

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

LEISURE and ARTS ADVISORY BOARD

20 May 2008

Report of the Chief Leisure Officer

Part 1- Public

Matters for Information

1 TONBRIDGE CASTLE FESTIVAL OF MUSIC & FIREWORKS

Summary

This report updates Members on ticket sales for this year's Festival of Music & Fireworks which is organised by promoters Musical Associates (UK) Ltd in partnership with this Council.

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Members will be aware that a new line up for the Festival was agreed at the 14 January 2008 meeting of this Board. The concerts, taking place over the weekend of the 11, 12,13 July, are as follows:

Friday 11 July: Party on the Lawn – World of the Bee Gees followed by “Utter Madness” (including support act West Kent College All Stars)

Saturday 12 July: Summer Nights – The World's Greatest Rock and Pop Musicals in Concert

Sunday 13 July: Ronnie Scott's on the Lawn

- 1.1.2 Tickets for the Festival went on general sale to the public on 1 April 2008 and for the first time an online box office facility was provided by the promoters. Musical Associates run the box office via its website www.maconcerts.co.uk in association with Barclays Bank who provide a secure payment mechanism and account holding system. A dedicated telephone number (0871 271 6149) has also been established to provide a booking facility for those members of the public who do not have internet access.
- 1.1.3 A small number of tickets have also been retained at the Tonbridge Castle Customer Services Office for sale to the public who may enquire about the event in person.

1.2 Ticket Sales To Date

- 1.2.1 At the time of writing this report ticket sales are as follows:

Friday, 11 July	Party on the Lawn	1,158
Saturday, 12 July	Musicals	1,341
Sunday, 12 July	Ronnie Scott's on the Lawn	756

- 1.2.2 Members may recall that the audience capacity for the event has increased from 1,500 per night to 1,600. The increase was agreed in liaison with the Council's Health & Safety Officer and the Tonbridge and Malling Fire Safety Officer.

1.3 Marketing

- 1.3.1 Musical Associates arranged for a leaflet to be distributed through the Courier Newspaper group (media sponsors of the event) to residents in the West Kent area. Posters have been delivered to shops in Tonbridge High Street and West Malling, and have also been sent to Parish Councils. A dedicated page about the Festival has been created on the Council's website with links through to Musical Associate's box office. News releases have been issued to help raise the profile of the event. Banners advertising that tickets are now on sale have been installed at Tonbridge Castle and at Tonbridge Pool. The Council's 2008 Leisure Guide was recently printed and distributed to residents across the borough. This year's guide included a full page feature about the Festival.

1.4 Legal Implications

- 1.4.1 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 Legal Services.

1.5 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.5.1 Following a review of ticket prices and capacity levels, the Council's subsidy for the event has been reduced to £14,000. The Leisure Pass holder ticket price ensures fair access for all. The promoters have public liability insurance cover of £5 million.

1.6 Risk Assessment

- 1.6.1 A risk assessment and detailed Event Safety Plan for the Festival is undertaken on an annual basis in liaison with the Council's Health and Safety Officer. The contractor providing the firework display also has public liability insurance of £5 million. Musical Associates produce its own Health and Safety documents for the event, and employ external security staff to be on site over the weekend.

1.7 Policy Considerations

- 1.7.1 Healthy Lifestyles, Community, Customer Contact, Communications.

Background papers: File T.2/9/1

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