



Fermanagh & Omagh
District Council
Comhairle Ceantair
Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí

Events and Festivals Strategy

2021 – 2026

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Version 1.4

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Foreward

We rate festivals and events highly. They provide recreation and leisure opportunities for our residents, help build strong and resilient communities and have many economic and social benefits. Crucially, our festivals and events provide a strong sense of community, cultural identity and pride - each festival or event has its own distinctive qualities and appeal.

As Councils are put under pressure financially, and several of our Council departments support, host or initiate events, we need to find ways to make sure our investment has maximum impact and benefit across our community.

That's why this events and festivals strategy is so important. We need to help communities and event organisers take longer term views about how to develop and sustain their events, while the Council makes the process of applying for our help credible and coherent, across all departments.

At the same time, we need to build the area's capacity to attract match funding while we build Fermanagh and Omagh's reputation for hosting events, to contribute to the area's economic and tourism benefit.



Image 1 BBC Proms, credit BBCNI

1 Introduction

Events and Festivals enable communities to feel connected and proud about where they live, work and play. In Fermanagh and Omagh they illuminate a rich tapestry of places, cultures, beliefs, traditions, arts and talents. Events and Festivals are also important to stimulate local economic activity, showcasing great places and attractions, and helping to place Fermanagh and Omagh on the map as a visitor destination.

Importantly Events and Festivals have been identified by Fermanagh and Omagh District Council (FODC) as having a key role in helping to achieve the vision of the 2030 Community Plan:

“a welcoming, shared and inclusive Fermanagh and Omagh district, where people and places are healthy, safe, connected and prosperous, and where our outstanding natural, built and cultural heritage is cherished and sustainably managed”.

Events play an important role in the cultural fabric of our community and provide significant cultural, economic and social benefit. They act to bring people together and foster a shared sense of place for the region, celebrating the diversity of our people, place and experiences.

An important catalyst for tourism and economic development, events raise the profile and reputation of the destination and deliver economic benefit through local spend and repeat visitation. They encourage social wellbeing and connectedness, facilitating community participation and pride. They also act to foster creativity and innovation.

1.1 Events & Festivals Strategy Purpose

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council is committed to ensuring our community and visitors have the opportunity to experience and participate in a range of quality and exciting events.

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council has acknowledged the importance of events and Festivals both to animate the community, to attract visitors and project positive images of the region and its capabilities, especially when events support and reinforce the product strengths of the area.

The Events and Festivals Strategy 2021-2026 defines Fermanagh and Omagh Council’s role and ways it will support a program of events and festivals. It articulates the resource commitments Council will make and how FODC will work with the local community to ensure Events and Festivals are inclusive, demonstrate best practice, are sustainable and flourish. The aim is for the Strategy to be closely aligned to and integrate effectively with the key existing strategies across the Council area and being developed more widely. The strategy is supported with more detailed findings and research outcomes.



Image 2 Christmas Omagh



Image 3 Sperrin's Walking Festival

2 The Way Ahead - A Strategy for Events and Festivals

This Events and Festival Strategy seeks to support the Events Strategy Working Group and Council Officers in their aims to support, attract, and promote events that deliver community and economic benefit and add vibrancy to Fermanagh and Omagh. It provides the Council with a clear direction to build on its foundation of success and achieve greater social, economic and cultural benefit and vibrancy for our region.

2.1 Vision

Fermanagh and Omagh is known and recognised as one of Northern Ireland's most event-friendly destinations, supporting, developing and fostering events that contribute to our community values and provide economic and social benefits for our communities. Our vibrant and diverse annual events calendar will celebrate and showcase our culture, heritage and unique natural environment.

2.2 Ambition

To increase community excitement, pride, economic benefit and add to the traditional and cultural fabric of Fermanagh and Omagh.

2.3 Strategic Goals

There are five strategic goals and actions. Each goal has particular areas of focus and a set of actions on how Fermanagh and Omagh District Council will address each of the strategic priorities to achieve the district's ambition for events and festivals.

The strategy focuses five priorities are:

1. Support

We will provide a supportive environment which facilitates the effective creation, production and development of existing events and festivals and attract new events and festivals that bring visitors and new spending to Fermanagh and Omagh.

2. Develop

We will develop strong collaboration across the public agencies with event / festival organisers identifying the resources required to build

their capacity and capability and to support and assist events / festivals move towards being financially self-sustaining.

3. Promote

We will encourage, support and develop events that increase visitation and enhance the profile of the Fermanagh and Omagh District Council region as a destination that celebrates and showcases our communities, our people, places and unique selling points.

4. Monitor

We will develop a consistent and systematic approach to event/ festival evaluation in order to measure the outcomes generated by those Fermanagh and Omagh District Council invests in. The evaluation framework should be used to assess the outcomes delivered by individual events, as well as the overall portfolio.

5. Sustain

Fermanagh and Omagh District will be recognised as a leader in hosting environmentally and sustainable events and festivals.



3 Strategic Alignment

The Events and Festivals Strategy aligns closely with the Fermanagh and Omagh 2030 Community Plan which provides an over-arching long term structure and strategic context for all Council programs and services. The Events and Festivals Strategy aligns with the following 2030 outcomes:

People and Communities Theme:

- Outcome 1: Our people are healthy and well – physically, mentally and emotionally
- Outcome 2: Older people lead more independent, engaged and socially connected lives
- Outcome 3: Our communities are inclusive, safe, resilient and empowered

Economic Infrastructure and Skills Theme:

- Outcome 5: Our economy is thriving, expanding and outward looking

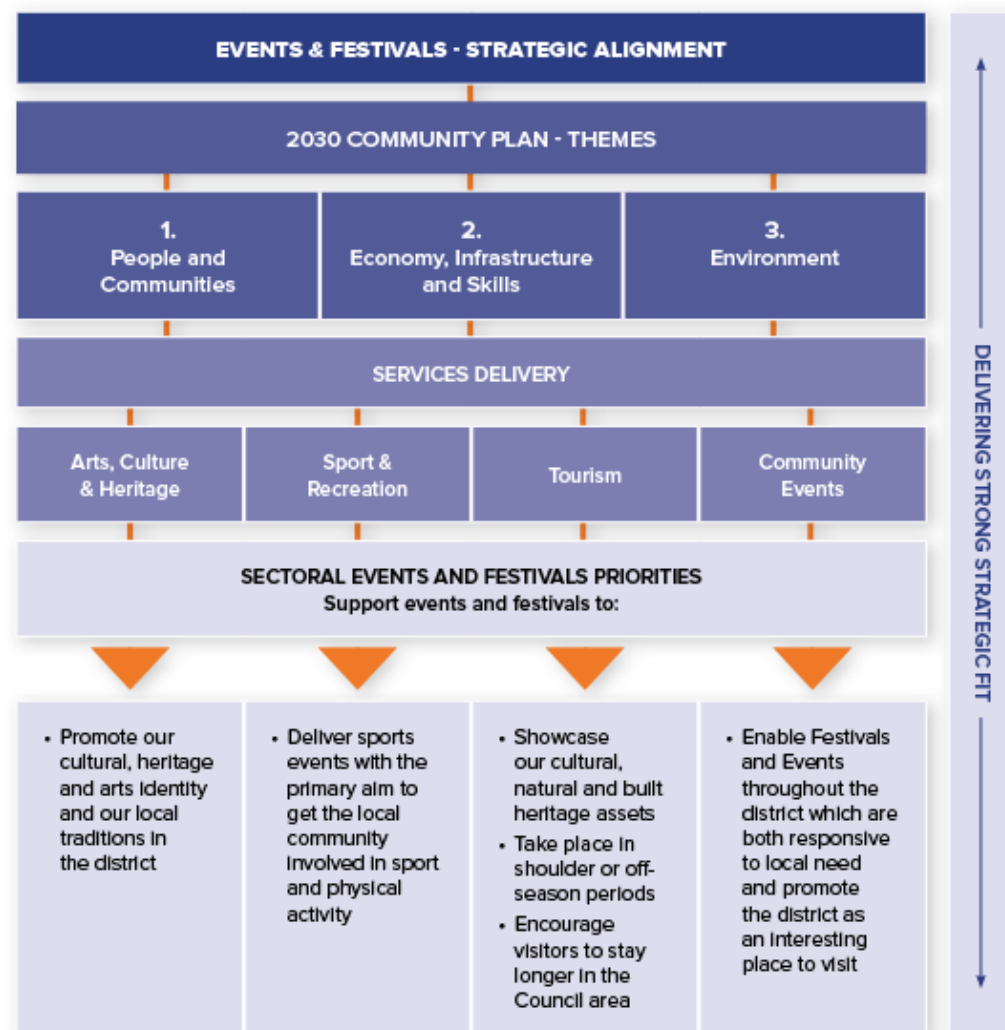
Environment Theme:

- Outcome 7: Our outstanding natural environment and built and cultural heritage is sustainably managed and, where possible, enhanced
- Outcome 8: Our district is an attractive and accessible place



Figure 1 depicts in headline terms the strategic alignment with the 2030 Community Plan and then each of the Strategic Goals, the Cross-Cutting Themes and the Sectoral Emphases.

Figure 1



3.1 Local and National Strategy and Policies

The Fermanagh and Omagh District Council Events and Festivals Strategy supports and complements a number of regional and national strategies.

Table 1

Local Strategic Context	National Strategic Context
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fermanagh and Omagh 2030 Community Plan Corporate Plan for Fermanagh and Omagh District Council 2015 - 2019 FODC Tourism Development 2016-2019 Active Together – A Strategy for Leisure in Fermanagh and Omagh 2019 - 2030 Enniskillen Town Master Plan 2012 Omagh Town Master Plan 2015 FODC Economic Development Plan 2016 - 2019 TNI & FODC Blue Sail Report 2018 FODC Angling Strategy 2015 FODC Events and Festivals Framework 2018 FODC Sponsorship Guidelines 2018 FODC Corporate Funding Policy 2018 	<p>Regional: Programme for Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TNI Events Strategic Vision 2020 NI Tourism Strategy (Draft) NI Economic Strategy Arts Council Northern Ireland Five Year Strategy 2013-2018, <p>Department of Communities (DfC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategy for Culture and Arts The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure guidance framework for the Community Festivals Fund

From both a policy context and the review of the local, regional and national reports and strategies a number of common characteristics can be identified, these being:

- Events and Festivals contribute to community development, regeneration, civic pride, tourism, recreation, arts and cultural ambitions.
- Events and Festivals as well as being economic drivers, raise the profile and reputation of a destination; this in some instances can have a greater output than purely economic benefit (i.e. civic pride).
- They encourage social wellbeing and connectedness, facilitating community participation, integration and pride.
- They foster creativity and innovation.
- For local residents they provide recreational and/or regeneration opportunities that help to build strong and resilient communities through participation and involvement, as well as increasing economic and social benefits.
- Events and festivals support tourism being one of NI's most important industries, help to create wealth and jobs and build a strong international reputation.
- Events and Festivals deliver economic benefit through local spend and repeat visitation.



Image 6- Courtesy of BBC PROMS NI

4 The Role of Fermanagh and Omagh Council

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council undertakes a variety of roles when involved in the delivery of events; these roles can include:

Table 2

Role	Description
Strategic Leader	Advocate and champion a coordinated and strategic event focus for the Council area and act as a catalyst for partnerships.
Enabler	Develop and refine relevant and accessible processes for the approval, regulation and coordination of events providing advice for event organisers, especially around use of FODC locations.
Sponsor	Strategically investing in events organised by others through targeted funding programs.
Producer	Directly undertakes the initiation, planning and delivery of corporate community events for the community. This includes fully funding or part funding (by seeking sponsorship). Such events include St Patrick's Day, Halloween, annual Christmas events, Remembrance Day etc.
Champion	Provide significant support in advocating and accommodating a vibrant events platform, including community, private and public sector engagement. Empowering event organisers and community groups through skills development, information and advice, and relationship management.
Partner and Stakeholder	Working with event organisers, businesses, community groups, and individuals to support events and create new opportunities.
Promoter and Advocate	Championing event initiatives and their benefits to stakeholders; utilising Council's marketing and communications resources to promote and generate audiences.

5 Independent Event Organisers

There are a number of professional event promoters and organisers delivering events in the region. We will be pro-active and approach these organisers to build relationships and encourage more commercial operators to stage events and festivals in the region.

External event organisers – whether from a commercial or community background that are motivated to develop and run events in Fermanagh and Omagh - will help the Council achieve its objectives.



6 Events and Festivals SWOT Analysis

Table 3

SWOT Analysis			
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rich and diverse cultural, historic and heritage venue settings • Strong community participation and support for events • Natural assets • Active communities and strong “volunteer” support for local events • Active role of the Council in promoting and supporting events • Diverse range of events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited number of venues/ locations with resources or infrastructure to host events • Limited local professional event management knowledge/ expertise for many events • Development and hosting of events often left to volunteers and volunteer/community groups • Limits to the availability of accommodation to support growth in event visitor numbers • Infrastructure challenges with parking, roads, access etc. to support larger scale events • Point of difference - current events are not sufficiently differentiated from events elsewhere in NI • Focus more on what the operators/ event organisers want/need rather than what the consumer is looking for • No significant “Signature Events” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing portfolio of events and festivals • Strong network of events and event organisers to build on • Active engagement of the Council and its departments in event management, funding and promotion • Corporate Community Plan offers positive context for events • Council venues available for events • Council support and direction to ensure health and safety for event organisers • Enhanced social media marketing to substitute for more expensive traditional routes to market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial sustainability – sponsorship / events funding • Limitation to Council and other public sector funding for events • Community expectation of ongoing funds and in-kind support from the Council • Dependence on the Council for logistical and venue support • Increasing strong competition from other regional and national destinations • Too many events / not the right events competing for limited financial resources • Support for events that do not complement the region’s position and brand

7 FODC Current Position

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council's events and festivals portfolio, programming, content and delivery is spread across a number of service areas. Fermanagh and Omagh District Council currently supports a range of events across the district through a mixture of direct delivery, commissioning and partnering arrangements. These events constitute the Council's events and festivals programme.

The existing programme contains a range of cultural, tourism, sporting and community-based events that are currently distributed unevenly across the calendar and are made up of both annual and one-off events. These events attract hundreds of residents and visitors and make a direct and indirect social and economic contribution to communities. The commitment of volunteers, and organisers provides a platform for the delivery of these events and their contribution to a way of life and attraction as a place to visit.

7.1 Events and Festivals Funding Streams

The current funding of events and festivals is through the following channels:

Grant Aid: The Grant Aid programme for Events & Festivals opens twice yearly in January & September for applications. Voluntary Clubs, Societies, Community and Sporting Organisations based in the FODC area can apply. The streams (categories) of events and festivals available for funding are:

- Arts Culture and Heritage - 9 applications were received in January 2019
- Festivals & Events Large - 23 applications were received in January 2019
- Festivals & Events Small - 41 applications were received in January 2019
- Sports Events¹ – 34 applications were received in January 2019

FODC Service Departments: Funding of events and festivals through the following service delivery departments (see also Table 4):

- Leisure, Sport & Recreation
- Tourism and Economic Development
- Arts Culture & Heritage

¹ This grant aid stream only opens in the first round of each financial year.

² Delivered by the Events Team.

- Corporate / Civic Events²

7.2 Current Events – 2019 / 2020

The table below summarises the category of event, the value of funding and the total number of events and festivals supported directly and indirectly by FODC for the period April 2019 – March 2020. The value of the event funding is for the first call of funding approved in April 2019; the amount will increase subject to funding approval for events and festivals from the second call of funding in September 2019.

On the whole, Council-led events are delivered on a service department basis, though a small number are delivered on a cross-service basis.

Table 4

Service Department	Total No Events	2019/20 Funding
Community Services		
Festivals & Events – Small	41	£15,869
Festivals & Events – Large	23	£37,800
Total Community Services Grant Aid Events and Funding	64	£53,669
Service Delivery Department		
Leisure, Sports, Recreation ³	35	£25,502
Events Management	17	£80,800
Tourism and Economic Development	21	£68,164
Arts & Culture ⁴	26	£202,300
PCSP	1	£3,000
Total Service Delivery	100	£379,766
Total FODC Events and Festivals Funding 2019/2020 at April 2019	164	£433,435

³ Includes 34 Sports Events Grant Aid funding (£15,002)

⁴ Includes 9 Culture Nights Grant Aid funding (£37,094)

8 Event and Festivals Portfolio

The events and festivals portfolio consist of a range of cultural, tourism, sporting and community-based events in Fermanagh and Omagh that complements and might have characteristics that are distinctive and specific to an area. However, the events and festivals are currently distributed unevenly across the calendar and consist of both annual and one-off events. These are either delivered or supported by a number of Council departments.

A priority should be to consider the events and festivals profile of Fermanagh and Omagh in relation to regional / major/ signature events of scale and that they have a clear fit with the wider Council vision and priorities.

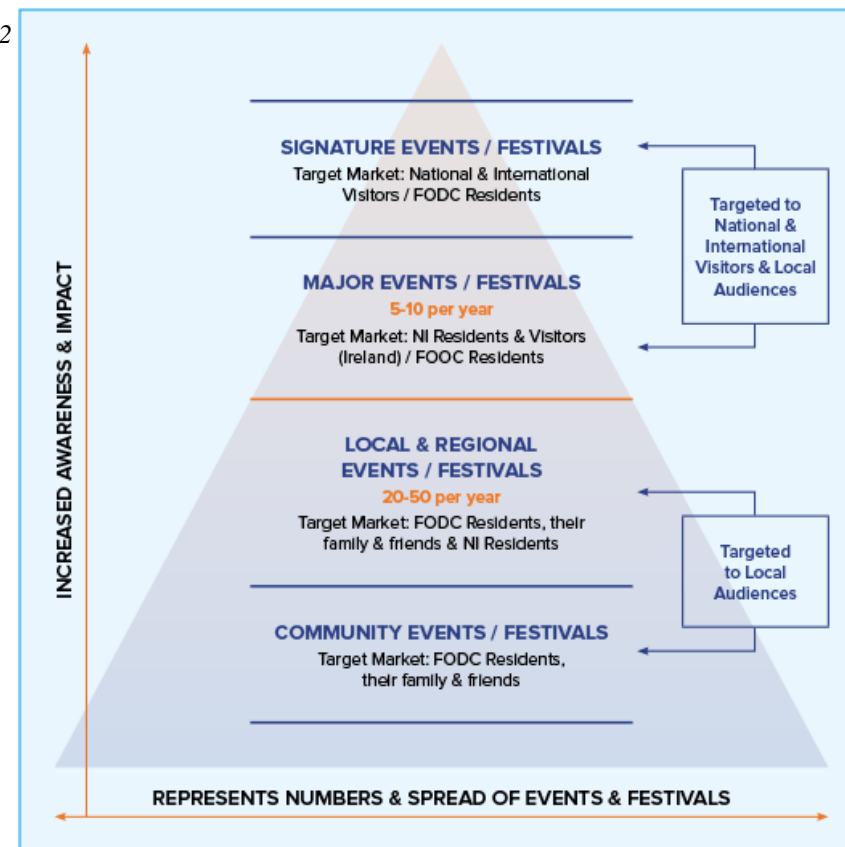
This strategy will aim to:

- Develop a well-rounded portfolio that offers a vibrant and diverse event and a festivals calendar that celebrates sports, arts, traditional culture, heritage, music, and the environment and supports the cultural identity and local traditions of an area.
- Provide a balanced events calendar that encourages the spread of events geographically across the district and throughout the year especially in the winter and shoulder seasons.
- Promotion of our location and its natural resources and assets (such as Lough Erne, the Forests) combined with our Arts Culture & Heritage; Sport to provide strong leveraging opportunities to develop a competitive advantage for events and festivals in the region.
- Attract overnight stays and higher yield and build visitor experience development opportunities and reputation for Fermanagh and Omagh.

The event pyramid will be used to identify events and festivals that contribute to a triple bottom line for Fermanagh and Omagh i.e. those that deliver social, environmental and economic benefits to the region.

The 'Events Pyramid' (figure 2) provides a strategic direction on the number, scale and type of events to be acquired, retained and/or developed and the basis for funding appraisal using the events and festivals criteria.

Figure 2



Currently in Fermanagh and Omagh District Council there aren't any what might be considered "signature/ major events" that have high-level international visitor numbers and awareness. There are however existing events and festivals that could potentially be elevated to signature/ destination status to build the region's competitive advantage. An ambition would be to host 1 or 2 Signature events/ festivals per year.

There is a wide range of regional events and festivals across the district. Some of these events and festivals have limited national recognition and while they attract out of district attendance, they have limited overnight stays (the high level of occupancy of hotels impacting on this). A number of events and festivals attract local attendees or are aimed at niche target markets (e.g. angling, motorcycling) but do attract out of district visitors.

9 Events and Festivals Categories

Event / Festival Category	Reach	Characteristics
Local Home-Grown Community Events and Festivals	<p>Primarily community-based events that attract local visitors and local media that contribute to social cohesion. Some may have potential to attract visitors and participants from outside the region. Generally held over 1 – 2 days with a limited budget requiring support i.e. less than £5,000</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally, attract less than 1,000 people from the local community/ region and are open to all participants taking part in the event. • Has strong community participation and Celebrate aspects of community and bring energy and colour to the region • Deliver social value for primarily local audiences rather than economic impact • Organised by local charities, Community groups, sporting groups and commemorative organisations which improves community relations. • Managed locally by a volunteer committee
Regional Events and Festivals* Attract Regional Profile for the Area	<p>Events and festivals that promote sport participation, celebrate our traditional culture and heritage and our natural resources (forests and water) and locations.</p> <p>These have a loyal, local following and might attract visitors to the region and generate economic benefit and attract regional and national media coverage.</p> <p>Generally held over 2 days or more and can extend the annual event calendar, enhance Fermanagh and Omagh's profile as an event destination and offer the potential to attract higher-yield visits.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally, attract numbers up to 5,000 and are open to all to attend • Involves both spectators and participation of competitors (sport events), performers (festivals) and exhibitors • Draw visitors from outside the region • Attract tourism and economic benefits and local media coverage and local business benefits, with potential to increase benefits over time. • May be one-off or recurring • Managed locally by a volunteer committee or event organiser or by external promoters and specialists • Includes Civic Events organised and delivered by Fermanagh and Omagh District Council
Major Events (National and International) Attract Regional Profile for the Area	<p>Events which generate significant economic / media benefits with increased numbers of visitors from outside the region and generate national and international media coverage. Often one-off or occasional events that may not be unique to the region (e.g. major sporting events/concerts).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showcase local cultural, sporting, community or lifestyle opportunities • Could be, are part of an event programme circuit and not exclusive to Fermanagh and Omagh District Council • May have corporate sponsors

Event / Festival Category	Reach	Characteristics
	<p>These events generate substantial community, economic and tourism benefits including national and international profile and visitation, likely to be one-off or initial years of a longer-term opportunity leading to a signature event.</p> <p>Major Events will complement the Fermanagh and Omagh District Council events portfolio and are attracted to Fermanagh and Omagh by its appeal as a destination and reputation as a region which delivers quality events.</p> <p>These types of events might require a bidding process and are held as a single staging in the destination in the lead up to bidding for a national, European or international event signature event.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May involve participatory elements • Involves both spectators and participation of competitors (sport events), performers (festivals) and exhibitors • Attract significant tourism and economic benefits • Managed by a professional event organiser • Require longer lead in time e.g. 18 – 24 months • Expected attendance over 5,000
Signature Events**	<p>Internationally or nationally recognised events that may be one-off or recurring; provide variety and richness; and are important for building profile, reputation and drawing visitors from outside the region.</p> <p>Possessing such significance, in their tradition, attractiveness, image, or publicity that they provide the host community with a competitive advantage.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally, a one-time event • Attract significant tourism and economic benefits • Often subject to a bidding process and may require national / international association support for bidding • Attracts significant share of outside visitors and participants. High level of overnight visits • High level of national and international profile coverage • Provides sponsors and Fermanagh and Omagh District Council with national and international media and branding opportunities • Managed by professional event organisers and a host of specialists • Required higher level of Fermanagh and Omagh District Council department engagement with commitment of senior staff in event planning • Require a 2 to 5-year lead time • Expected attendance over 10,000

* There are a wide range of regional events and festivals across the district. Some of these events and festivals have limited national recognition and while they attract out of district attendance, they have limited overnight stays (the high level of occupancy of hotels impacting on this). A number of events and festivals attract local attendees or are aimed at niche target markets (e.g. angling, motorcycling) but do attract out of district visitors and visitor numbers.

**Currently in FODC there are no what might be considered “signature/ major events” that have a high-level international visitor numbers and awareness. There are existing events and festivals that could potentially be elevated to signature/ destination status to build the region’s competitive advantage.

10 Events and Festivals Funding Assessment Criteria

Criteria for Council funding support for events and festivals needs to be:

- In line with the Fermanagh and Omagh District Council Event and Festivals vision
- Directly related to the strategic approach and links with the Fermanagh and Omagh 2030 Community Plan outputs.

The internal assessment framework will be a **common, evidence-based process** to support investment decisions for all events and festivals, across all departments of Fermanagh and Omagh District Council. This will allow investment decisions to be made for Events and Festivals seeking Council support on events that meet and / or demonstrate achievement of the strategy, Council and Community Plan priorities and objectives.

Applications will be assessed by looking at ways in which the event or festival will create a positive impact for Fermanagh and Omagh. There are five criteria on which the applications will be prioritised in determining which events to support and at what level.

- I. Strategic Fit
- II. Community Involvement (Social)
- III. Economic / Profile Impact (Economic)
- IV. Sustainability (Environmental)
- V. Media/Profile

Table 6 outlines the criteria, weighting and measures to be used in the assessment process by each department / service (i.e. each service assesses the event application if planning to allocate funds from the department budget).

The investment decision for Events and Festivals funding applications will be based on the outcome of the criteria measures.

Notes:

- Events and Festivals criteria and scoring will be reviewed annually to align with Corporate priorities and community plan outcomes.

- A number of the community events held in Fermanagh and Omagh are “free” events and therefore rely on grant funding. The strategy recognises that events of all sizes make a valuable contribution to the region and community events are important pillars of Fermanagh and Omagh’s event portfolio. Currently some community events do not generate sufficient income to be financially sustainable and are reliant on the FODC funding for the event to happen in current and subsequent years.
- For Local Home-Grown Events and Festivals, a simpler and consistent application and approval process across all departments is required.
- At a time of financial stringency, a strategic approach to Events and Festivals is essential. For department managers a scheme of delegated authority and clear direction of responsibilities is required to manage and approve funding bids, especially for smaller, lower impact events.
- Event Management support and Business management support should be available by the Council to applicants to assist them demonstrate how the event will achieve the assessment criteria.
- Annual recurring events and festivals that can demonstrate growth potential should be encouraged to develop three-year business plan to support to future development and sustainability.
- Multi-Annual Events and Festivals should be considered by Fermanagh and Omagh District Council.
- **Outward Sponsorship** - A Sponsorship process to support event organisers has been developed that maximises Sponsorship benefits based on an investment criterion (as per Events and Festivals funding criteria) aligned to the outcomes of the Community Plan 2030 and this Events and Festivals Strategy.

Table 6

*Events and Festivals Funding Criteria			
Criteria	Weighting	Measures	
1. Strategic Fit	20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Event positively contributes to the Fermanagh and Omagh 2030 Community Plan Demonstrate fit with the social / cultural / heritage / tourism / sport / recreation aims of the Council 	
2. Community Involvement (Social)	20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of community engagement including opportunities for volunteering Positive impact on local communities and opportunities for social / skills development Accessibility & Inclusiveness 	
3. Economic Impact (Economic)	20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate event's potential to attract visitors from outside the local area – i.e. national (Rest of Northern Ireland/Ireland) or international (overseas) Expected visitor numbers Demonstrate impact on the economy of the local area Evidence anticipated potential income generation 	
4. Sustainability (Environmental)	20%	Environmental <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measures to mitigate risk to the environment whilst planning and holding the event Waste Management – the approach to recycling, reducing and re-use waste (Green Your Festival initiative) Litter management Carbon Footprint 	Operational <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place Making Future growth & development Benefit to existing businesses in the District
5. Media /Profile Impact	20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate potential for the event to generate media profile for Fermanagh and Omagh area Demonstrate the types of media coverage the event generates, i.e. TV, print press, radio, social? Evidence that the coverage will be on a local, national and/or international level? Promotes a sense of place 	

*Events and Festivals criteria and scoring will be reviewed annually to align with Corporate priorities and community plan outcomes.

11 Events and Festivals Sponsorships

The Council has developed a Corporate Sponsorship Policy that provides opportunities for business and media to sponsor an event or festival alongside a number of additional Corporate sponsorship opportunities.

Sponsorship, for the purposes of this Policy, is defined as:

‘...an agreement between the Council and the sponsor, where the Council receives financial, or benefits in kind, support of an event, activity, campaign, facility, asset or initiative from an organisation or individual which in turn gains publicity or other benefits.’

The term ‘sponsor’ is essentially the provider of sponsorship for Council events, festivals and venues.

Inward Sponsorship - Over recent years, there have been a number of approaches by local businesses to sponsor Council events and festivals. The Corporate Sponsorship Policy provides a consistency across the organisation on how sponsorship opportunities are identified, advertised and approved. It provides the potential to develop partnership opportunities and additional revenue streams for services, maximise return on investment of events and facilities and reduce reputational risk to the Council through a planned and risk-based approach to the approval of Sponsorship agreements.

Objectives

To ensure sponsorship applications are being assessed against specific criteria to ensure consistency and fair consideration for all applicants. The Council will actively seek opportunities to work with local, regional, national and/or international organisations by identifying sponsorship opportunities, of mutual benefit, in keeping with its Corporate Vision, Values and Strategic Priorities.

Principles

The Policy outlines the general principles which will help the Council manage sponsorship opportunities, including information on:

- Transparent criteria and procedures.
- A consistent and professional approach.

- Protection (for all parties) in relation to allegations of inappropriate arrangements.
- Accountability, ensuring best value is obtained for all parties involved in sponsorship arrangements.
- Sustainability, to enhance, or assist with, Council and/or business activities.

The Sponsorship Policy maximises the opportunity for the Council to obtain commercial sponsorship for appropriate events, activities, campaigns and facilities, whilst also offering potential sponsors attractive packages, offering value for all parties involved.

This policy applies to all sponsorship opportunities (‘paid for’ and ‘contra’ opportunities) across all Council Directorates and is not limited to just services, publications and events.

Sponsorship Criteria

Inward Sponsorship will be considered from businesses, organisations and media outlets

It is important to ensure that:

Consideration of the type of event and the level of sponsorship contribution, as well as ensuring that the potential sponsor has the capacity and capability to fulfil the sponsorship agreement.

12 Resources

Events Team (ET) is the single point of contact for Events and Festivals enquires and signposting across the different Council departments and the Safety Advisory Group. The role of the event team is to facilitate and partner events, provide an advisory role and a liaison service for events and festivals being held in Fermanagh and Omagh District Council district. The events team may also initiate events on behalf of the Council and is the coordinator of the Events Management Forum.

The key activities of the Events Management Team will be:

- Event initiation, program development, event coordination & delivery
- Facilitation and coordination of:
 - Events Management Forum
 - Safety Advisory Group (SAG)
- Reporting to Events Strategy Working Group
- Managing Major Events fund/Budget
- Identifying & coordinating bidding for events
- Event and programme marketing & promotion
- Events and Festivals website - update and manage
- Event and community programs support & assessment
- Events management is the single point of contact for events and Festivals enquires and signpost across the different Council departments and Safety Advisory Group membership
- Coordination and collaboration with Sports, Tourism and Marketing departments to maximise the opportunities from events and festivals
- Assist event and festival organisers with a range of services all year round: workshops on event management, Event spaces, advice about permits and legislation, manage promotional and marketing opportunities, advice and event planning coordination.

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council service departments allocate and manage their own resources and budgets to support events and festivals.

The Council will always comply with its own Procurement and Financial Policies and Guidelines.

13 Delivering Success

The Strategy Action Plan contains steps required to realise future opportunities and achieve the recommendations included in this Events and Festivals Strategy - to develop Fermanagh and Omagh as an event friendly destination, as well as supplementary actions that can be undertaken to further its success.

The action plan focusses on the five identified priorities:

1. Support
2. Develop
3. Promote
4. Monitor
5. Sustainability

Actions will be implemented over the following time frames:

Short-term – within the next year (2021/22)

Medium-term – within the following two years (2022/23; 2023/24)

Long term – Beyond 2023/26

FODC Events and Festivals Strategy Action Plan will be reviewed annually to align with Corporate priorities and community plan outcomes.



Image 9 GrangeFest

FODC Events and Festivals Strategy Action Plan					
Activity	Actions	Owners/ Partners	Outcomes	KPIs	Timing
1. Support					
1. Support the development of a proactive local events and festivals industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that Fermanagh and Omagh District Council Events Team, (ET) leading on events, has capable, credible and experienced human resources aligned to the needs of events in the district Review role of Council delivery of events and agree process to outsource management of Council events to 3rd parties (where considered appropriate and feasible) Facilitate event organiser, venue, tourism operators, manager networking events Organise site visits for local event organisers to visit venues, open spaces and tourism facilities 	Owner Events Team Partners FODC Depts Event & Festival Organisers Tourism Businesses Training providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated whole-of-Council approach to event planning, management and monitoring of supported events Increase in events gaining support Increased profile, better economic impact ET staff able to spend more time building event organisers' capacity, supporting existing and new events Plan for strengthening external event organisers and prioritising Councils' commitments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of events Economic impact Publicity and PR for F& O as an events destination Number of ET capacity building and other activities for event organisers 	20/21 20/21 20/21 20/22
2. Build capacity of event organisers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with local event organisers to identify training opportunities that would be most beneficial for them. Develop a schedule of event organiser training opportunities that is tailored to suit different levels of experience Explore opportunities to develop a volunteer training and event experience programme 	Owner Events Team Partners FODC Event & Festival Organisers Colleges Training providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved professional skills and capabilities for event organisers / event committees / volunteers Increased sustainability of events through less reliance on Council funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise 2 workshops per year Event organisers' views of volunteer capacity/ sustainability 	20/22 20/25 Ongoing

FODC Events and Festivals Strategy Action Plan					
Activity	Actions	Owners/ Partners	Outcomes	KPIs	Timing
3. Support events that develop a sense of place and cater to our community's characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage event organisers to utilise local businesses and develop a directory of contact details for local event suppliers Communicate clear benefits of events to the community with regular feature articles online and in social channels Implement a communication programme – targeting business and community partners, existing event organisers and prospective event organisers to promote the outcomes and benefits of Events and Festivals Work and engage with existing events to explore opportunities to further leverage audience reach in target markets 	Owner Events Team Partners Event & Festival Organisers Local business organisations and local businesses & communities Tourism operators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An involved and engaged community Use of venues and public open space Increased sense of place and community pride An involved and engaged community Recognition and celebration of our cultural diversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take up/actions emanating from comms programme to event organisers PR generated Successful examples of businesses and event organisers working closely 	20/21 Ongoing 20/22 20/22
4. Enable events to better reflect Fermanagh and Omagh's communities and to reflect the area's unspoilt water, natural, built and cultural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a scoping exercise to identify which existing events best showcase the region's assets and explore how these events can be better supported to ensure sustainability. Identify 2 or 3 existing events or new visitor orientated events that focus on the strengths and assets of the district and will attract visitors from a wider geographic area 	Owner Events Team Partners Event & Festival Organisers Sport NI, Tourism NI, Arts Council NI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritised events, with development plans for future growth and impact in Fermanagh and Omagh Event attraction and development opportunities identified, and action taken 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New events Engagement of external bodies and agencies in new events Economic impact 	20/25 20/25 20/25
5. FODC to be an Event friendly location with an effective, easy-to-use event portal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continually improve processes for Council to support the delivery of local events through the event portal and an online event toolkit to assist event organisers Identify and leverage opportunities for strategic partnerships and collaborations Event notification document to be available online for event organisers and FODC 'internal' event owners to complete 	Owner Events Team Partners Event & Festival Organisers Local Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streamlined event application and internal approvals process Compliance with industry best practice Events that align with community feedback and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfaction by event organisers Satisfaction by internal stakeholders Number of enquiries; 	Ongoing 20/22 20/21 20/22

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FODC Events and Festivals Strategy Action Plan					
Activity	Actions	Owners/ Partners	Outcomes	KPIs	Timing
		Fermanagh Lakeland Tourism			
8. Encourage, support and develop events that increase visitation and enhance the profile of the region as a destination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an event and festivals attraction plan to identify and attract potential new events for Fermanagh and Omagh to support a year-round calendar Market Fermanagh and Omagh to event organisers and sports governing bodies and bid for events on the basis of a strong evidence base Implement a co-ordinated response to event opportunities, enquiries for venues, support services, marketing and funding agencies etc. and that these are channelled through the Events Management Team (link to No: 4) 	Owner Events & Tourism Teams Partners FODC Depts Tourism NI Sport NI Arts Council NI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Event attraction and development opportunities identified, and action taken 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinated events plan for whole year Partnerships with sports governing bodies Economic impact/ visitor numbers to events 	20/22 Ongoing 20/25
9. Events to move towards being financially sustaining.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and assist festivals and events which demonstrate potential to become more financially viable through the development of appropriate business training/funding initiatives Develop a programme of strategic advice, mentoring, and support to local event organisers aimed at increasing event sustainability and capability 	Owner Events Team with Event & Festival Organisers Partners FODC Depts Colleges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable events that are retained and grow over time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of events assessed to have increased their financial sustainability 	Ongoing 20/25
10. Sustainability will be at the core of festival and event organisers' planning throughout the cycle of the event or festival	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage and facilitate Festivals and events to promote quality local and artisan food and drink, local arts and craft and provide visitors with locally sourced products. Encourage and facilitate Events and Festivals that are Home Grown to develop in quality and delivery. 	Owner Events Team with Event & Festival Organisers Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An involved and engaged business community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of improved sustainability practices 	20/22

FODC Events and Festivals Strategy Action Plan					
Activity	Actions	Owners/ Partners	Outcomes	KPIs	Timing
		FODC Technical services dept Green Tourism Ecotourism Ireland			
11. Dedicated Events Space and Event Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify key event-specific location with capacity to host events in the region and undertake an audit of the key events and festival specific locations to establish infrastructure requirements Identify facility development priorities to assist with future event attraction and an inventory of locations suitable for festivals and events and promote them for festival and event planning Ensure event infrastructure requirements are included in public realm works in town centres and rural communities identified in audit 	Owner FODC Estate services & Events Team Partners FODC-Corporate Forestry NI Waterways Ireland Event Site owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced number of sites and capacity to deliver events Infrastructure costs are minimised for events so that sustainable future growth can be achieved Event hosting requirements are considered in future council capital investments and plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of sites Costs of preparing sites (infrastructure) Integration of events spaces in development plans and capital programme 	22/25 22/25 20/22 Ongoing In line with capital programme works
12. Build reputation as an Event friendly destination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate the region's reputation as an event friendly destination Identify existing events that show potential to elevate to signature/destination event status based on event monitoring Target new event acquisition opportunities which align with the full range of the region's assets and unique advantages Event / Festival organisers working with Fermanagh and Omagh District Council to organise an event / festival will encounter a seamless process, with an effective, easy-to-use web site event portal that includes e.g. toolkits etc Engage with Tourism NI to identify potential events for the region 	Owner Events Team Partners Fermanagh Lakeland Tourism Tourism NI Sport NI Arts Council NI Forestry NI Waterways Ireland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase participation in events Enhanced reputation for the district as an "events friendly destination" Enhanced coordination in the delivery of council services to event organisers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marketing and PR outcomes for the district Attraction of signature events Attraction of new events 	20/22 20/22 22/25

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FODC Events and Festivals Strategy Action Plan					
Activity	Actions	Owners/ Partners	Outcomes	KPIs	Timing
3. Promote					
15. Develop partnerships and support events that provide maximum economic benefit to the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop communications channels and co-ordinate marketing activities with partners in relation to target markets Support event and festival organisers and partners to attract participants and visitors to Fermanagh and Omagh 	Owner TED & Events Team Partners FODC Depts Fermanagh Lakeland Tourism NI Tourism Ireland Event & Festival Organisers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased and consistent external branding and media exposure Links to regional destination branding promoting a consistent and appealing story to visitors Increased capacity of event organisers to promote 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic impact Marketing and promotional spend and impacts 	20/21 20/22
16. Events will partner and collaborate, share resources and undertake co-promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the collective promotion and better utilisation and functionality of websites and other online and social media channels Encourage cross promotion of events and festivals collaborative marketing activity on all Social Media platforms 	Owner FODC Marketing and Events Team Partners FODC Depts Fermanagh Lakeland Tourism NI Tourism Ireland Event & Festival Organisers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social media and comms plan implemented Engagement and encouragement of tourism operators to align their marketing and promotion to events and festivals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marketing spend Social media impact 	20/21 20/22
17. Clearly articulate the benefits of events and festivals to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiate an events and festivals awareness campaign for residents to promote the value and benefit of events and festivals to the local community 	Owner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communities aware of event support and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectiveness of local coms programmes 	20/22

FODC Events and Festivals Strategy Action Plan					
Activity	Actions	Owners/ Partners	Outcomes	KPIs	Timing
Fermanagh and Omagh's residents and partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiate a local campaign promoting the communications channels and co-ordinate marketing activities with partners in relation to target markets 	FODC Marketing and Events Team Partners FODC Depts Fermanagh Lakeland Event & Festival Organisers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Social, tourism and economic benefits from events and festivals 		
18. Raise awareness of events in FODC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote events and festivals offering to target audiences and visitor markets Develop and maintain an online festival and event clash calendar Encourage each festival/event organiser to upload to destination web sites (TNI and Tourism Ireland) Initiate programme of familiarisation visits from key industry targets, and 3rd party key event organisers Working with other agencies (e.g. Fermanagh Lakelands, National Trust) develop a coordinated communications plan to promote events and festivals and to maximise promotion and profiling of the Council area for events and festivals (including web sites and social channels) 	Owner FODC Marketing and Events Team Partners FODC Fermanagh Lakeland National Trust Waterways Ireland Event & Festival Organisers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growth in visitation to the region is experienced through festival and event activity Co-promotion of events Strengthen the F&O region brand Increase reach and effectiveness of campaigns Increase opportunities to engage stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic impact Visitor numbers and origin to events Stakeholder engagement 	Ongoing 20/22 20/22
19. Use events and festivals to strengthen profile and awareness of the destination products and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and agree how Events and Festivals use the emerging destination story in the promotion of events and positioning of Fermanagh and Omagh as a place to live, work, visit Agree FODC branding for the promotion and profiling of the destination and promoting the destination's brand to a wide audience of potential visitors (nationally & internationally) 	Owner FODC Marketing and Events Team Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Links to regional destination branding and promotion is consistent with an appealing story to visitors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Origin and number of visitors to events Marketing reach 	20/22 20/22 Ongoing

FODC Events and Festivals Strategy Action Plan					
Activity	Actions	Owners/ Partners	Outcomes	KPIs	Timing
experiences e.g. heritage, nature, activities, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working closely with Fermanagh Lakeland Tourism and event operators, ensure that destination brand values are reflected in event promotion, signage and captured imagery Actively promote the region's strengths and achievements in hosting events / festivals of all types to key promoters, influencers and the wider event industry Identify and target key digital influencers related to events to broaden appeal and promotion 	FODC Fermanagh Lakeland Tourism Event & Festival Organisers Tourism NI Tourism Ireland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marketing activity and Brand Value – aligns with, enhances and supports the destination and FODC brand Strengthen the FODC brand Increase in the number and length of stay of visitors to the region Promotion of the F&O region as an enviable place to live, visit and invest Websites always up to date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social media reach 	Ongoing 20/22 Ongoing Ongoing
4. Monitor					
20. FODC approach to regulations and standards are consistent and uniform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide procedures and guidelines for festivals and events and easy access to resources, e.g. health and safety information and assessment tools Develop social and environmental impact assessment templates for use by event organisers 	Owner Events Team Partners FODC Depts Event & Festival Organisers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A fair and equitable process for supporting events in Fermanagh & Omagh 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation online Use of research/ impact templates by events Event Toolkits on website 	Ongoing 20/22
21. Measuring event value and impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce localised formula to measure the value of events held in FODC Collect, collate and analyse data that allows us to fully understand economic and social impact across the region, justifying the resources and effort to sustain and grow our events Include event / festival impact question(s) in Council's Community Surveys 	Owner Events Team Partners FODC Depts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of standardised event reporting tools and measures across the Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of funding applications Number and diversity of events supported 	19/20 Ongoing

FODC Events and Festivals Strategy Action Plan					
Activity	Actions	Owners/ Partners	Outcomes	KPIs	Timing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the events / festival portfolio on an annual basis to assess those that best meet strategic objectives and offer the best growth/leveraging potential – identify 6 key projects per year for targeted leveraging to maximise value Engage with businesses through feedback surveys after Events / Festivals to gauge direct impact, monitor community sentiment and collect testimonials on the positive impact of events / festivals 	Event & Festival Organisers Event Management Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council measures of performance of events and festivals adopted Council annual review is conducted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of events that measure their outcomes Media reach Level of community and visitor satisfaction 	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing
22. Develop a consistent and systematic approach to event measurement and evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop event visitor survey template for use by event organisers. (Including all FODC events and Festivals) Use the measurement process to prioritise the allocation of resources towards events and festivals 	Owner Events Team Partners FODC Depts Event & Festival Organisers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent methodology for evaluation and calculation of economic impact from events and festivals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KPIs from event evaluations Develop as part of FODC Depts business plans- link to KPI's 	21/25 20/25
5. Sustainability					
23. Fermanagh and Omagh events and festivals will aim to be leaders in hosting environmentally sustainable events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote and Encourage the Green Your Festival initiative at Council events and Council funded events. Include in application process for Events and festivals funding Explore opportunities to have 'event rubbish and recycling scheme' available for all event organisers 	Owner Events Team Partners Green Your Festival initiative. FODC Dept Event & Festival Organisers Training Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support events to increase environmental sustainability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % of waste Number of events using best practice 	20/25 Ongoing