

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

17 June 2015

THE ROYAL NATIONAL MÒD 2019

Report by Executive Director (Environment) and Executive Director (Education and Children's Services)

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to advise Committee of the process to bid for the Royal National Mòd in 2019, the anticipated outcomes of the event and the financial implications of hosting the event.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In 2004, Perth hosted the Royal National Mòd for the first time in 26 years. Post event evaluation estimated the Mòd to have attracted around 6,600 visitors; 1,900 of these being competitors and the remainder largely spectators. The event generated net expenditure of approximately £525,000. Subsequently, the Council committed itself to hosting the Mòd at a future juncture. In addition, in 2013 the Council launched a new Events and Festivals Strategy (Report No 13/275 refers), which stated the ambition to be a leading events tourism destination and to secure events of scale for the area. As such, attracting the Mòd back to Perth and Kinross was identified as a future opportunity.
- 1.2 Following engagement with An Comunn Gàidhealach in 2014, it was identified that the earliest opportunity to host the Mòd would be 2019, as host towns/cities have been agreed up to 2018. An Comunn Gàidhealach indicated that it would be receptive to a bid from Perth and Kinross with submission by the end of June 2015. As a result, a letter confirming the Council's intention to submit a bid was sent by the Leader of the Council to the Chair of An Communn Gàidhealach earlier this year.
- 1.3 A short study was undertaken by the Council's Enterprise team to assess the feasibility of the area hosting the Mòd. This took account of changes in infrastructure requirement and venues used by the Mòd since 2004. It also included an estimate of the likely economic impact and return on investment, given the scale of financial commitment that the Council would be required to provide. This entailed venue inspections by representatives of An Comunn Gàidhealach and also engagement with some local branch members who would be closely involved in the bidding process for the Mòd. The study, which was completed by a consultant familiar with the Mòd in general and the 2004 Mòd in Perth, was extremely positive about Perth's potential. This was as a result of the available venues, particularly in regard to the venues that could be used such as Perth Concert Hall and Perth Theatre, as well as other venues including the community campuses.

- 1.4 In order to progress matters, a working group comprising representatives from Education and Children's Services and The Environment Service together with Horsecross Arts was established to consider the event. In particular, the group has prepared the bid submission and engaged with local Gaelic interests, including the Area Committee of An Comunn Gàidhealach and Perth Gaelic Society. It was agreed that the Perth Gaelic Society (an affiliated branch of An Comunn Gàidhealach) would be the lead bidding partner; supported by the Council and Horsecross Arts. It is a bidding requirement that the application is submitted by a local Mòd branch, or equivalent (in this case the Perth Gaelic Society). In the event of the bid being successful, a wider group would be established to form a Local Organising Committee to address the local delivery arrangements for the event.

2. PROPOSALS

- 2.1 In order to be considered eligible as a potential host location, a bid must be submitted with the support of a branch or affiliated group of An Comunn Gàidhealach, albeit with significant input from the local authority. For Perth's bid, this vehicle would be Perth Gaelic Society. The bid must comprise information on venues, accommodation, infrastructure, financial support and issues such as past performance. The financial and other support of the local authority, and any other funding sources, is a material consideration and will be negotiated by An Comunn Gàidhealach with relevant agencies. The Board of Directors of An Comunn Gàidhealach will consider each bid on its individual merits and invite representatives from each bidding location to meet with the Board. The Board would normally announce a decision on future locations to coincide with the Royal National Mòd each October, with the Local Organising Committee subsequently formed.
- 2.2 While the responsibility for raising the major funding required for staging the Mòd rests with An Comunn Gàidhealach (including engagement with the local authority), it is also expected that the Local Organising Committee undertakes fundraising locally in order to assist with meeting the costs of staging the event.
- 2.3 Following the bid process outlined above, it is proposed that the Council submits a bid to host the Mòd in 2019.
- 2.4 The bid document itself outlines the strong case for Perth as the host location. It is informed by the findings of the feasibility study and the known venue requirements from information provided by An Comunn Gàidhealach. The city of Perth is well placed to host the Mòd with Perth Concert Hall being used for the four or five very large events, including public concerts, included as part of overall programme. As well as the Concert Hall, the extensive number of other rooms and halls across the city for the various events and competitions include the redeveloped Perth Theatre (which will reopen in late 2017), St John's Kirk and North Inch Community Campus as potential venues. The Mòd traditionally takes place during the October school holiday period.

- 2.5 A key feature of the Mòd is the “buzz” that the event brings to the particular host location and it is important that consideration is given to community and business engagement in the area in order that this is delivered. Moreover, there is an opportunity to develop a “fringe” programme which would complement the official Mòd programme. Accordingly, the bid document highlights the experience of the Council and its partners in delivering a range of events and festivals. It also highlights the Council’s experience in engaging with communities and businesses to make Perth and Kinross a leading events and festivals destination. In terms of accommodation supply, analysis showed that the area does have the bed spaces across a range of accommodation categories available for an estimated 1,500 Mòd visitors each night. The bid document reflects the extensive range of accommodation options throughout the area.
- 2.6 Consideration is also being given to funding a Modern Apprentice and/or a Graduate Trainee to work with the Local Organising Committee and the Council in the lead-up to the event. This would be considered as a part of the Council’s overall contribution to support the Mòd. This would provide an early career opportunity for some of the talented young people emerging from Further/Higher Education courses in Gaelic.

3. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

- 3.1 The feasibility study also assessed the potential impact of the event for Perth and Kinross. In so doing, comparative data from the evaluations of recent Mòds including Dunoon and Paisley were used together with data from the 2004 evaluation to inform the estimates of visitation and impacts. (An independent assessment of the 2014 Mòd in Inverness showed that £3.5M was generated in additional economic benefits to the local area.)
- 3.2 Estimates of visitors, including overnight and day trippers, were used together with expenditure by both visitors and the organisers in staging the event. It is estimated that the Mòd could attract 7,500 visitors and that the total direct and indirect expenditure by visitors and the organisers could amount to £1,040,970. Assuming an investment by Perth and Kinross Council of £160,000 the estimated rate of return would be just under 7 to 1. (Approximately £7 of expenditure generated for every £1 of investment by the Council).
- 3.3 In addition to the direct economic impacts, it is acknowledged that there is significant exposure for the host area. In Paisley in 2013 for example, the Mòd was covered in 33 different press titles which reached some 9 million readers. It was also covered by both BBC and STV, with the former reaching some 6.5 million viewers. There will also be educational and cultural benefits, making it important for the Council and its partners to consider a legacy programme.

4. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Council has been making budget provision since 2006/7 to support the hosting of this festival of Gaelic culture. As a result, if no other demands are made on the budget, there will be £140,000 allocated towards this. This will be the Council's direct contribution and it should also be noted:
- Perth Gaelic Society has confirmed that £5,000 remains in the local funding allocation from the 2004 Perth Mod which can be redirected to support the 2019 event;
 - For the 2004 Mòd, over £100,000 of public sector support was provided. In addition, the Local Organising Committee would be expected to raise £30,000 towards the event.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 The Royal National Mòd is clearly a significant event for a local authority area to host and the Council has been making financial provision for a number of years. Given the established circuit of locations in the Argyll and Bute, Highland, and Western Isles local authority areas, the opportunity to bid for the Mòd is not a regularly recurring one. An Comunn Gàidhealach has indicated that if there is not a bid in respect of the 2019 Mòd, then the opportunity for Perth and Kinross to host the event will not occur for at least another ten years. It is understood that there is interest from other lowland local authorities in bidding for the Mòd. The bid has to be submitted by the end of June. The assessment undertaken by the Council shows that Perth has the supply of venues and accommodation required to host the Mòd and that the area would be an appealing prospect for Mòd goers.
- 5.2 The hosting of such an event is in line with the ambition of the Council's Events and Festivals Strategy and the ambition within the Perth City Plan as a vibrant cultural centre and leading events destination.
- 5.3 It is recommended that the Committee:
- (i) Notes the progress made with the preparation of the formal bid to An Comunn Gàidhealach to host the Royal National Mòd in Perth in 2019
 - (ii) Approves the bid in principle with authority delegated to the Executive Director (Education and Children's Services) and Executive Director (Environment) to finalise the bid.
 - (iii) Approves the subsequent expenditure to stage the Royal National Mòd, including a fee to An Comann Gàidhealachy, of £140,000 from Council resources if the bid is successful.
 - (iv) Approves that consideration is given to seek a Modern Apprentice or Graduate Trainee as part of the overall Council's contribution

- (v) Instructs the Executive Director (Environment) and the Executive Director (Education and Children's Services) to seek other sources of funding to support the hosting of the Mòd, if the bid is successful
- (vi) Requests reports to future meetings of relevant Committees in respect of progress regarding the event.

Author(s)

Name	Designation	Contact Details
Alan Graham	Business Development Team Leader	Tel: 01738 477951 E-mail: AGraham@pkc.gov.uk
Fiona Robertson	Head of Culture and Community Services	Tel: 01738 72670 E-mail: fionarobertson@pkc.gov.uk

Approved

Name	Designation	Date
Jim Valentine	Executive Director (Environment)	8 June 2015
John Fyffe	Executive Director (Education and Children's Services)	15 May 2015

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1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes / None
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	Yes
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	Yes
Workforce	None
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	None
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	None
Strategic Environmental Assessment	None
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	Yes
Legal and Governance	None
Risk	None
Consultation	
Internal	Yes
External	None
Communication	
Communications Plan	None

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement

- 1.1 This section should set out how the proposals relate to the delivery of the Perth and Kinross Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement in terms of the following priorities:

- (i) Giving every child the best start in life
- (ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens
- (iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy
- (iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives
- (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations

Corporate Plan

- 1.2 This section should set out how the proposals relate to the achievement of the Council's Corporate Plan Priorities:

- (i) Giving every child the best start in life;
- (ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens;
- (iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy;
- (iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives; and
- (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations

2. Resource Implications

Financial

- 2.1 Subject to the budget review process the budget fee payable to would be accommodated within the Council's Revenue Budget.

Workforce

- 2.2 There are no workforce implications arising from this report.

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

- 2.3 There are no asset management implications arising from this report.

3. Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. An equality impact assessment needs to be carried out for functions, policies, procedures or strategies in relation to race, gender and disability and other relevant protected characteristics. This supports the Council's legal requirement to comply with the duty to assess and consult on relevant new and existing policies.
- 3.2 The function, policy, procedure or strategy presented in this report was considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) with the following outcome: Assessed as not relevant for the purposes of EqIA.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.3 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals. No further action is required as it does not qualify as a PPS as defined by the Act and is therefore exempt.

Sustainability

- 3.4 Under the provisions of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 the Council has to discharge its duties in a way which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. In terms of the Climate Change Act, the Council has a general duty to demonstrate its commitment to sustainability and the community, environmental and economic impacts of its actions. The activities in this report will contribute towards sustainable economic development in Perth and Kinross.

Legal and Governance

- 3.5 The consideration of the report is in line with the Council's Scheme of Administration and specifically the role of the Enterprise and Infrastructure Committee in developing measures to support and promote economic activity and to plan key infrastructure.

Risk

- 3.6 Risks and the controls required to mitigate any risks will be reported through the Council's risk management process where the Council is the lead on individual projects.

4. Consultation

Internal

- 4.1 The Head of Planning and Development and Head of Finance have been consulted in the development of the report.

External

- 4.2 Consultation has been undertaken with the Perth Gaelic Society.

5. Communication

- 5.1 Any communications required will be undertaken by the Council in the event of the bid being successful.

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Events & Festivals Strategy – Report by the Depute Director (Environment) to the Enterprise and Infrastructure Committee (ref: 13/275); 5 June 2013

3. APPENDICES

None