

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

LEISURE and ARTS ADVISORY BOARD

18 May 2010

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 the confirmed programme for the event and provides details of ticket sales to date.

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Members may recall that at the December 2009 meeting of this Board, MA Concerts Ltd, the Festival's promoters, provided details of a proposed programme for consideration for the 2010 event. The change of date for the event to 23 – 25 July (due to the Football World Cup) meant that some acts previously approached, were already booked elsewhere. However, the promoters have since been able to confirm an exciting new programme which features two completely new performances.

1.2 Confirmed Programme

- 1.2.1 Due to the success of the Motown show in 2009, it was agreed that Motown should feature in this year's Festival line up. Friday Night's Party on the Lawn will start the event with the show "Motown's Greatest Hits – How Sweet It Is". Now in its 8th successive year this live show combines first class music together with the slickest choreography and an amazing orchestra to deliver truly outstanding performances for a fantastic MOTOWN experience. The show includes songs from legendary artists such as The Temptations, Diana Ross, The Four Tops, Martha Reeves, Marvin Gaye, Stevie Wonder, The Supremes, The Jacksons, Mary Wells, The Isley Brothers and many, many more. Once again, the West Kent College All Stars will perform as the warm up act.
- 1.2.2 Saturday night sees the introduction of a new show – Strictly West End. This performance brings together the magic of the musicals coupled with the beauty of the ballroom. This unique combination provides an evening of West End performers and champion ballroom dancers showing their skills through the passionate dance of the Tango in Evita, the energy of the Jive in Hairspray and the elegance and romance of the Waltz and Quickstep with Gershwin and Porter.

- 1.2.3 The Festival will end in high spirits with a Magic of the 80s show which includes 40 hit songs from the decade that discovered Boy George, Madonna, Blondie, Bon Jovi and Wham, The Human League and the Eurythmics to name but a few!
- 1.2.4 Tonbridge Rock Choir will be the warm up act for the Magic of the 80s performance. Rock Choir Ltd offers pop, gospel and Motown singing to children, teenagers and adults. It is part of a national movement which has achieved a fantastic reputation in the UK for its sophisticated teaching and leadership style, but also its dynamic, feel-good experiences. Created in 2005, it is the leading contemporary choir in the UK.
- 1.2.5 As with last year's event, gates will open at 5.30pm on all three nights. The performances on Friday and Saturday will start at 8 pm and finish at approximately 10.45 pm. Sunday's performance will start at 7.15 pm and finish at 10 pm.

1.3 Ticket Sales

- 1.3.1 At the time of writing this report tickets had just gone on sale, and numbers were as follows:

Magic of Motown 520

Strictly West End 349

Magic of the 80s 503

- 1.3.2 As per last year, tickets can be purchased from the box office by calling 0845 296 0000 or via the event's website at www.tonbridgecastlelive.com This year, Tonbridge Castle Gateway are also selling tickets direct to the public.

1.4 Marketing

- 1.4.1 The promoters have secured a deal with the Courier Newspaper Group as the major media sponsor. The event has featured in the Council's Here & Now publication and annual Leisure Guide. A leaflet has been produced and distributed door-to-door to residents. Banners have been produced and are on site at the Council's leisure facilities across the borough.
- 1.4.2 Leaflets have also been handed out at Sainsbury's and the railway station. Posters have been put up in shops along Tonbridge High Street and adverts have been placed in local publications. An e-shot has been sent to attendees from the 2009 Festival and the Leisure Services Business Unit has included the event in its corporate Zest Newsletter.
- 1.4.3 The promoters are looking to encourage KM FM to get on board and provide a compere for each evening as in 2009. Through KM FM's involvement it is hoped the event will get radio airtime across the West Kent region.

1.5 On Site Facilities

- 1.5.1 The promoters are in discussion with Biddenden Vineyards to provide a stand at the event for concert-goers to sample and purchase wine and fruit juices.

1.6 Sponsorship

- 1.6.1 This year the Festival has attracted sponsorship of £2,000 from property developer McCarthy and Stone.

1.7 Legal Implications

- 1.7.1 The Council has powers to undertake this activity by virtue of Section 145 of the Local Government Act 1972. The contract with Musical Associates (Concerts) Ltd has been drawn up in agreement with the Legal Services Partnership Manager.

1.8 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.8.1 The cost to the Council for the 2010 Festival (£5,000) is included within the revenue estimates.

1.9 Risk Assessment

- 1.9.1 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.

1.10 Policy Considerations

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

Background papers:

contact: Lyndsey Bennett

Nil

Robert Styles
Chief Leisure Officer