

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE – 3 MAY 2005

“THE BURNS AN’ A’ FESTIVAL”

Report by Executive Director of Development and Property Services

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To advise the Committee of :

(1) the outcome of the independent review into the economic impact of the Burns An’ A’ That Festival (the Burns Festival) 2004; and

(2) the proposed management arrangements for the Burns Festival in future years; and

1.2 To seek the authority of the Committee to continue to provide grant funding towards the costs of the Burns Festival.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 The Burns Festival was developed by the Ayrshire & Arran Tourist Board (A&ATB) as a means, both of celebrating the importance of “Burns” to Scotland in general and Ayrshire in particular and also to derive maximum benefit for the tourism industry through the attraction of visitors to the area. The Festival was established in 2002 and has subsequently taken place in 2003 and 2004. The concept is that the Festival will be an annual event, developing on a year by year basis towards 2009, which will be the 250th anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns and will also be the “Homecoming” year, as planned by The Scottish Executive.

3 THE BURNS AN’ A’ THAT FESTIVAL 2004

3.1 As in previous years, the A&ATB appointed Pete Irvine of Unique Events (who for the last few years has managed the Edinburgh Hogmanay celebrations) to manage the main Festival programme. The Fringe programme was managed locally and independently of the main Festival.

3.2 The Festival took place over 8 days, opening with the “Holy Fair” in Mauchline on Saturday 29 May 2004 and closing with the Royal Bank Gala Concert at Culzean Castle, on Sunday 6 June 2004.

3.3 Festival events took place across Ayrshire and in a wide range of venue types. The main programme consisted of a total of 31 events, in addition to which there was a “fringe programme” which has grown in size and quality over the last 3 years and this year consisted of 51 events.

3.4 Within East Ayrshire, the following events took place:

EVENT	LOCATION	MAIN PROGRAMME / FRINGE
The Holy Fair	Mauchline	Main Programme
Killie Clamjamphrie (2 events)	Various locations in Kilmarnock	Fringe
Mrs Dunlop of Dunlop	Dunlop	Fringe
Country House Concert	Dumfries House	Main Programme
Itchy Coo presents Kings o’ the Midden	Kilmarnock	Fringe
Burns Masterclass	Kilmarnock	Fringe
Country House Concert	Carnell House	Main Programme
Poets and Pints in Ayrshire	Mauchline	Fringe
Robert Burns meets Martin Luther King (3 events)	Kilmarnock	Fringe
Gospel Choir & Concert Concert Dinner & Concert	Laigh West High Kirk Palace Theatre The Park Hotel	

3.5 It is estimated that around 13,200 people attended these events within East Ayrshire. If the average spend was at a lower level of say £15.00 per head, the contribution to the local economy would amount to £198,000.

3.6 Funding for the Festival, amounted to £710,750, which comprised :

Public Sector		£621,250
Event Scotland	£100,000	
Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire	£125,000	
Visit Scotland	£100,000	
South Ayrshire Council	£100,000	
<u>East Ayrshire Council</u>	<u>£ 40,000</u>	
Scottish Arts Council	£ 40,000	
ERDF Grant	£114,250	
Scottish Executive	£ 2,000	

Sponsorship/ Private Sector Income	£ 53,000
Income	£ 35,500
TOTAL	<u>£710,750</u>

The grant of £40,000 from East Ayrshire Council was approved by the Committee at its meeting on 29 June 2004.

- 3.7** Additional funding of £6,500 was provided by East Ayrshire Council to support the cost of the Fringe events, in particular the “Robert Burns meets Martin Luther King” events which took place at the Laigh Kirk and the Park Hotel in Kilmarnock. The events were developed and managed by Pete Heywood of The Living Tradition, which is a “celtic and folk music” company, based in Kilmarnock.

4 OUTCOME OF INDEPENDENT IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 4.1** An evaluation of the Festival’s impact on the local economy was carried out by the Moffat Centre for Travel and Tourism Business Development at Glasgow Caledonian University.

- 4.2** The “headline” results of the 2004 Festival are :

- approximately 49,000 people attended the Festival events, both paid and free events, over the 8 day period and of this figure and it is calculated that 17,526 were additional visitors to Ayrshire;
- this figures shows continued growth from 9,614 in 2002, 16,673 in 2003 to 17,526 in 2004;
- the Holy Fair at Mauchline attracted 12,580 visitors, which represents 25% of the total attendance at all the events;
- the Country House Concerts proved to be very popular and tickets were sold out;
- likewise, the Fringe events organised by The Living Tradition were very successful and attracted large audiences;
- the estimated expenditure over all visitors to the Festival is estimated at £48.57 per person, which calculates to a local direct expenditure in Ayrshire of £851,238; and
- approximately £1.5 million of advertising equivalence press coverage was achieved;
- visitor numbers have grown year on year and whilst the Festival is predominantly an Ayrshire/Scottish event, it is clear that there is a rise in key markets, notable in England and in Europe;
- whilst accommodation utilisation was fairly low, there was growth from 2003 to 2004 in the numbers of people staying in Ayrshire for 2 or 3 nights during the Festival;
- visitor expenditure was predominantly on admissions to events and on food and drink.

- 4.3** The key conclusions and recommendations made by the consultants are as follows :

- Festivals take time to build, establish and develop brand awareness. The third Burns Festival was considered is a significant step towards building the reputation of Ayrshire and the southwest of Scotland as a destination and a place of cultural significance and creativity;
- to support the ongoing development growth of the Festival, it is important that the Festival has a clear geographical focus and it is considered that attempting to extend the Festival to an increasing range of tangentially connected locations risks would dilute coherence;
- although the current arrangements whereby the A&ATB, supported by Unique Events has managed the Festivals to date, the management of the Festival on an ongoing basis requires specialist expertise and more appropriate arrangements should be made to put this in place.

5 FUTURE MANAGEMENT OF THE FESTIVAL

- 5.1** The increasing scale of the Festival and the commitment required to plan and manage it, coupled with the recent restructuring of the Area Tourist Boards in April 2005 means that the present management arrangement is not an option for the future.
- 5.2** Genesis Strategic Management Consultants were commissioned by the A&ATB in 2004 to review the structure and management of the Festival and make recommendations on options for the best structure to take the Festival forward.
- 5.3** The review concluded that an arm's length management option, in the form of a limited company would be most appropriate. This would allow the Festival to develop an increased identity and be able to raise additional funding which would ensure a greater degree of financial security for the development of the Festival to 2009 and beyond.
- 5.4** South Ayrshire Council has agreed, subject to various conditions, to take on the lead role within the independent management company, post 2005.
- 5.5** However, within the context of discussions amongst the funding partners regarding the future format and management of the Festival, East Ayrshire Council will play an active role to ensure that the original aims and objectives of the Festival as a major cultural event which has a significant focus throughout Ayrshire are developed.
- 5.6** Details of the new operating arrangements will be reported to a future meeting of the Committee.
- 5.7** Given the timescales involved in the preparation of a Festival, it has been agreed by the funding partners that it would not be possible to establish a new management structure in time for the 2005 event and accordingly, the arrangements of the past 3 years should continue for the 2005 Festival. This was approved by the Ayrshire & Arran Tourist Board at its meeting on 17 December 2004.

6. THE 2005 BURNS an' a' THAT FESTIVAL

- 6.1** The formal launch of the 2005 Burns an' a' That Festival programme took place on 14 April 2005 and East Ayrshire Council was represented by Councillor O'Neill, Chair of the Community Services Committee. The full programme for the Festival has been published on the internet and can be viewed at www.burnsfestival.com
- 6.2** The 2005 Festival will run from 20 May to 4 June 2005. The opening event will be the Gala Concert which will take place at Culzean Castle on Friday 20 May 2005
- 6.3** The **Holy Fair in Mauchline** which is an official "Main Programme" event will be held on **Saturday 28 May 2005** –this date is acceptable to the community of Mauchline and will ensure the participation of the various voluntary organisations which support the event.
- 6.4** The "Fringe Programme" which runs for the full duration of the Festival includes 14 events which will take place within East Ayrshire, including 3 events which will be held within East Ayrshire Council venues :
- Dick Institute, Kilmarnock – 24 May 2005
"Collective Bargaining" – interactive poetry reading
 - Stewarton Library, Stewarton – 26 May 2005
"Literary Allsorts" – a varied programme of stories, poetry and drama presented by the writers
 - Dalmellington Community Centre, Dalmellington – 29 May 2005
"Sounds of Scotland" – the rousing sounds of Dalmellington Brass Band and Cumnock Pipe Band.
- 6.5** Subject to Committee approval, it is proposed that East Ayrshire Council continues to provide grant funding to the 2005 Festival of £40,000 – of this amount, £30,000 is allocated directly to the Holy Fair in Mauchline and the other £10,000 is a contribution to the overall costs of the Festival.

7 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1** The Burns An' A' That Festival contributes significantly towards achieving the policy objectives of the East Ayrshire Community Plan (Improving Opportunities Theme) and also the Strategy of the Ayrshire Economic Forum.

8 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1** The funding support proposed for the 2005 Burns Festival amounts to £40,000, provision for which has been made within the 2005/06 Grants to External Bodies Budget.

8.2 The Council's support for the Burns Festival will be incorporated as a key element of the funding agreement which will be developed between the Council and VisitScotland.

9 LEGAL AND PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no legal or personnel implications for the Council.

10 RECOMMENDATION

10.1 That the Committee :

- (1) notes the positive outcome of the evaluation study into the economic impact of the 2004, Burns Festival;
- (2) notes the proposals for the future management of the Festival, including the proposal that the management of the 2005 Festival be on the same basis as the preceding 3 years; and
- (3) approves, subject to budgetary provision, the proposed grant of £40,000, towards the costs of the 2005 Festival

JAMES LAVERY

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Jrs :18/04/2005

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- (1) **Burns Festival 2004 Impact Assessment** , prepared by the Moffat Centre for Travel and Tourism Business Development at Glasgow Caledonian University : August 2004
- (2) **Future Management Options Report and Draft Business Plan**, prepared by Genesis Strategic Management Consultants : September 2004
- (3) **Burns an' a' That Festival 2005 : Full Programme**

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