

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET – 2 JULY 2008

HOMECOMING 2009: EVENT PROGRAMME

Report by Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise the Cabinet of the recently announced programme for the Homecoming 2009 particularly with regard to East Ayrshire events which have received funding.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Scotland's Year of Homecoming 2009 is a Scottish Government led initiative aimed at attracting visitors to Scotland in 2009, the 250th Anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns. Details of the Homecoming Themes and the funding available were reported to Cabinet on 9th January 2008 and Corporate Management Team received a further progress report on 28th May 2008.
- 2.2 The national event programme was announced on 16th June 2008 when the Homecoming schedule was officially launched by the First Minister. Full details of the programme are available at www.homecomingscotland2009.com. An events calendar for local events and events felt to be of wider interest is attached as Appendix 1.

3. LOCAL EVENTS

- 3.1 The Homecoming programme contains several events to be staged in Ayrshire, and whilst details of funding awarded to each event have not been made public, all events in the final programme will be receiving financial and / or marketing support from EventScotland, the Homecoming 2009 organisers.
- 3.2 East Ayrshire Council will receive £20,000 to support the two exhibitions to be held at the Dick Institute titled Creative Burns and Ayrshire Innovators respectively. This funding falls short of the amount applied for (£50,000) however contributions from Enterprise Ayrshire and the Council's own funds will ensure that high quality exhibitions and associated events are staged. Details of the events will be further developed over the summer and reported back to Cabinet in September.
- 3.3 In addition the Scottish National Portrait Gallery has agreed to loan five iconic portraits for display in the Dick Institute during October 2009. The five paintings will reflect the five pillars of the Homecoming.
- 3.4 Mauchline Burns Club has also been successful with applications for three events; the Mauchline Plough Match (March); The Holy Fair (May) and the Mauchline Homecoming Marquee (July). Full details will be available from the Mauchline

Burns Club in due course and these will again be reported to Cabinet at a later date.

- 3.5 In association with the Ulster/Scots Agency, the Ulster Folk Orchestra are staging an event at the Palace Theatre, Kilmarnock in May and it is likely that local schools will be participating in this event since children from East Ayrshire schools have already taken part in previous events with the Orchestra as part of an exchange visit.
- 3.6 It is also anticipated that the Burns Monument will also be formally opened during the year of the Homecoming and early planning for this event has commenced although a date has not been set.
- 3.7 As members are aware, it was also proposed to invite the twin towns to visit East Ayrshire in May 2009 to celebrate the Homecoming and positive responses have been received from Kulmbach, Santa Coloma and Virginia USE. Further responses are awaited. In advance of the Homecoming, The Provost has been invited to Joue Les Tours later this year.
- 3.8 Very little information is available on smaller local events despite requests for groups to advise the Council of proposed events. Clearly the local Burns Clubs are proposing to have special Burns Suppers but other than that little information is available. This is clearly an area which EventsScotland will have to address by improving marketing awareness and support. It is felt that local interest could be enhanced if a letter was issued to all local voluntary groups to raise awareness and seek information on the promotion of local events.
- 3.9 The Chief Executive of Dumfries House has indicated that they will be participating in the Homecoming. Further details will be provided in due course.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 On 8th January 2008 Cabinet approved expenditure of £45,000 to support Homecoming events, £40,000 of which was allocated to the Dick Institute events and £5,000 to support the Town Twinning celebration. This funding together with the £20,000 grant from EventsScotland and £10,000 from Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire will be sufficient to support the approved exhibitions and activities.

5. POLICY / LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Support for the Homecoming 2009 initiative, which aims to attract visitors to all parts of Scotland will assist in the delivery of objectives set in the Improving Opportunities section of the East Ayrshire Community Plan.

6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 East Ayrshire has five events included in the national Homecoming programme, two to be organised by the Council and three by the Mauchline Burns Club. EventsScotland will be responsible for the national and international promotion of Homecoming 2009 and the area should see a significant increase in visitor numbers if the Homecoming initiative is successful in 2009. It will be necessary to establish

a range of indicators to measure the impact of the Homecoming for evaluation purposes and these will be included in the next Cabinet report.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- (i) note the successful bid for funding to support the Council's planned Homecoming events;
- (ii) note the East Ayrshire and Ayrshire events included in the national programme;
- (iii) remit to the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services and Depute Chief Executive / Executive Director of Corporate Support to provide further progress reports on the Homecoming programme;
- (iv) remit to Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services and Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support to write to local groups regarding the Homecoming and seek information on organised events; and
- (v) otherwise note the content of this report

William Stafford
Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

WS/JAG

25th June 2008

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL

Implementation officer – john.griffiths@east-ayrshire.gov.uk

CALENDAR OF HOMECOMING EVENTS - 2009

Year Round Events

Traditional Music Sessions
Scottish Games Association Events

January

Burns 250th Anniversary Weekend

February

Creative Burns Exhibition at Dick Institute from 14th February to 16th May

March

Mauchline Ploughing Match

April

REME Association Reunion Scotland 2009 at Ayr

May

Ulster Folk Orchestra at Palace Theatre
Burns an a' That Festival
Mauchline Holy Fair
Whisky Month from May to November
Ayrshire Innovators Exhibition at Dick Institute from 30th May to 12th September
Town Twinning

June

A Whole in One Golf Exhibition at Ayr from June to August

July

Mauchline Homecoming Marquee
Open Golf Championship
Golf Events

August

Ayr Flower Show
Golf Events

September

St Kila Day: Latha Hiort
Doors Open Day
Tom O' Shanter 2009

October

Display of portraits at Dick Institute by Scottish National Portrait Gallery

November

Homecoming Finale Weekend

December