

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

LEISURE and ARTS ADVISORY BOARD

22 May 2007

Report of the Chief Leisure Officer

Part 1- Public

Matters for Information

1 TONBRIDGE CASTLE FESTIVAL OF MUSIC AND FIREWORKS 2007

Summary

This report updates Members of the progress regarding the above event to be held in July 2007.

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Following the 8 January 2007 meeting of the Leisure Facilities, Culture and Youth Advisory Board the Executive Member agreed (Decision No LCY 07/13), the 2007 programme for the Festival of Music and Fireworks as follows:

Friday, 13 July	The Magic of Abba supported by the West Kent College All Stars
Saturday, 14 July	Summer Nights – The World’s Greatest Rock and Pop Musicals in Concert
Sunday, 15 July	Rat Pack Legends

1.1.2 The programme was selected to take into account the views of the promoters, Musical Associates, feedback from those attending the Festival in 2006, and ticket sales the previous year. After last year’s event, the Customer Services Team at Tonbridge Castle undertook market research with those that had attended the performances. There was a unanimous request to bring back Abba to the Festival line up. Members of the public also commented that Some Enchanted Evening required new content. The omission of the traditional proms finale came at the request of the promoters, Musical Associates, as a result of poor ticket sales at last year’s Festival. The proms concert last year took place on the same night as the Football World Cup Final and this was identified as being a major factor impacting upon ticket sales.

1.1.3 To broaden the appeal of the Festival to young people within the borough and West Kent region, the Council and the promoters will be working with the music department from West Kent College (WKC). Talented pupils and staff have formed a group, known locally as the WKC All Stars. In the past, this group has performed at the John Lewis Christmas Staff Party in front of 1,000 people. The

WKC All Stars will be performing classic disco and soul hits before the Abba tribute band on Friday 13 July.

1.2 Ticket Sales

1.2.1 To date ticket sales for the Festival have been encouraging. Each night of the Festival has a capacity of 1,500, and at the time of writing this report ticket sales were:

Abba	1,419
Summer Nights	1,247
Rat Pack Legends	757
Combined 3 day Festival Pass	80

1.2.2 I will advise Members at the meeting on the up to date position regarding tickets sold.

1.3 Legal Implications

1.3.1 The Council has powers to undertake this activity by virtue of Section 145 of the Local Government Act 1972. The contract with Musical Associates has been drawn up in agreement with the Council's Chief Solicitor.

1.4 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.4.1 A subsidy of £18,000 is paid to the promoters to deliver the event, which is financed from the Arts revenue budget. The Leisure Pass Holder ticket price ensures fair access for all. The promoters and the Council have agreed to keep ticket prices at the same level as 2006.

1.5 Risk Assessment

1.5.1 A risk assessment for the event is undertaken on an annual basis in liaison with the Council's Health & Safety Officer. The contractor providing the firework display also has public liability insurance of £5 million. Musical Associates has public liability insurance cover of £5 million and produce its own Health and Safety documents for this event, which will be circulated internally for comment.

Background papers:

contact: Lyndsey Bennett

Nil

Robert Styles
Chief Leisure Officer