment, growth and the introduction of new projects that fit with current market demand, whilst reflecting the key characteristics of our area. Further to the rates setting process the Tourism Recreation service's budget has been agreed and this report details the events that are proposed to be delivered by Council in 2022.

In September 2021, Members approved a new venue location and flight line for a new NI International Airshow for 2022 to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Proposed dates of 10 and 11 September 2022 were ratified.

The past 20 months have been extremely challenging and have significantly impacted on both Council-led events and the support provided to the third sector.

As per 2020, the majority of Council managed events planned for 2021 were cancelled in the physical world. 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'.

An easement of Covid restrictions by the NI Executive in recent months has permitted Council's Halloween and Christmas programme to be delivered in the physical world, with COVID mitigations in place.

After consultation with Elected Members, Officers were able to organise Halloween and Christmas events with a greater physical presence and interaction with the public.

3.0 Delivery of Council Events in 2022

Table 1 – Tourism Event Schedule.

Events 2022	Date(s)
Ballymoney Spring Fair	Fri 8 th & Sat 9 th April
NW200 Race Week Festival	Sun 8 th - Sat 14 th May
Rathlin Sound Maritime Festival	Fri 27 th May- Sun 5 th June

Seasonal Summer Programme (Summer Theatre Programme)	Mon 11 th July - Fri 26 th August
Summer Fireworks Evening Portstewart (Finale of Red Sails)	Sat 30 th July
Summer Entertainment & Fireworks Evening Portrush	Sat 20 th August
Ould Lammas Fair	Sat 27 th - Tues 30 th August
N.I. International Air Show	Sat 10 th - Sun 11 th September
Salmon and Whiskey Festival*	Sat 17 th - Sun 18 th September
Atlantic Sessions	Fri 18 th Nov – Sun 20 th November
Seasonal Halloween Events x 4	Ballymoney - Thursday 27 th October Limavady - Friday 28 th October Coleraine - Saturday 29 th October Ballycastle - Monday 31 st October
Seasonal Christmas Light Switch On's	Ballymoney Thursday 17 th November Limavady Saturday 19 th November Ballycastle Thursday 24 th November Coleraine Friday 25 th November Portstewart Saturday 26 th November Dungiven Saturday 26 th November Garvagh Monday 28 th November Portrush Friday 2 nd December Kilrea Saturday 3 rd December

COVID 19 related regulations and guidance has been subject to many changes over the last 20 months. Legislative restrictions are currently removed, however current advice states that the event organiser is responsible for carrying out necessary risk assessments and taking all reasonable measures to limit the risk of transmission of the coronavirus.

4.0 Implications for Planning Council-led Event Programme

Many of the Council's managed events require significant lead-in time and committed resources. Event management, planning, outsourced suppliers, professional services, marketing activities and traffic management consultants need to be procured and contracts agreed months in advance of the event taking place. Safety Advisor Group (SAG) consultation for events such as the Ould Lammas Fair starts 7-8 months in advance, with tender documentation and pyrotechnic licences applied for several months in advance.

Whilst there has been a significant relaxation in Government legislation and advice on the COVID 19 pandemic, Officers are mindful that this could change at any point throughout the year. To facilitate this uncertainty, events will need to be assessed on a case-by-case basis moving forward as to their appropriateness in respect of current legislation.

Over the last number of years, the Tourism and Recreation remit continues to experience an additional burden on resources coming from external influences. Greater scrutiny around Traffic Management and Health and Safety have impacted on the resources required to deliver events.

5.0 Proposed Approach for Delivery of Council Event Programme 2022

Officers have made an assumption that for 2022 the Tourism Events schedule will take place in its preferred format.

In addition to the schedule of events detailed in Table 1, a number of additional events for the spring of 2022 have been planned. Delivered by the Destination Management team with support from the Tourism Events Team, these events include:

- The Causeway Coast and Glens Walking Festival - Weekends from 5 March to 27 March.
- The Great Outdoors Festival at Benone - Saturday 26 March and Sunday 27 March.

These events have been 100% funded through TNI's Market Led Development programme.

6.0 Consultation and Assessment of Event Delivery Options

Officers have continued to liaise and seek advice from various agencies in relation to the potential planning opportunities for Council Managed events in 2022. This includes the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS), St Johns Ambulance and the Council led Safety Advisory Group (SAG). The Tourism Events Team also continue to attend regular meetings with colleagues from other Local Authorities to benchmark event planning in respect of Covid 19.

For each event, Officers will continue to look at the type of delivery which is possible based on information, advice, Government restrictions and timings, while considering both internal and external risks.

7.0 Recommendation

It is recommended that the Leisure and Development Committee gives consideration to the current situation and approves the schedule for the delivery of Council-led events in 2022 as detailed in Table 1 within the report.