Agenda Item:	
Report to:	Enterprise Regeneration and Tourism Committee
Subject:	Tourism Strategy Development
Date:	Monday 9 th May 2016
Reporting Officer:	Marie Ward, Director Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism
Contact Officer:	Marie Ward, Director Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism

Decisions Required

To consider the contents of the paper and approve the recommendations at 3.0

1.0 Purpose and Background

To approve the proposed learning journeys for the development of the Tourism Strategy.

The Council are currently working on the development of a new Tourism Strategy for the region.

The strategy components incorporate:

- Current situation analysis
- Benchmarking exercise identifying best practise and key learning
- Vision, mission and strategy goals
- Action planning and implementation dedicated action plans are required for product development, destination marketing, visitor servicing, capacity building and events framework implementation
- Final conference and presentation of strategy

The Tourism Task and Finish Group oversee the implementation of the project

A key part of the development of the strategy includes a learning journeys to a competitor destination to experience first-hand best practice. This will be coordinated by Team.

Team have proposed the Cairngorms for the learning journey to consider a number of issues that have come up in the consultation and workshops such as activity tourism, landscape and culture, branding and marketing and public/private sector partnership delivery vehicles.

Key Issue

The visit will incorporate the following visits/meetings and workshops:

 Inverness Meeting with HIE and Inverness & Loch Ness Tourism BID Policies for economic development & regeneration

Tourism strategy and project priorities

Public-private partnerships for tourism/ DMO support

Establishment, governance and funding of the TBID

Relationships with other bodies

Implementation structure

Activities to date

2. Scottish Natural Heritage

Countryside recreation projects

3. Cairngorm Business Partnership

Evolution of the organisation

Partnership working

Overview of outdoor activities

Accommodation/ activity packaging,

4. Cairngorm Mountain - Mountain uplift & conservation issues

Loch Morlich Glenmore Lodge

Scotland's National Outdoor Training Centre

Carrbridge Landmark Adventure Park

How it evolved from anInterpretation Centre, evolved into mini-theme park

5. Grantown on Spey

Establishment of the Park

Overview of operations and funding

Relationships and partnerships

Park management

Conservation and customer experience (inc interpretation)

Cairngorm Tourism Partnership

6. Moray Monster Trails

Trail development and promotion

Mountain biking

Adventure activities

The learning journey will guide the vision and action planning for the Tourism Strategy.

3.0 Recommendations

That the committee approve the learning journey as proposed above for the Tourism Task and Finish Group.

4.0 Resource Implications

The financial cost is in the region of £7000 and this is within the 2016/17 budgets.

5.0 Appendices

N/A

Agenda Item:	Food NI to facilitate a Newry, Mourne and Down Food Network Forum for Year of Food and Drink			
Report to:	Economic Regeneration and Tourism Committee			
Subject:	Food NI to facilitate a Newry, Mourne and Down Food Network Forum for Year of Food and Drink			
Date:	9 th May 2016			
Reporting Officer:	Marie Ward			
Contact Officer:	Michelle Boyle / Tracey Mooney			

Decisions Required

Food NI to facilitate a Newry, Mourne and Down Food Network Forum for Year of Food and Drink

1.0 Purpose and Background

As part of the Year of Food and Drink Food NI would like to work with Newry, Mourne and Down to harness to tourism and exporting expertise in the region, to help ensure the competitiveness of all local producers and agri-food businesses with the Newry, Mourne and Down area and to develop a food personality for the Newry, Mourne and Down region.

Food NI is an industry support body and therefore only for those projects which are similar aims to enhance the reputation of Local regional food.

Workshops would be held September/October & January& February

The total cost for these workshops is £6,000

2.0 Key Issues

The total cost of the network forum is £6,000 therefore approval will be needed to proceed as Food NI are the only industry supplier that can provide these workshops and have all the relevant contacts.

3.0 Recommendations

To proceed and appoint Food NI for facilitate a Newry, Mourne and Down Food Network Forum for Year of Food and Drink

4.0 Resource Implications

The total cost for full service is £6,000 and a budget is available

5.0 Appendices

See attached proposal from Food NI

From: FoodNI Ltd

Submitted: Thursday 17th March 2016

Re: Facilitation of a Newry, Mourne and Down Food Network Forum

Company Information

FoodNI understands that is keen to respond to the Year of Food and Drink 2016 through a range of initiatives and is considering the establishment of a Year of Food and Drink Forum.

FoodNI believes that the aim of a forum matches our area of expertise and wish to submit the following ideas to the Newry, Mourne and Down Food Network for a series of quarterly seminars and workshops.

Experience of similar Agri Food and Drink Sector Events :

FoodNI works to bring together the agri food sector – from producer through to retailer and chef. We have 400 industry members including Hillstown Brewery, Brunels, Neary Nogs and The Slieve Donard.

We only work on projects which are in line with our aim to enhance the reputation of food from Northern Ireland. We develop and deliver a number food of events to support members and the promotion of local Agri Food. In 2015 we delivered services to over 30 events.

We have extensive industry experience and the trust of our members and would be confident of securing their buy in to this project.

To illustrate we would highlight our recent work with Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon on Heartland of Food, Ards Borough Council and Belfast City Council, Derry City Council.

Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon

Food NI has worked successfully with the council over the last two years to build a strong "Heartland of Food" forum this has resulted in a strong message about the council's strength in food exporting, innovation and let to the development of Awards.



Ards Borough Council / Comber Early Growers

In 2012 Comber Early Growers achieved Product of Geographic Indication status from the European Union for Comber Early Potatoes. FoodNI challenged the growers to work together to do something to capitalise on this special status.

We did this by proving to the farmers that the public were unaware of the special characteristics of the Comber Early Potato, its growing conditions, geography, seasonality and taste. It was extremely challenging to get the farmers to work together but we held 4 meetings with the growers who eventually agreed to work together on the Comber Early Potato Festival. We faced significant difficulties with gaining support for the initiative from the council due to disagreements between elected representatives but eventually got support for a Comber Early Potato Festival. The first festival was held in 2012 with 18 exhibitors; the second in 2014 had 42 and secured press from GB the third in 2015 had 38 and attracted RoI bloggers. As a result of working with FoodNI the growers formed a co-operative in Spring of 2014, this will ensure the longevity of the project.

Belfast City Council

Belfast Restaurant Week 2012/3/2014 – and Taste n Dine

FoodNI has worked with Belfast City Council to develop the City's link with local produce. Belfast, in contrast to Craigavon, has few agri food producers yet it acts as a tourism gateway for the region. FoodNI has worked with the Council since 2012 to strengthen the linkages between local produce and Belfast Restaurateurs. This culminated in highly successful Restaurant weeks in 2013 and 2014 and the development and delivery of the inaugural Taste N Dine event in the grounds of Belfast City Hall. Restaurant week is more than just a week of promotions in Restaurants; it is now a full programme of food activities, workshops and events that go on around the City. In 2013 there were 40 customised food workshops/ talks and seminars.

FoodNI's role was to work with the agri food industry to stimulate

60

innovation resulting in the programme of agri food activities and for the recruitment and delivery of Taste N Dine which involved 15 local restaurants and 12 producers. Outputs were 12,000 visitors; spend of £42 per head with 92% of companies wanting to return.

Derry City Council

FoodNI has worked with Derry City Council for the last 5 years to develop Derry/ Londonderry's reputation as a food region. Due to its unique location the City's restaurants have access to fresh fish on a daily basis; this combined with the Clipper Homecoming inspired the council to develop a seafood event. FoodNI's role was to work with the council to generate enthusiasm for the idea (which was initially perceived as high risk for the businesses concerned): Flavours of the Foyle 2012, 2013,2014 and 2015 were all highly successful with 20 local companies participating each year and attracting crowds of 19,000. We then worked with Derry City Council to develop Northern Ireland first ever St Patricks Day food festival. This involved 35 local producers and attracted 35,000 visitors over 3 days with many of the companies selling out of stock. Plans are currently underway for Flavours of the Foyle and LegenDerry 2016.







Approach to the project :

FoodNI would like to work with Newry, Mourne and Down to harness the tourism and exporting expertise in this region, to help ensure the competitiveness of all local producers and agri-food businesses within the area.

Our approach would be to work with the companies in the region to

identify the strengths in the area.

Newry, Mourne and Down has the potential to grow its reputation as a food tourism destination in Northern Ireland. With the strength of the Coastal Route and Mournes. We believe it would be essential to develop a food personality for the region e.g. home of award winning produce. We believe that this identity or personality would result from participation in Workshop 1. We also understand that the workshops would need to be alternated between Newry and Newcastle as both have different characteristics and strengths.

<u>Aim:</u> To create networking opportunities for young entrepreneurs in the industry to ensure the agri-food industry is strengthened for generations to come.

FoodNI believe that to harness the enthusiasm of young entrepreneurs we need to showcase the innovation of the local industry i.e. we could facilitate a workshop with to identify products that define the region. We would envisage this being the keynote element to Workshop 2.

<u>Aim:</u> To encourage and provide the skill to local agri-food and drink producers to enter their products into prestigious competitions such as the 'Great Taste Awards' to increase the standard and reputation of these businesses within the Borough, across Northern Ireland and beyond to export markets.

FoodNI could secure a speaker from the Guild of Fine Food to present to the group on Great Taste Awards, their importance and the process involved. With Moira hosting 2 UK supreme champions and a number of foods in the Top 50 in Britain there are no shortage of local success stories. We would envisage this focus on awards would take place in workshop 3 and that we would allow all of the participants to undertake tastings and to be judges for a day.

By workshop 4 we would envisage that a strong group of local food companies has emerged with a vision for promoting the area. Workshop 4 would focus on developing an action plan for the region and securing buy in from the businesses involved.

All workshops would be enjoyable and interactive and Workshop 3 would include some local food sampling for participants to 'judge'.

<u>Aim:</u> To promote and encourage the development of "The Newry and Mourne as a centre of excellence in food tourism" which will assist with the marketing and promotion of the area to export markets.

61

Page 5

Timetable for	Food NI is an industry support body and therefore only for those			
delivery	projects which share similar aims i.e. to enhance the reputation of local			
	regional food. We develop our own opportunities, events and projects			
	to deliver the messages of our campaigns			
	Planning would take place in July/ August			
	Workshops would be held September / October/ January and February			
	as the agri food industry is extremely busy in the pre-Christmas season.			
	We understand there is no budget secured but for illustrative purposes.			
Potential budget	Workshop 1 Local strengths Delivery Fee £1,000 (2 x facilitators)			
	Workshop 2 Innovation Delivery Fee £1,500 (2 x facilitators plus one speaker)			
	Workshop 3 Award processes Delivery Fees £2,500 (2 x facilitators,			
	travel and speaking fee for Guild of Fine Food)			
	Workshop 4 The future Delivery Fees £1,000 (2 x facilitators)			
	Total £6,000 plus VAT			
	The above incudes meeting times with the council representatives,			
	evaluation report and presentation to council committee (if required)			
Contact Person/s:	Michele Shirlow, Chief Executive michele@nigoodfood.com			
	Sharon Machala Manager info@nigoodfood.com			
	Main Office Tel: +44 (0) 28 90 249449			
Year Established:	2008			

Agenda Item:	Report of meeting of Slieve Gullion DEA Councillors, Forestry Dept., Clanrye Group re Forward Planning for Slieve Gullion held on15 April 2016, Slieve Gullion.		
Report to:	Economic Regeneration and Tourism Committee		
Subject:	Forward Planning Slieve Gullion		
Date:	18 April 2016		
Reporting Officer:	Marie Ward		
Contact Officer:	Michelle Boyle		

Decisi	ons Required					
To agr	ee the contents of the report and approve recommendations at Section 3					
1.0	Purpose and Background					
	Slieve Gullion briefing meeting initiate planning for 2016 season at slieve Gullion					
2.0	Key Issues					
	Consideration of operational arrangements for 2016 to enhance visitor experience					
3.0	Recommendations					
	Park and Ride Service to operate from JADE centre until September 16					
	2. The appointed bus company to be extended to September 16					
	3. The Park and Ride bus to avoid Adavoyle Road if possible					
	Forest Service to be approached regarding native tree planting along new fence on the driveway					
	5. Clanyre to liaise with Council officials on date of food event					
4.0	Resource Implications					
	Ongoing revenue cost associated with Slieve Gullion					
5.0	Appendices					
	Report of meeting of Slieve Gullion DEA Councillors, Forestry Dept., Clanrye Group re Forward Planning for Slieve Gullion held on 15 April in Slieve Gullion Courtyard					

Report of Slieve Gullion Forward Planning Meeting held on Friday 15 April 2016 at 2pm, Slieve Gullion Courtyard

Present: Councillor M Larkin

Councillor Terry Hearty Councillor K Loughran Councillor R Mulgrew

Mrs M Ward Mrs M Boyle Mr D Rice

Mrs M McKeown

Mr L Devine Clanrye

Apologies: Councillor P Byrne

Mrs J McCann

Mr Mark Parker - Forest Service

Report of Last Meeting

Agreed it was a true and accurate record

Matters Arising

M Boyle confirmed Forestry had contacted her to advise Northern Ireland Car Club would not be using Slieve Gullion

Update on overflow car park

Mrs Boyle advised the use of JADE as a Park & Ride facility had been operating a month, and after a few minor issues was working well. A comprehensive programme of signage was in place and a social media campaign encouraging people to go directly to J20 and park at the JADE. Members were updated on the dates and times of the service. Councillor Larkin suggested given feedback from residents if the bus could avoid Adavoyle Road, Mrs Boyle to discuss with the bus company. It was agreed after a successful one month trial to extend the bus service to September and the use of the JADE Centre

Update on operational matters

The two mobile vendors are in place and operational

Fencing near completion. Councillor Hearty enquired if native trees could be planted at the inside of the fence. Darren Rice advised this was something he was pursuing with Forest Service

The tour guide company have been appointed and a number of schools have booked. 2 public tours planned for the 30 May and 6 June.

Mr Devine confirmed the water tank works nearing completion and Synge and Byrne had been operating successfully in the Café
Mr Devine updated on the cleaning schedule

Mrs Boyle advised she had received details on a number of events planned by Clanyre including:

- Film nights during June it was agreed numbers would be restricted in view of parking, Clanyre confirmed a management company would be brought into oversee the events
- Food Events Week Commencing 8 August It was agreed Clanyre to liaise with the Council to ensure this event does not clash with the Food event being delivered as part of the Lunasa Festival in Ti Chulainn
- Facepainting etc in the courtyard over July and August

Any other business

Mrs Ward advised draft licence for Slieve Gullion are with Council and she would be progressing with the legal department.

Councilor Hearty enquired regarding future plans. Mrs Ward advised an Expression of Interest had been submitted to the DARD programme for Chambre House. Mrs Boyle confirmed that Council had allocated funding in this financial year to purchase additional land for carparking and provide a new toilet block. Both projects had been raised with planning as an enquiry and official were waiting on feedback. Discussion took place on the potential need for future road improvements

Mr Devine updated on a major conference planned for May.

Next meeting 20 June

Signed: Mrs M Boyle

Agenda Item:	[This is the number the item will be given]
Report to:	Enterprise Regeneration and Tourism Committee
Subject:	Forward Plans for Down County Museum and Newry and Mourne Museum 2016-2019
Date:	Monday 9 th May 2016
Reporting Officer:	Marie Ward, Director Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism
Contact Officers:	Mike King Noreen Cunningham

Decisions Required

To agree the contents of the report and approve recommendations at Section 3

1.0 Purpose and Background

Down County Museum and Newry and Mourne Museum are required by the Museum Accreditation standard and good practice to have in place current Forward Plans in order to carry out planned collecting, documentation, research, conservation, storage, exhibition, education and outreach work to the correct standard. The areas of activity match the areas covered by the Northern Ireland Museums' Policy. The concurrent plans for 2016 to 2019 are presented here for Council approval.

2.0 Key Issue

Both museums will again be going through the Accreditation process in the Spring of 2017 and the Forward Plans are required as part of the accompanying audit of museum standards and activities. Each Museum is put through the Accreditation process separately.

3.0 Recommendations

Council is requested to approve the Forward Plans for 2016-2019.

4.0 Resource Implications

Budgets are in place to support the activity in the Forward Plans.

5.0 Appendices

Page 2 – Newry & Mourne Museum Forward Plan Page 22 – Down County Museum Forward Plan

67

larsmalann an lúir agus Mhúrn NEWRY & MOURNE MUSEUM

Forward Plan

2016 - 2019





69

Introduction

Newry and Mourne Museum is an important tourism, cultural and heritage resource for the Newry and Mourne area. Within the area covered by Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, it provides a regional museums service for the Newry and Mourne area including south Armagh, Newry and the Mournes area as far as Annalong, in terms of learning, outreach, advice on local and family history, and conservation.

Located in Newry, the Museum focuses on interpreting local heritage for the community and visitors to the area. Traditionally called the 'Gateway of the North' the locality has been a strategic position since prehistoric times. The area is famed for being the stage for the mythical Ulster hero, Cuchulainn and his legendary battles with Maeve, Queen of the neighbouring province of Connaught. In the Iron Age period the nearby earthwork, the Dorsey Rampart, is thought by archaeologists to have controlled north to south access to Ulster's Royal capital – Emhain Mhacha, outside Armagh.

Newry and its hinterland has always been a border area, notably between Ulster and the English Pale in the Middle Ages and currently between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. This sometimes has been a disadvantage and source of conflict. This environment is a melting pot of contrasting cultures and histories, and their interaction, peaceful or otherwise, has hugely influenced the present character of the city.

The Museum draws on these elements to illustrate the diversity and vitality of the local area. The stories and experiences of the early church, the Patrician and Cistercian origins of Newry, the Bagenal family and their relationship with the Gaelic Order, the Plantation; the building of a merchant town and the first summit level canal in the British Isles; the working life and folk traditions of rural and mountain areas; fishing, trade and migration by sea; and modern experiences of a Border area are explored and made accessible through exhibitions, events and activities.

MISSION STATEMENT

As a Newry, Mourne and Down District Council service, Newry and Mourne Museum is committed to providing a high-quality, dynamic and inclusive learning and recreational resource. As the area's collective memory bank, the museum will collect, preserve and interpret the diverse material and cultural heritage of Newry and Mourne in order to cultivate and promote pride, understanding and enjoyment of local cultures and traditions to the present day.

Tying into the overall Council business plan, the purpose of this Forward Plan is to define the vision, aims and objectives of Newry and Mourne Museum up to 2019. These include:

- Meet the needs of the people of, and visitors to Newry and Mourne, so that they
 may be able to enjoy the learning and recreational benefits of their heritage.
- To collect, care and provide access to items relating to the history of Newry and Mourne
- Maintain Accreditation, the UK standard for museums and galleries, administered by Arts Council England (ACE).
- To utilise the collection in the delivery of learning activities for all our users.
- Consistently deliver high levels of customer care and satisfaction.
- Maintain and develop museum services.

Newry and Mourne Museum

Newry and Mourne Museum is located in a restored 16th century fortified house, Bagenal's Castle, and adjoining 19th century warehouse

The museum galleries which interpret the history of the castle and the development of the area from earliest times provide a leisure and learning service to the local community throughout Newry and Mourne, and act as a dynamic focus for helping us connect with our past, our present and our future.

Audience

The Museum opened to the public in March 2007 and attracts over 30,000 visitors each year.

Visitors to the museum include:

- Local visitors
- School trips
- Participants in family events
- Participants in lecture series and courses
- Various organisations including local historical societies, community and health care groups, church groups, charities and government groups.
- Tourists, including visitors from the UK and Ireland, Australia, America, S. Africa, New Zealand
- Genealogy researchers
- Local history researchers
- Borrowers and users of the Reminiscence Loan Box service
- Users of travelling exhibitions

The Museum actively evaluates all services.

To promote accessibility, entry to the Museum and exhibitions is free. A fee is charged for lectures and some events.

Collections

The current collection comprises over 14,000 artefacts, documents and photographs. These represent many aspects of local social, cultural and political heritage. Items of special interest include:

- The Reside Collection over 8,000 items dated from 1715 to 1986 relating to the life and work of Major G.W. Reside and his wife. The archive includes records relating to the Kilmorey, Downshire and Hall estates, Land Purchase Commission papers, legal papers, newspapers, and architectural plans.
- Gelston Clock a rare grandfather clock made in Newry c.1780 by John Gelston.
- Textile Collection most notably a set of Order of St. Patrick Robes owned by the 3rd Earl of Kilmorey, an Irish National Foresters uniform, a Deputy Lord Lieutenant's uniform and a complete set of robes worn by a High Court Judge who was also a Queen's Counsel.
- Hugh Irvine Collection and Eamon Donnelly Collection

Of the Museum's collection, approximately 5% is on display. This includes a mix of objects and archival material. They are displayed in three galleries throughout the building. Most are in museum cases, with larger items on open display. The artefacts are on display in environmentally controlled areas, protected in cases with further security provided by periodic monitoring by gallery attendants.

Financial

Newry and Mourne District Council run the Museum. The total budget the museum works with is outlined below, with detail of more specific museum-related activities. .

The Museum also has access to outside funding including Heritage Lottery Fund, N.I. Museums Council, National Art Collection Funds and European Peace monies for specific projects, acquisitions or events.

	2014- 2015	2015-2016
Overall Museum Budget	£312,438 Less income earned £9,000	£312,515 Less income earned £9,000
Wages	£143,911	£150,451
Conservation	£12,000	£12,000
Exhibitions	£10,000	£10,000
Education events/workshops	£8,000	£8,000
Purchase fund (artefacts)	£2,000	£2,000
Staff training	£500	£1,000
Research/Publications	£1,500	£1,500
Marketing	£17,500	£17,500
Reference Library	£1,500	£1,500
Printing/stationery	£3,000	£3,000
Other e.g. utilities, insurance, service contracts, IT etc.	£55,141	£50,874

Facilities

Newry and Mourne Museum provides a range of amenities including:

- Courtyard. This provides the introduction to the Castle and Warehouse.
- Visitor Information Centre, which provides information on tourist attractions, both local and national.
- Gallery 1. This part of the building contains many of the most easily recognisable surviving features of the Castle, which will be highlighted for visitors.
- Gallery 2. The displays focus on urban and domestic life in the seventeenth, eighteenth, nineteenth centuries.
- Banqueting Room/Education Room with a capacity for 60 people. This is utilised by schoolchildren, students and tour groups and families for a variety of learning activities and community/cultural meetings and use as a private function/banqueting room.
- Meeting Room on ground floor, with seating for 25 people for workshops, training sessions etc.
- Gallery 3 Houses the "A Border Town's Experience of The Twentieth Century" exhibition which traces the impact of key political and economic events of the Twentieth Century on the Newry and Mourne area
- Reading Room. This facility is available to local historians, students and researchers to study the Museum Collections.
- Two Temporary Exhibition Galleries, which allow the Museum to maintain a rolling programme of temporary exhibitions which focus on aspects of local history and culture which cannot be addressed in depth in the main exhibitions.

Newry and Mourne Museum has undertaken a SWOT analysis, (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats analysis) and process has allowed the museum management to identify the following:

Strengths

- Establishment of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council with two museums in the area.
- Flexibility
- · Professional, dedicated staff
- Diverse collection
- Contemporary collecting
- Range of services provided
- Research
- Strategy
- Good Location
- Accessibility
- Historically important site
- Marketing and promotion of service
- Good working relationship with local people
- Informing people what we are doing

Weaknesses

- Part of larger council area.
- Limited finances
- Lack of communication
- Confusion over service
- Limited Resources
- Outside funding

Opportunities

- Museum Policy for Northern Ireland
- Outside funding
- Media
- Wider council area
- Tourism Strategy
- · Ongoing interest in history and heritage issues
- Roots Tourism

Threats

- · Competition with other council services
- Competition with other service providers
- Retention of staff
- Competition with other museums for resources
- Misunderstanding of services
- Local government reorganisation new council priorities

This review of the internal and external factors affecting the museum creates a fairly detailed picture of the museum and has been used when defining the vision, aims and strategic objectives of Newry and Mourne Museum for the next three years.

The Review of Public Administration in Northern Ireland has created a new council. This will afford channels for closer collaboration with Down County Museum in Downpatrick and Armagh County Museum.

Consultation event

A consultation event was held with a range of Museum stakeholders on the 26th November 2015. The Forward Plan was presented to the participants and they were given an opportunity to comment on the Plan, the Museum exhibitions and education programme. Feedback was positive and some comments recorded by the participants are included below:

- Well Laid out
- Items Beautifully Mounted and Displayed
- I like that many of the objects and the stories attached tell a Social History of Newry rather than bombarding us with hard facts of politics etc.
- All set in context but with stories of ordinary people
- Information provided is informative but concise 'Easy to Digest'
- The display cases are very approachable

There were some suggestions for the future that have been taken on board in the Forward Plan:

- Requirement for more Museum storage space
- Possible re-design of Gallery 3 and purchase of larger display cases

Mission

As a Newry, Mourne and Down District Council service, the Museum is committed to providing a high-quality museum service. Its core functions are to cultivate and promote pride, understanding and enjoyment of local cultures and traditions. Our collections are preserved to the highest standard through effective collection management procedures, and are held in trust for the future on behalf of the local community.

Vision

The Museum believes that it makes a major contribution to the quality of life in the region, through contributing directly and indirectly to the local economy, providing an invaluable learning resource and contributing to tourism.

Objectives

To collect, care and interpret items relating to the collecting area covering south Down as far as Annalong, south Armagh as far north as Newtownhamilton and the Newry City area. The Collection Policy of the Museum also respects the historic hinterland of Newry including the villages of Markethill, Rathfriland and Omeath which are outside the boundaries of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council. The Museum holds its collections in trust for the community and is therefore committed to providing an accessible, welcoming learning and leisure environment for all ages, interests, abilities and social backgrounds.

The Museum endeavours to present Newry and Mourne's social and cultural history in a stimulating, challenging and balanced way that provides opportunities for a range of visitors to appreciate cultural differences.

The Museum is committed to continually developing its services and thereby acquiring new audiences. This can be achieved through mutually beneficial relationships with others to secure funding, raise public profile, develop exhibitions and improve the quality of service provided for the community.

To ensure a sustainable and quality provision of service through creative, innovative and efficient management of its resources whilst recognising the need to develop further the museum infrastructure.

Museums Policy NI - Collections Care, Management and Use

AIM 1		Newry and Mourne N	Museum Mission	
Maintain Accreditation Standard as		Statement:		
required by the Arts Council England		Newry and Mourne Museum is committed		
(ACE)		to providing a high-quality, dynamic and		
		inclusive educational and recreational		
		resource.		
	To ensure that existing equirements for Accre		meet the necessary	
Key Task	Action	Completion Date	Principal Officer	
Maintain collection		Ongoing	Assistant Curator	
	Ensure that	Origonity	Assistant Outator	
management procedures to	object entry,			
procedures to SPECTRUM	accessioning			
Minimum Standard	and cataloguing			
Millimum Standard	methods			
	conform to			
	SPECTRUM			
	Minimum			
	Standard.			
	 Loans in/loans 			
	out methods			
	conform to			
	SPECTRUM			
	Minimum			
	Standard.			
	 Retrospective 			
	documentation			
	must conform to			
	SPECTRUM			
	Minimum			
	Standard			
	Object exit			
	procedure must			
	conform to			
	SPECTRUM			
	Minimum			
Engliso miles	Standard	Ongoine	Curator	
Ensure museum	Maintain	Ongoing		
policies meet Accreditation	Collections		Assistant Curator	
standards	Development			
Statiuatus	policy			
	Maintain	Ongoing		
	Collections Care			
	and			
	Conservation			
	Plan			
	 Update and 	Review annually,		
	review	and more often as		
	Emergency Plan			

	as required Maintain Documentation Procedure Manual Prepare new Documentation Plan 2016 – 2019 Maintain Documentation Policy	Ongoi	nber 2016	
AIM 2 To collect, care and interpret items relating to Newry and Mourne		0	Newry and Mourne Museum Mission Statement: To collect, preserve and interpret the diverse material and cultural heritage of Newry and Mourne	
Strategic Objective	1: Eliminate remainin	g Mode		,
Key Task	Action		Completion Date	Principal Officer
Continue cataloguing of the collection and reduction of back- log	 Sort and catalogue artefacts Input data on to Modes for Windows Box artefacts not on display for storage 		Ongoing This is an ongoing process as the collection develops	Assistant Curator
	2: Develop Museum C	collection		
Key Task	Action		Completion Date	Principal Officer
Develop range of artefacts in Collection	 Acquire artefacts according to ident gaps in Collection Review profiles of collecting areas Consult with relev stakeholders rega annual temporary exhibition program 3: Develop research p 	ant ording nme	Annually through analysis of temporary exhibition evaluation forms	Assistant Curator

Key Task	Action	Completion Date	Principal Officer
To develop access to the Museum	Maintain and edit Modes database	Ongoing	Assistant Curator
Collection	Promote Collection through main and temporary exhibitions	Three times year	Curator, Assistant Curator and Education Officer
	Facilitate research by staff and public	Ongoing	
Promote access to Performing Arts Collection	Secure funding to employ project officer for a two year period	January 2016	Curator Assistant Curator
Publish articles on Museum Collection and local history	Research and write articles for local newspapers, periodicals and online publication on Museum website	Ongoing	Curator Assistant Curator Education Officer Museum Assistants
Raise profile of Collection material relating to Partition and Boundary Commission	Secure project funding	June 2016	Curator Assistant Curator
	4: Cultivate public understar		
Key Task	Action	Completion Date	Principal Officer
Improve direct access to the collection and public knowledge of collection care	 Complete documentation of the entire collection to Accreditation standards Develop a digital photographic record of the collection Improve the standard of care for artefacts in storage according to their specific requirements Provide an advisory service to the public on care of historic objects 	Ongoing	Assistant Curator

Museums Policy NI – Developing Audiences

AIM 1 Audience Development		Newry and Mourne Museum Mission Statement: To cultivate and promote pride, understanding and enjoyment of local cultures and traditions	
Strategic Objective	1: Increase Visitor Numbers		
Key Task	Action	Completion Date	Principal Officer
Actively market museum services	 Maintain high levels of social media activity Analyse current activities Increase public awareness Attract new audiences Constant evaluation of all services 	Ongoing	Curator Education Officer
	2: Increase social and cultur		
Provide a neutral venue to encourage mutual understanding between communities	 Develop a programme of temporary exhibitions reflecting local heritage and culture Provide an avenue for local people to actively explore their history and culture Maintain programme of two temporary exhibitions per year 	Ongoing	Curator Education Officer Assistant Curator
Strategic Objective	1 3: Utilise website as a marke	ting resource	
Key Task	Action	Completion Date	Principal Officer
To re-design the Bagenal's Castle website.	 Updateable pages Virtual 'tour' of galleries Embedding of social media Two online exhibitions each year Online booking service Interactivity Ability to upload short videos Podcasting Hits measured 	2017	Curator Education Officer

Museums Policy NI – Education and Learning

AIM 1 To provide a learning resource for the community.		Newry and Mourne Museum Mission Statement: To provide a high-quality, dynamic and inclusive educational and recreational resource	
	1: Maintain and Develop Edu		
Key Task	Action	Completion Date	Principal Officer
Continued development of a proactive education programme for local learning institutions	 Liaise with local school in relation to the curriculum to assess needs. Adapt resources according to specific requests Design curriculum-linked workshops/lessons for schools in conjunction with temporary exhibitions Maintain Education Services and Access Policy 	Ongoing	Education officer
Continued development of tours focused on specific user groups.	 Customise tours in accordance with user groups: Schools Senior Citizens Specialist groups Tourists Community organisations Corporate organisations Incorporate new temporary exhibitions into the tour 	Ongoing	Education Officer Museum Assistants

83

Marketing of Learning	Implement direct marketing strategies	Ongoing	Curator
Learning Programme	marketing strategies including: - Mail shots - Text Anywhere - Email - Regular website updates - Social media - Poster and flyer campaigns • Continue to develop information booklets		Education Officer
	 Continue to develop online resources 		

Museums Policy NI – Infrastructure and Resources

AIM 1 Develop partnerships		Newry and Mourne Museum Mission Statement: Maintain and develop museum services	
Strategic Objective services	1: Work in partnership to	deliver enha	nced and additional
Key Task	Action	Completion Date	Principal Officer
Formalise relationship with Down County Museum	 Regular meetings Co-operation and communication on areas of mutual benefit Loans of artefacts for temporary exhibitions 	Ongoing	Curatorial and education staff from both museums
Assistance with resources to voluntary and statutory organisations	 Maintain Reminiscence loan box service Maintain travelling exhibition programme 	Ongoing Ongoing	Education Officer Museum Assistants Curator and Assistant Curator
Network on education issues throughout Northern Ireland	Continued membership of Group for Education in Museums in Northern Ireland	Ongoing	Education Officer
Network with Curators throughout N. Ireland and the Border Counties	Continued membership of Northern Ireland Regional Curators Group	Ongoing	Curator
Liaise with other organisations in order to develop a local network of mutual support	 Local community groups Heritage and history groups Reminiscence Network Northern Ireland Adult education Other cultural institutions 	Ongoing	Curator Education Officer Assistant Curator
AIM 2 Develop and enhance interpretation of Bagenal's Castle		Newry and Mourne Museum Mission Statement: To cultivate and promote pride, understanding and enjoyment of local cultures and traditions	
	1: Ongoing development of	I .	
Key Task	Action	Completion Date	Principal Officer

Development of main exhibitions	 Continue development of main exhibitions in three main galleries Continue with developing and interpreting 16th century history of castle through living history, curriculum-linked lesson and tours 	Ongoing	Curator Assistant Curator Education Officer
Redevelop layout of Gallery 2	Secure funding for additional museum case	June 2017	Curator Assistant Curator
Guidebook for Bagenal's Castle	Research and write guidebook	March 2017	Curator Assistant Curator
Redevelopment of Gallery 3	Undertake scoping	March 2018	Curator Assistant Curator
AIM 3 Provision of service		Newry and Mourne Museum Mission Statement: To provide a high-quality, dynamic and inclusive educational and recreational resource	
Strategic Objective	1: Generate revenue streams		
Key Task	Action	Completion Date	Principal Officer
Explore potential funding opportunities for development of Collection	Identify relevant grant aid	Ongoing	Curator Assistant Curator Education Officer
Use of the Banqueting Room and Meeting Room for hire	Continued marketing of the Banqueting Room and Meeting Room for cultural functions	Ongoing	Curator Education Officer Administrative Assistant
Strategic Objective	2: Develop staff potential		•
Key Task	Action	Completion Date	Principal Officer
Ensure staff are covered under current legislation	 Provide proper conditions of employment Develop and implement a policy to promote equality of opportunity 	Ongoing	Curator
Offer developmental opportunities	Offer opportunities for staff through a training programme	Ongoing	Curator Council Personnel
	 Ensure proper training on all relevant council 		Outside Training

	policies including Child Protection and Health and Safety procedures			
Volunteer programme	 Recruit a minimum of one volunteer a year Develop volunteer work programmes as required Provide placements for university students as appropriate 	Ongoing	Assistant Curator	
Strategic Objective with Down County N	3: Secure additional share Nuseum	ed museum st	orage in partnership	
Key Task	Action	Completion Date	Principal Officer	
Identify storage requirements of Newry and Mourne Museum and Down County Museum	Undertake scoping surveyPresent to Council	December 2016 January 2017	Curatorial staff from both Museums	
Strategic Objective 4: Ensure Safe Working and Visitor Environment				
Key Task	Action	Completion Date	Principal Officer	
Identify potential risks to staff and visitors	 Carry out and update risk assessment and COSHH assessments for the building Carry out new risk assessments and COSHH assessments as required Carry daily and weekly 	Review annually each September Ongoing	Curator Museum Assistants Education Officer Assistant Curator	
Strategic Objective	maintenance checks. 5: Improve environmental s	Ongoing sustainability b	ov reusing recyclable	
	on and family and education		,	
Key Task	Action	Completion Date	Principal Officer	
Identify key areas where this can be achieved	 Reuse Foamex for captions in temporary exhibitions Use Perspex mounts for objects 	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing.	Assistant Curator Assistant Curator Assistant Curator	
	Conserve items for temporary exhibitions that can be used in	2gug.	T Soldian Garator	

	•	main exhibitions Use waste material from Play Resource scrap shop in family and learning workshops	Ongoing	Education Officer
	•	Reuse waste materials from packaging in workshops	Ongoing	Education Officer
Maintain membership of Green Tourism Programme	•	Maintain Green Tourism Programme standards	Ongoing	Assistant Curator

Conclusion

As a Newry, Mourne and Down District Council service, Newry and Mourne Museum is committed to providing a high-quality, learning and recreational resource. As the museum is entrusted with the area's collective history it will continue to collect, preserve and interpret the heritage of Newry and Mourne in order to cultivate and promote pride, understanding and enjoyment of local cultures and traditions to the present day.

The key aims and objectives of the museum are to care for the heritage of Newry and Mourne through the care and collection of a diverse range of material and providing accessibility to this resource. It will also ensure the preservation of Newry's oldest known surviving building. While the restoration of the building offers a unique opportunity to explore our past, it will continue to be an invaluable resource for the local community as a learning tool with activities which relate directly to the history of the site and to the objects in the Museum Collection.

The Museum believes that it makes a major contribution to the quality of life in the region, through contributing directly and indirectly to the local economy, providing an invaluable learning resource and contributing to tourism. Its adaptability will enable it to develop mutually beneficial relationships with others to secure funding, raise public profile, develop exhibitions and improve the quality of service provided for the community.

The Forward Plan will be the blueprint in ensuring that the above objectives are met and an economically sustainable service will be provided. Newry and Mourne Museum is now well placed to extend its services and learning facility due to the recruitment of core staff, training opportunities and specialised skills.

MÚSAEM CONTAE AN DÚIN DOWN COUNTY MUSEUM

Forward Plan 2016 - 2019





1.0 Introduction

Down County Museum was established in the late eighteenth-century buildings of the old County Gaol of Downpatrick in 1981. Perfectly situated on the historic Hill of Down, close to Down Cathedral and St Patrick's Grave, the Museum has been developed in four phases of restoration and refurbishment. The gatehouses were opened to the public in 1984, the Governor's Residence in 1987 and the Cell Block in 1991. The provision of universal access to the Governor's Residence, and a new permanent exhibition of 1200 treasures from the collection telling the story of *Down Through Time* were completed in 2006, with the financial support of the Heritage Lottery Fund. A new extension housing the Downpatrick High Cross, the Museum's farming and maritime collections, the story of the gaol, and the new Cathedral View Tearoom, was opened in September 2015 with the financial support of the European Union's INTERREG IVA programme, and the Department of the Environment.

2.0 Vision

The Council's vision of the Museum continues to be as a universally accessible, safe, all-weather, cross-community venue for exhibitions, events, learning programmes, family activities and group visits, attracting local, regional and tourist audiences.

The Museum will maintain its status as an Accredited Museum, find new ways to make its collections of objects and photographs accessible to the public, seek to improve the interpretation of the historic gaol site, and develop packages for group visits and tours in collaboration with other attractions in Downpatrick.

Equipped with state-of-the art permanent exhibitions, the Museum will continue to develop new links with the communities of the District and work in partnership with Newry and Mourne Museum.

The Museum has been an active participant in TourismNI's St Patrick Signature Project, and aims, through the recent housing the Downpatrick High Cross and the development and marketing of its Early Christian and related displays, to become a key orientation point and visitor attraction on the St Patrick's Trail, for the benefit of cultural tourists from inside and outside the Province.

Down County Museum is committed to supporting DCAL's Northern Ireland Museums Policy (2011) which aims to establish the highest standards for museums and sets out plans for developing them as attractions both for the local community and tourists.

3.0 Statement of Purpose

The Museum's mission is to 'enhance appreciation of the history, culture and environment of County Down'. Its purpose is 'to collect, conserve, record, interpret and display those objects which best serve to illustrate the history, culture and environment of County Down, and to carry out related research. This involves study, development of collections, provision of access and promotion in relation to archaeology, history, the natural environment and the art and craft of County Down and its people'.

The Museum aims to balance its duty of care to preserve its historic site and genuine artefacts, mainly donated by local people to benefit the community, with the provision of access to the site, collections and local heritage to as wide an audience as possible, to create opportunities relating to lifelong learning for all. The Museum's activities reflect these two core aims of the service.

4.0 Review of Forward Plan 2012-15

The Museum's objectives for 2012-15 were outlined in the Forward Plan for this period. The status of the objectives under each Key Aim is included here in bold:

Aim 1

To look after our collections, buildings and resources

(NI Museums Policy Strategic Priority 3: Collections Development, Care, Management and Use)

In 2012-15 the Museum aimed:

- To maintain the Museum buildings and fabric to preserve them for the future and ensure they are safe (achieved).
- To maintain and improve the security of buildings and the collection (achieved).
- To improve internal signage on the Museum site (achieved).
- To carry out essential maintenance on the courtyard surfaces for health and safety reasons (requires funding).
- To carry out actions contained in the Museum's Environmental Sustainability Policy Statement (Green Tourism Award achieved).
- To carry out recommendations in the NIMC funded Access Audit completed in 2012 (requires funding).
- To ensure that the Museum continues to meet the Accreditation standard when it reapplies in 2013 (achieved).
- To continue collecting in line with the Museum's acquisition policy and as agreed by Council in the Collections Management Plan. A specific programme of collecting applied art is underway (achieved).
- To manage conservation work on the collections according to the requirements of the Museum Extension project and programme (achieved).
- To improve storage conditions in the large object store by redisplaying the farming and maritime collections in the new Museum Extension (achieved).

Aim 2

To make the Museum collections more accessible

(NI Museums Policy Strategic Priority 3: Collections Development, Care, Management and Use)

In 2012-15 the Museum aimed:

- To upgrade ADLIB documentation system to bring it in line with current standards and especially to improve the storage and retrieval of digitised images (ADLIB upgraded).
- To ensure that information on the collections is entered on ADLIB for efficient retrieval of artefact data (ongoing).
- To continue upgrading the storage and documentation of the photographic collections to improve access (ongoing).
- To publish the Newman and Hudson photographic collections relating to the Mournes in the Museum's yearbook (achieved).
- To prepare major accessible exhibitions relating to 1912-1922, Religion in County Down and the town of Ballynahinch for display (achieved through PEACE III funding).
- To prepare flexible displays for loan to other venues (achieved: 'In the Footsteps of St Patrick' exhibition).

 To liaise with other organisations to take travelling exhibitions as appropriate (achieved).

Aim 3

To inspire learning for all

(NI Museums Policy Strategic Priority 2: Education and Learning)

In 2012-15 the Museum aimed:

- To train staff to deliver tours, themed walks and living history experiences relating to the local historic environment, with a particular focus on the development of Georgian history/characters for living history presentations at the Museum and other locations in Downpatrick (achieved).
- To promote all learning programmes and activities to identified target audiences (achieved).
- To develop plans for the Discovery Room that are relevant to the requirements of the revised NI curriculum (Gaol interpretation gallery developed with interactive elements).
- To introduce seasonal educational activities for Christmas and Halloween (achieved).
- To introduce an educational session on County Down (1900-1920s) for KS3 pupils (achieved).
- To train staff in assisting with the joint Down County Museum/St Patrick Centre 'history of Downpatrick' induction session available for KS3 pupils (achieved).

Aim 4

To reach out to local communities

(NI Museums Policy Strategic Priority 2: Education and Learning)

In 2012-15 the Museum aimed:

- To roll out SEUPB PEACE III Phase 2 Shared History projects (2012-13) (achieved: £400,000 awarded).
- To roll out SEUPB INTERREG IVA High Cross Extension project (2012-15) including galleries dedicated to the Downpatrick High Cross, Gaol Discovery Room and the Farming/Maritime collections (achieved: £545,000 awarded from EU – £500k and DOENI - £45k).
- To apply, in partnership with three other District Councils, for Heritage Lottery Funding for 'Rivers, Sea and Loughs' project (partner Council contributions could not be committed due to RPA.).
- To investigate the provisions of the PEACE IV plan, to ascertain its relevance to Museum goals and make an application as appropriate to meet the needs of local community groups (ongoing).

Aim 5

To get the message out to our audiences

(NI Museums Policy Strategic Priority 1: Developing Audiences)

In 2012-15 the Museum aimed:

- To promote the Museum as a key visitor attraction on the St Patrick Trail and work with the other providers and destinations to develop capacity in this area (achieved).
- To promote the Museum as a family-friendly venue by building family activities into all services, and marketing the Museum to the family audience (achieved).
- To develop staff capacity to tailor their welcome to the visitors who attend the Museum, and to reinforce the St Patrick link and the family-friendly nature of all Museum activities (achieved).

- To devise strategies to actively promote the Museum, and specifically the new
 Museum Extension when it opens, to identified target audiences, including over 45s,
 out-of-state visitors, people with disabilities, heritage and community groups and
 schools (NIMC and AudiencesNI analysis ongoing).
- To build up a churches and church societies database in tandem with PEACE III Phase 2 'Religion' strand and High Cross project (achieved).
- To promote a programme of talks, handling sessions and other outreach services available for booking (achieved).
- To build relationships with service users who provide feedback at events, exhibitions and activities in order to promote repeat visits (achieved).

To generate income from diverse sources

(NI Museums Policy Strategic Priority 1: Developing Audiences)

In 2012-15 the Museum aimed:

- To maximise use of hired facilities by groups and businesses (ongoing).
- To upgrade function rooms and promote to businesses for board meetings and Away Days (ongoing).
- To earn income through offering conservation and curatorial services (conservation advice/assistance provided to other museums).
- To generate funds for conservation projects through fundraising campaigns (Friends of Museum 'buy a brick' campaign).
- To promote family-friendly seasonal events for which charges can be made to subsidise entertainment provided (achieved: eg Christmas/Halloween).
- To hold regular conferences relating to archaeological and historical subjects connected with County Down (achieved: eg St Patrick's Week annual conference).
- To promote the Museum as a good location for external conferences (ongoing).
- To liaise with the Arts Centre to develop themed historical and musical events to attract visitors to both venues (ongoing).
- To maximise attendance at family-centred craft activity and special theme days and charge as appropriate (ongoing).
- To run a programme of themed tours and walks around Downpatrick and local monuments, and costumed events, charging as appropriate (Museum provided content for Downpatrick Historic Walking Tour).
- To develop new income generating events, such as 'Murder Mystery' evenings (achieved).
- To develop a fun-packed summer scheme for youngsters covering archaeological and historical themes (achieved).
- To review birthday parties and relaunch (achieved).
- To launch new educational sessions and activities for schools and generate income from visits (achieved).
- To promote existing and new publications to disseminate information about the collections and generate income from sales (achieved: Yearbooks).
- To offer existing and new exhibitions on loan and make appropriate charges (achieved).
- To sell photographs from the collection, reserving reproduction rights (achieved).
- To develop new shop stock and Museum investigation packs based on Museum collections and popular family/school subjects (ongoing).

To train staff for success

(NI Museums Policy Strategic Priority 4: Infrastructure, Investment and Resources)

In 2012-15 the Museum aimed:

- To ensure that all staff have a personal development plan which identifies training requirements (achieved).
- To create a Museum training plan which identifies specific and generic training requirements (achieved).
- To support staff in making training applications to undertake planned training agreed in personal development plans (achieved).
- To ensure that unplanned training opportunities are identified and discussed with the Curator in order for appropriate applications to be approved (achieved).
- To ensure that staff can attend corporate training courses eg manual handling/disability awareness (achieved).
- To support staff to provide living history events, themed tours and walks to earn income and underpin the 'St Patrick' and 'family-friendly' priority areas (achieved).
- To support staff to deliver craft activity days, birthday parties, events, and schooland family-centred learning activities included in the Museum's events programme (achieved).

Aim 8

To build for the future

(NI Museums Policy Strategic Priority 4: Infrastructure, Investment and Resources)

In 2012-15 the Museum aimed:

- To provide a safe and secure location in a new Museum Extension overlooking the Mound of Down, Inch Abbey and the Quoile River where the Downpatrick High Cross may be protected and interpreted (achieved).
- To work closely with the Church of Ireland on the project and ensure that a replica is placed on the site of the High Cross (achieved).
- To request NIEA support for the move of the High Cross, including the conservation and re-erection of the Cross in Down County Museum, and the loan of other archaeological material for display (achieved).
- To provide a hands-on family-centred Discovery Room to encourage interest in local archaeology, including the Early Christian period (replaced by Gaol Discovery Gallery in Extension designs).
- To provide an enhanced location for the Museum tearoom (achieved: Cathedral View Tearoom opened).
- To provide a solution to the problem of the display and storage of large items in the Museum collection, especially those relating to farming and the sea (achieved: large items brought in from courtyards and out of storage).
- To promote the new Extension widely within the NI market and to out-of-state visitors with the help of TourismNI, and in relation to the continuing development and promotion of the St Patrick Trail (achieved).

5.0 Analysis of the Current Environment

The PESTELM model has been used to look at how changes relating to the overall environment in which the Museum operates could have a beneficial or negative effect on the development of services.

Political

New opportunities exist to undertake partnership working with Newry and Mourne Museum. The need for both museums to increase visitor numbers and continue to generate loyalty in the local and wider communities will assist in the development of this partnership. The opportunity to provide 'packages' and tours to NI, RoI and tourist groups could be developed, linking the museums more closely.

Economic

The downturn in the local economy provides the Museum with the potential to provide 'recession busting' offers or opportunities. Free admission to the Museum will be emphasised in marketing materials developed for visitors. This substantially reduces the overall cost of a visit to Downpatrick for groups, schools and those who have donated artefacts, while offering an important incentive for family and individual visitors to visit the town. At the same time packaged guided tours to the Museum and local area for visiting groups, including catering/refreshments, can be developed with the Cathedral View Tearoom in order to earn revenue from incoming groups by adding value to the product offered.

Social

The changing demography of Northern Ireland has the potential to impact both negatively and positively on the Museum. Declining numbers of schoolchildren will have a negative effect on the numbers of school visitors, while, conversely, the increase in the ageing population will result in larger numbers of 'active retired' visitors seeking a meaningful and relevant experience. Similarly the increase in numbers of members of new communities in Northern Ireland will have a positive benefit in that this category of visitor is likely to want a varied range of family activities, and to participate in local cultural activities. The increasing numbers of people from ethnic minority backgrounds living and working in the local area will also have a positive impact on the Museum's cultural programme. The availability of PEACE IV funding may assist the Museum in providing a wide variety of cultural and shared history programmes for the local community.

Technological

There are significant technological opportunities available to museums in relation to social media and website development, which can attract interest in the Museum and local history to a global audience at low cost. A number of improvements have been made to the Museum's website. This includes updated information on visitor facilities and greatly enhanced content, which will be of interest to 'culturally curious' tourists, local people, historical and cultural societies, schools, churches, educational audiences, families and specialists. There is a major opportunity to make images from the Museum's large photographic collection available to view and purchase online, given funds to develop the website further.

Environmental

As well as providing on-site and outreach services to groups, the Museum also provides a series of tours to other places of local interest, for example sites relating to the legacy of St Patrick, and to the 1798 Rebellion. This encourages appreciation of the local landscape and heritage among local people and tourists and provides access to sites which may be difficult for individuals to get to or understand when they are there. This activity emphasises the importance of caring for and understanding the local built environment and historical landscape. It also provides the opportunity for the Museum to work in partnership with local environmental and heritage agencies, especially the Historic Environment Division of the

DOENI, which has assisted the Museum to save the Downpatrick High Cross, as part of its objective to protect and interpret the local environment. The authentic historic environment requires preservation and careful management in order to attract tourism visits. The Museum has gained a Silver Award in Green Tourism.

Legal

New policies and procedures relating to children and vulnerable adult protection will impact on staff and this training will need to be updated.

Market

In a market which has many competing visitor attractions all offering a variety of experiences to the visitor, it is imperative to offer an authentic experience, providing something 'extra' or specific. The strength of this Museum is that it has some unique features (the old gaol, the Downpatrick High Cross, a diverse local collection of objects, and views of the unique historic landscape) and the ability to forge real community partnerships which can 'translate' into increased numbers of visits. Another advantage it has over other private and commercial attractions is that there are a number of rationales supporting its operation, including those relating to heritage preservation, education, community relations, tourism and economic regeneration. This means that the Museum has diverse support networks and funding opportunities. Outreach provision is an important asset as it can be used to generate loyalty, repeat visiting and positive image.

SWOT Analysis

This SWOT analysis identifies current issues relating to the Museum:

Strengths

- Location in heart of historic area of town with easy access to other visitor attractions
- Location within 20 miles of Belfast, with good roads & public transport
- Listed gaol buildings with restored cell block and gaol courtyards
- Restored and universally accessible Governor's Residence with 'Down Through Time' exhibition
- New extension featuring Downpatrick High Cross, farming, maritime and gaol galleries
- Professional staff dedicated to collections care and conservation, interpretation, photography, education, fundraising, retail and management of safety, security and maintenance
- Large, varied collections with wide appeal to many different audiences
- Extensive photographic archive
- Annual Down Survey research publication on collections and local history
- Well stocked handling collection of objects
- Varied programme of temporary exhibitions
- Varied events programme
- All-weather facility

- Free admission
- Seven day opening
- Good support from the local community
- Seasonality affecting usage and visiting patterns is less than for other attractions due to shoulder period events and year-round local support
- Facilities for community group meetings and events including out-of-hours opening
- Good facilities for conferences and away days for businesses
- Popular Cathedral View Tearoom
- Universal access to display areas and function rooms
- Good website and Facebook presence
- Good WiFi coverage
- Strong and active Friends group

Weaknesses

- Limited on-street parking for cars and coaches
- Not enough co-ordination in approach to marketing all of the town's facilities
- Cell block toilets need refurbishing
- Front courtyard requires re-surfacing for safety
- Access audit from 2012 requires funding and action

Opportunities

- St Patrick Signature project and cooperation between attractions should deliver more visitors to the region
- Develop Gaol tours and packages for groups and tourists with Cathedral View Tearoom, generating income
- Develop Early Christian tours and packages for groups and tourists with Cathedral View Tearoom, generating income
- Promotion of free admission to local audience
- TourismNI initiatives
- Audience Development initiatives
- Develop and promote the research and interpretative potential of the medical collection
- Work with Newry and Mourne Museum in joint exhibitions and initiatives

- Develop and update website to achieve global interest in the collections and attract international visits
- Develop online photographic sales and generate income

Threats

- Public sector cuts
- Retention of staff

6.0 Consultation

Councillors and stakeholders were consulted regarding the Forward Plan for 2016-19 in November 2015.

Those invited to contribute included:

Councillors
Members of the public
Friends of the Museum
Local history groups
Museum staff

Key contributions relating to the following areas were made and incorporated in the development of actions for 2016-19:

- What worked well
- · Ideas for exhibitions and activities
- Involving communities
- Improving marketing

7.0 Key Aims and Objectives for 2016-19

The following plans include objectives that will be implemented during the three-year period under 8 different Aims:

- To look after the collections
- To make the collections more accessible
- To inspire learning for all
- To reach out to local communities
- To get our marketing message out to our audiences
- To generate income from diverse sources
- To train staff for success
- To build for the future

To look after the collections

(NI Museums Policy Strategic Priority 3: Collections Development, Care, Management and Use)

The Museum has a rich collection of over 10,000 artefacts dating from 7000BC to the present day, and a comprehensive acquisition policy to ensure that the collection can be developed in the future. The vast majority of these items have been given to the Museum by local people. It is necessary to check, clean, document, insure and store all new acquisitions when they are given to the Museum, and to research, interpret and display them as opportunities arise in permanent and temporary exhibitions.

The Museum is housed in a fine late eighteenth-century gaol which has been restored to give a good external impression of the historic gaol, while giving universal access to high quality exhibitions and visitor facilities internally. There are three buildings dating to 1796 on the site, one now fitted with an air-conditioning system and two with lifts. The major management challenge is to keep the site safe, secure, pest-free, well-maintained, clean, sensitive to issues of environmental sustainability, and properly staffed and accessible to the public for 7 days a week for 357 days per year.

Currently 1200 artefacts are well displayed in the Museum's *Down Through Time* exhibition, which opened in the Governor's Residence building in October 2006. The Museum received Accreditation by Arts Council England in the most recent phase of the scheme in 2013 and will need to re-apply in 2017.

The Museum's new extension, opened in September 2015, has vastly improved the display of the Museum's regionally significant farming collection, and other large items. The Harvests from Land and Sea Gallery has provided a suitable space for displaying key items from the collection and the refurbished large object store now provides a safe and secure environment for the rest of the collection. Further improvements to the conditions of stores will be made, including the labelling of items for behind-the-scenes tours.

Our objectives during 2016-19 will be:

Strategic Objective 1: To maintain the Accreditation Standard

Strategic Objective 2: To continue collecting in line with the Museum's acquisition policy and as agreed by Council in the Collections Management Plan

Strategic Objective 3: To document the collections on ADLIB for efficient retrieval of artefact data

Strategic Objective 4: To care for the collections and manage conservation work on the collections

Strategic Objective 5: To improve storage of collections and labelling for public tours

To make the collections more accessible

(NI Museums Policy Strategic Priority 3: Collections Development, Care, Management and Use)

The Museum has important regional artefact and photographic collections which are made accessible through exhibitions, publications and the Museum's website.

In addition to the Museum's primary documentation, data on the collections is entered on the Museum's ADLIB collections database, to enable retrieval for identification of artefacts, response to enquiries, preparation of displays, and dissemination of information on artefacts through the Museum's yearbook and website. These systems need to be maintained in order to meet Accreditation standards.

The Museum has major photographic collections relating to County Down, such as the DJ McNeill, Gribben, Hudson, Malone and Newman collections. A major project to upgrade the storage, documentation and accessibility of these collections is required. Digitisation of key images from the photographic collections for publications and sale online is a priority for the Museum during the period of the Forward Plan.

Major accessible exhibitions of the Museum's costume, social history, geology, photographic and art collections are planned for this period. A PEACE III-funded exhibition produced by the Museum, entitled 'In the Footsteps of St Patrick' will travel around Poland from 2016-19 as a St Patrick tourism vehicle, and strengthening the Museum's existing links with Polish museums.

Following the opening of the Museum's new permanent gallery examining the history of the Gaol in the Museum's new extension, the Museum is planning to re-develop several galleries and re-interpret the surviving ground floor gaol cells as a priority during the period 2016-19.

Our objectives during 2016-19 will be:

Strategic Objective 1: To re-interpret the gaol cells and associated galleries

Strategic Objective 2: To develop an innovative programme of in-house/ travelling exhibitions

Strategic Objective 3: To maintain and update permanent exhibition areas for the benefit of visitors

Strategic Objective 4: To make the photographic archive more accessible and develop online photographic sales

Aim 3

To inspire learning for all

(NI Museums Policy Strategic Priority 2: Education and Learning)

The Museum's education programmes for Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 have been designed to meet the needs of the Northern Ireland curriculum and the learning areas of Language and Literacy, The World Around Us, Personal Development and Mutual Understanding, The Arts and Religious Education. Our hands-on learning experiences are challenging and engaging, cross-curricular, enquiry-based and emphasise problem-solving and group working. All of our primary school sessions involved extensive use of the museum's handling collections and exhibitions.

Our programmes for Key Stage 3 and 4 continue to be developed. These enhance the learning areas of history, learning for life and work, language and literacy and religious education and encourage pupils to work collaboratively in evaluating evidence, decision-making and understanding a variety of perspectives. Two web-based learning activities for Key Stage 3 pupils were developed during the period of the last plan and can provide a model for developing additional resources for the secondary school sector.

During the period of the last plan a new gaol gallery was opened in the extension to the rear of the cell block and a gaol-themed arts project was undertaken with school and community groups. In addition, a resource pack on the theme of crime and punishment in the past was produced for KS2 and KS3/4 groups. These provided the basis for the museum to continue to develop gaol themed learning activities and resources which can be further enhanced in 2016-19.

In 2006 interactive elements were successfully incorporated into the 'Down Through Time' exhibition in order to provide opportunities for families and schoolchildren to explore history in a fun way and the gaol discovery room opened in 2015 also included interactive elements. The Museum will continue to develop activities and facilities that operate on the principle that learning in the Museum is a hands-on, lively and memorable activity.

During the period of the last plan the Museum continued to develop outreach sessions for community groups, with staff delivering a wide variety of talks off site and using the handling collection. In addition a number of activity days for pre-school children were developed. The Museum will participate in a HLF-funded partnership project with the British Museum to offer a 1-year work placement to a disadvantaged young adult in order to work with people with disabilities in the museum context. This placement will run for a year from September 2016.

Our strategic objectives during 2016-19 are:

Strategic Objective 1: Enhance Education Services for Schools

Strategic Objective 2: Develop Gaol Based Education Projects for Schools and Community Groups

Strategic Objective 3: Develop informal education opportunities for adults, young people, family groups and early years

Strategic Objective 4: Recruit, train and supervise a 1-year work placement to work with disabled people in partnership with the British Museum

Aim 4

To reach out to local communities

(NI Museums Policy Strategic Priority 2: Education and Learning)

The key focus of the last Forward Plan was to enable local communities to enter into dialogue with the Museum, and to assist them to fund and initiate their own heritage projects, drawing on the support and skills of Museum staff and external resources (eg PEACE III) to achieve their aims.

Down County Museum and Newry and Mourne Museum established the Down Heritage Network which provides a forum for heritage and cultural groups to come together to share information and expertise and learn from each other and obtain advice from museum staff. This forum can provide the basis for further development of the museums' role in providing expertise to the community, and it can also encourage community groups to use the museum's resources, collections and spaces proactively to enhance understanding and appreciation of local heritage. An annual conference will be held in conjunction with Newry and Mourne Museum to provide information and support to local groups.

During the period of the last plan the Museum's PEACE III funded community history project resulted in 40 community groups and schools actively investigating local history and culture, undertaking a range of learning activities focused on cultural diversity and producing an exciting range of learning resources including publications, exhibitions, films and oral history. As part of the Council's PEACE IV programme, the museum is keen to build on the excellent work done with groups in PEACE III and carry on this large-scale and fruitful community engagement process.

The opening of the Museum's extension in 2015 also provides us with opportunities to develop further our community engagement by providing themed tours, events and workshops on the topics of Early Christian Down, the Old Gaol and the farming and maritime heritage of the area.

During the course of the last plan, both as a result of the PEACE III programme and as a result of ongoing community engagement, a number of groups used the museum's temporary exhibition galleries, community gallery and classroom spaces to put on their own exhibitions, with advice and assistance from curatorial staff. As well as increasing the impact of the museum's work in the community, these exhibitions generated good local publicity for the museum and resulted in new audiences/users for services. This can be built on during the course of the next Forward Plan to continue to enhance our community engagement.

The Friends of Down County Museum regularly run very successful events including musical evenings and tours at the Museum. In addition, they also assist, and help to fund, a number of projects, including the 'Roses from the Heart' project. The membership of this group provides the museum with a core group of interested users who are prepared to participate in a variety of initiatives from local history and archaeology to music, arts and crafts.

Our objectives during 2016-19 will be:

Strategic Objective 1: Develop opportunities for community groups to use the museum's collections, resources, expertise and spaces to increase understanding of local heritage, culture and cultural diversity

Strategic Objective 2: Develop and promote the museum's outreach provision for community groups, working in partnership with other bodies

Strategic Objective 3: Develop and promote informal learning opportunities and tours based on collections/resources in the museum's new extension galleries

Strategic Objective 4: Plan and implement community projects as part of the Council's PEACE IV programme

Strategic Objective 5: Support and develop the activities of the Friends of Down County Museum

Aim 5

To get the message out to our audiences

(NI Museums Policy Strategic Priority 1: Developing Audiences)

The key focus of the last forward plan was to build relationships with visitors and users and develop the Museum's contribution to the St Patrick signature project. During the period of the plan the Museum opened three new permanent galleries on site. The Downpatrick high cross gallery provides a specific space dedicated to exploration of County Down's early Christian heritage and substantially increases the amount of early Christian interpretation available at the museum. This places the Museum us in a very good position to increase the number of visitors who may have arrived here to experience Early Christian heritage, become a key player in the region-wide promotion of the St Patrick brand and create marketing partnerships with other attractions to draw in more visitors. A key element of this forward plan will be to highlight the new gallery as a must-see attraction and create a range of tours, visits and events around it.

The other new galleries on site, looking at the history of the farming and fishing industries in the County, and the story of the gaol, also enable us to promote those stories and experiences to different, more local audiences. The museum now has 10 galleries, all offering substantial and unique interpretation of local history and culture as well interpretation of our uniquely important asset of the historic building. The diversity of collections and interpretation on offer provides us with the ability to deliver exciting and thought provoking visits for a variety of audiences and groups. Developing packages, events and tours for these will be key elements of the next plan.

The opening of the extension in September 2015 was accompanied by the development of a new suite of promotional materials and these will be distributed widely to promote new developments.

During the period of the last plan, as a result of the PEACE III project, the museum developed a wide range of partnerships with local community groups and organisations. This resulted in groups using the museum more proactively than before to develop their own research and local history projects. This activity provided the museum with increased profile and awareness in the community and will be developed in the period of the next plan to continue to build loyalty among the community.

Over the past year the museum has benefited from membership of visitor attraction partnerships, Heritage Island and Visit Belfast. These organisations assist with Northern Ireland and Ireland-wide promotion and provide us with opportunities to attend trade fairs and tour operator days. During the period of the next plan we will increase the number of trade fairs and operator days we attend to make full use of these membership schemes.

The advent of the new Council also provides us with the opportunity to work more closely with colleagues in Newry and Mourne Museum to promote joint visits to both museums and more effectively promote the work of the museums to groups and tourists. During the period of this plan plan both museums will be taking part in audience research and consultation

activity to shape future delivery of services and expand our knowledge of our visitors and their needs.

Our objectives during 2016-19 will be:

Strategic Objective 1: To increase visitor numbers to the Museum

Strategic Objective 2: To ensure the museum is a key visitor attraction in the region and a key driver for generating more tourist visits to the Downpatrick area.

Strategic Objective 3: To improve marketing of the museum so as to increase visitor numbers, increase user numbers and raise public profile

Aim 6

To generate income from diverse sources

(NI Museums Policy Strategic Priority 1: Developing Audiences)

The attractive historic setting in which the Museum is housed, and the fine facilities provided within the restored buildings over a period of 35 years, provide a significant opportunity for developing greater use of the site and generation of income, for example from businesses seeking an attractive location for a meeting or Away Day. The new Museum extension, popular tearoom and function room with WiFi should result in greater usage of the facilities by businesses and public bodies, and this will be a priority during the period of this plan. The historic site is also an ideal location for filming, and this aspect will also be promoted.

New tours for visiting groups relating to the Early Christian collections and the Old Gaol will be promoted, with associated catering packages. The Museum will hold regular conferences relating to archaeological and historical subjects connected with County Down, and promote itself as a good location for external conferences. A series of costumed events will be continued by staff, including historical tours, murder mystery evenings, 'meet the prisoners' visits and ghost walks in order to generate income and attract greater usage of the Museum site by the local community. The popular birthday party options will be more effectively marketed to local families to increase bookings.

The Museum will also consider how to publicise the collections and generate income by lending out travelling exhibitions, selling publications, developing merchandise relating to the collections and selling photographs from the collection online.

Strategic Objective 1: To increase earned income from the hire of facilities

Strategic Objective 2: To increase earned income from tours, events and educational activities

Strategic Objective 3: To increase earned income from retail and photographic sales

Aim 7

To train staff for success

(NI Museums Policy Strategic Priority 4: Infrastructure, Investment and Resources)

The skills and commitment of Museum staff are essential to make any of the other aspects of this plan possible, and so 'investment in people' needs to be supported at every level. Personal development plans will feed into an overall Museum training plan, and coaching and shadowing activity will also be required to ensure skills are developed and services improved. Evaluation of training will be essential to ensure that it is effective and useful in the workplace.

Strategic Objective 1: To ensure that all staff have a personal development plan in place

Strategic Objective 2: To develop a training plan for Museum staff

Strategic Objective 3: To ensure that development activity is evaluated

Aim 8

To build for the future

(NI Museums Policy Strategic Priority 4: Infrastructure, Investment and Resources)

The Museum has recently completed a Museum Extension and gallery space to the rear of the complex, where the Downpatrick High Cross has been preserved and displayed, in the context of the view of the historic landscape, including the Mound of Down, Inch Abbey (managed by DOENI) and the Quoile River, part of an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Downpatrick High Cross is an iconic monument on the St Patrick Trail, and its high profile move to Down County Museum will provide a valuable boost to the promotion of the St Patrick Trail, and the building of interest in the Early Christian heritage of Downpatrick, and specifically that housed in the Museum. Any outstanding work on the Extension will be completed during the retention period.

The restored 18th century buildings of the gaol/museum require constant maintenance and repair, and service contracts require annual funding to maintain safety and customer care standards. The front courtyard requires re-surfacing in order to prevent accidents.

Risk assessments will be updated and a risk register kept for the site. Improvements will be made in line with National Security Adviser reports and NIMC Access Audits.

Subject to feasibility and funding, a hut dating to *c*. 1900 from Ballykinler Camp will be reconstructed in the Museum courtyard as a shared history community project, displaying collections relating to the use of the hut for military and internment purposes during the decade 1912-1922.

Strategic Objective 1: To ensure that any outstanding work on the new Museum Extension is completed during the retention period

Strategic Objective 2: To maintain the gaol/museum buildings and resurface front courtyard for safety reasons

Strategic Objective 3: To carry out risk assessments and make site improvements, as recommended in health and safety, security and access audits

Strategic Objective 4: To rebuild a hut from Ballykinler Camp and display related collections

8.0 Date for review

This Forward Plan should be reviewed by the Council in 2019.

Agenda Item:	Attendance at Mountain Bike World Cup Event in Fort William $4^{th} - 5^{th}$ June 2016 FOR NOTING
Report to:	Economic Regeneration and Tourism Committee
Subject:	Attendance at Mountain Bike World Cup Event in Fort William $4^{th}-5^{th}$ June 2016
Date:	8 th April 2016
Reporting Officer:	Marie Ward
Contact Officer:	Michelle McKeown

Decisions Required		
FOR NOTING - Attendance at Mountain Bike World Cup Event in Fort William		
	4 th – 5 th June 2016	
1.0	Purpose and Background	
	In order to promote The Rostrevor Mountain Bike Trails and the Castlewellan Mountain Bike Trails it has been agreed that a Council Rep along with the Trail Head Provider for Kilbroney and the main provider at Castlewellan would attend the Mountain Bike World Cup event in Fort William on the 4 th & 5 th June 2016 with a promotional stand	
2.0	Key Issues	
	Council will arrange and cover the cost of travel, accommodation and subsistence for those attending the event.	
3.0	Recommendations For Noting	
4.0	Resource Implications	
	Total cost approx. £4,000, this is within the ERT budget.	
5.0	Appendices N/A	