

**TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**LEISURE and ARTS ADVISORY BOARD**

**19 May 2009**

**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 and marketing initiatives 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 This year, Tonbridge Castle Festival of Music & Fireworks celebrates its tenth anniversary. To help mark this special occasion, an exciting line up of artists has been confirmed although, unfortunately, it has not been possible to progress a Sunday matinee performance for children as previously anticipated. It is hoped the matinee will be available in 2010.

**1.2 Ticket Sales**

1.2.1 Tickets for the event went on sale on 1 April and at the time of writing this report the following have been sold:

Friday 10 July	Party on the Lawn	1,000
Saturday 11 July	Summer Nights	955
Sunday 12 July	Magic of Motown	1,161

1.2.2 I will advise Members at the meeting on the up to date ticket sales, and Members will recall that the capacity for each performance this year has been increased to 1,800. Initial sales are felt to be encouraging, particularly in relation to Sunday evening, which has traditionally been the harder evening to sell.

**1.3 Marketing**

1.3.1 A promotional leaflet for the event has been distributed door-to-door to residents across the borough via the Courier Newspaper Group. This year the public are being encouraged to book online via Musical Associates website [www.tonbridgecastlelive.com](http://www.tonbridgecastlelive.com) or by calling the box office ticket hotline number on 0845 296 0000.

- 1.3.2 To help raise the awareness and profile of the event, banners have been produced and displayed at the Council's leisure facilities. Articles about the Festival have featured in the Leisure Service Business Unit's electronic magazine which is sent out to Lifestyle members as well as those businesses which are corporate members.
- 1.3.3 West Kent College has assisted with the promotion of the event by having leaflets in the College and advertising the event on the plasma screens in its reception area. The Assembly Hall Theatre in Tunbridge Wells has agreed to send out an eflyer about the Festival to members of the public on its database who have attended similar performances at its venue.
- 1.3.4 Students have been on location at Tonbridge Station and Sainsbury's handing out leaflets to the public and Sainsbury's have allowed the leaflets to be left in its store.
- 1.3.5 Musical Associates will also be promoting the event at Tonbridge Lions Carnival on 14 June at Tonbridge Castle. News Releases about the Festival have been issued to local media and the event has been featured in the annual Leisure Guide publication and in the Council's Here & Now magazine. A dedicated page advertising the event can be viewed at [www.tmbc.gov.uk](http://www.tmbc.gov.uk)

## **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 Chief Solicitor.

## **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:

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Nil

Robert Styles  
Chief Leisure Officer