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Tourism NI Annual Report

for the Year Ended 31 March 2019





HMS Caroline, Belfast

Tourism NI Annual Report

for the Year Ended 31 March 2019

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Front cover image Mussenden Temple, Causeway Coastal Route



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Overview

Purpose of Overview

The purpose of the Overview is to give the reader sufficient information to understand Tourism Northern Ireland, its purpose, the key risks to the achievement of its objectives and how it has performed during the year.





Terence Brannigan
Chairman

Chairman's Introduction

It is my pleasure to introduce Tourism Northern Ireland's annual report for 2018-19, a period which built on the success of previous years and returned another excellent performance for the tourism industry.

It is my pleasure to introduce Tourism Northern Ireland's annual report for 2018-19, a period which built on the success of previous years and returned another excellent performance for the tourism industry.

The latest data available from the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency indicates a highly positive 2018, particularly in terms of visitor spend. Revenue for the full year totalled £968 million. This equates to overnight visitors spending on average £2.7 million per day, with over £560m generated by visitors from Great Britain and overseas. Following on from a very strong performance in 2017, Northern Ireland also realised a 20% growth in spend from the Republic of Ireland market during 2018.

With over 3.7 million hotel guests accommodated, last year was also a record for hotel demand in terms of room and bed sales. There was a welcome influx of new hotel developments during this period, particularly in Belfast, although this impacted overall room and bed-space occupancy, which recorded some decreases.

Growth was evident across the tourism landscape in 2018-19, but was most notable in golf, ahead of The 148th Open, as well as the Causeway Coast and Glens and Giant's Causeway, Titanic Belfast, Belfast in general, and screen tourism, particularly in relation to Game of Thrones® attractions.

During the year, we continued to capitalise on Belfast and the Causeway Coast being declared the number one region in the world to visit in Lonely Planet's Best in Travel 2018, and in November, Northern Ireland was voted the world's Best Food Destination. This international award is yet another marvellous accolade for our industry and local producers in particular. It will be a major benefit to tourism as it seeks to attract even more visitors from across the world.

The Autumn Budget announcement of Northern Ireland's first 'city deal' for Belfast, with a deal for Derry-Londonderry to follow, was further welcome news. As both proposals contain strong tourism-led regeneration pillars, this co-investment from the UK Government, local government, the universities and the private sector will deliver a step change in Northern Ireland's economic and tourism fortunes over the next few years.

Such developments bode well for the future of Northern Ireland tourism. Going forward, we are ambitious to grow and develop tourism even more and to raise standards still higher to meet the needs of the diverse range of visitors from around the world. Indeed our new Tourism Strategy 2030 will seek to double the value of tourism to the economy by that date.

I am grateful to my fellow non-executive Board Members for their support during the year. Full information on non-executive membership and the roles of our statutory committees is available in the Accountability Report and in the Governance Statement.

As the Tourism NI Chairman, and with my colleagues on the Board, I will do everything possible to ensure the great work of last year continues, that our new strategic goals are met and that Northern Ireland keeps moving forward as an attractive, globally competitive and successful destination.

Terence Brannigan
Chairman
Tourism NI





John McGrillen
Chief Executive

Chief Executive's Message

Northern Ireland's tourism economy has delivered strong performances in the past number of years, and it was pleasing to see that positive trend continue during 2018-19.

As a destination, today's Northern Ireland has something for everyone, and throughout the year we continued to capitalise on our world-class visitor attractions, eight Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a wide range of top class accommodation, world-ranked golf courses, an award-winning food and drink offering and our close links with Game of Thrones®.

In 2018-19 the 26 film locations across Northern Ireland and a growing portfolio of related attractions continued to attract thousands of fans keen to explore the 'real Westeros'. Some 350,000, or one in six out-of-state leisure visitors, visited Northern Ireland because of Game of Thrones®, spending in excess of £50 million in the physical and spiritual home of the show.

In that context, a welcome end to the year was HBO's announcement of the first Game of Thrones® legacy project, which will open at Linen Mills Studios in Banbridge in 2020. Alongside further investments in various tours, the Season 8 European premiere, the Glass of Thrones fan trail, the Game of Thrones Tapestry and the arrival of GAME OF THRONES™: The Touring Exhibition, Northern Ireland's association with the show continues to pay tourism dividends.

During the year, Northern Ireland also experienced unprecedented success and status as a golf destination as Tourism NI stepped up promotion our golfing product ahead of the staging of The 148th Open in July 2019. The latest available figures from March 2018 show golf tourism brought 123,200 visitors into Northern Ireland and associated revenue of £39.9 million. Hosting The 148th Open will boost those figures and leave a legacy that will benefit tourism for years to come.

Additional in-year developments saw Hillsborough Castle, the Northern Ireland residence of HM The Queen, restored, reimagined and re-opened to the public, and 2018-19 also saw Titanic Belfast welcoming its five millionth visitor. This milestone was reached following the attraction's busiest ever period and included increased visitor numbers from international markets, including North America, mainland Europe and China.

In 2018-19 collaboration, clustering and working directly with local businesses to get them selling on a global scale delivered real impact. Tourism continued to mature, develop and grow, with the industry now well-established as one of the most important areas of Northern Ireland's economy.

Tourism NI remains highly committed to working in partnership with all stakeholders in the tourism sector. We will continue to leave no stone unturned in our efforts to ensure the industry remains vibrant, competitive and meets the needs of our visitors.

John McGrillen
Chief Executive
Tourism NI



Statutory Background & Business Activities

Tourism Northern Ireland is a Non-Departmental Public Body sponsored by the Department for the Economy. The organisation was originally set up as the Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) in 1948 and operates under the Tourism (Northern Ireland) Order 1992. It was renamed Tourism NI in January 2015.

Tourism NI's principal functions are to encourage tourism, to encourage the provision and improvement of tourist facilities and amenities and to certify tourism accommodation. We invest in relationships with our key strategic partners and stakeholders and offer funding mechanisms for capital projects to improve visitor attractions and activities with the aim of enhancing the visitor experience.

We devise marketing campaigns to promote Northern Ireland to best-prospect customers and support the industry through the development of skills and capabilities, including the WorldHost programme. We also develop visitor information and invest in the use of digital and social media.

We work closely with a wide range of organisations in a variety of sectors, utilising the strengths and expertise of others to drive tourism forward and achieve our goals.

Tourism NI comprises of seven divisions:

- Marketing
- Business Support & Events
- Product Development
- Corporate Development
- Organisational Development & Human Resources
- Finance
- Digital Services

In addition to our head office in Belfast, Tourism NI operates a Dublin office. The Marketing Division is based in both cities.

Commentary on the performance of the tourism sector and Tourism NI activities is detailed under section 'Performance Analysis'. It highlights the main trends and factors which have influenced the development of tourism in the current year and going forward.

Key Issues & Risks Facing the Entity

Section 2.5 of the Governance Statement outlines Tourism NI's approach to Risk Management, identifying and reporting on risks and management of risks.

Risks being managed as at 31 March 2019 were categorised as follows:

- Financial
- Operational
- Reputational
- Compliance

Some of the key risks identified in 2018-19, their impact and mitigating action is summarised below;

KEY RISK	IMPACT	MITIGATING ACTION
Legislation for certification of accommodation not 'fit for purpose'	Global developments in tourism industry cannot be accommodated within existing legislative framework	A review has been completed to inform drafting of revised legislation for consultation once a Minister is in place.
'No Deal' EU Exit	Potential impact on delivery of Outcomes Delivery Plan targets	A programme of activity took place specifically targeting areas that would be impacted most. A number of industry engagement sessions were held. Bids prepared to secure additional funding in 2019/20.
Organisational structure and people resource not 'fit for purpose'	Failure to deliver on Tourism Strategy	Review of structure identified the requirements needed to deliver on the ambition of the Tourism Strategy to 2030. A number of priority posts were identified and considered to be essential to meeting the objectives set out within the forthcoming 2019–20 Operating Plan.

Further information can be found in Section 2.5 of the Governance Statement.

Performance Summary

Preparation of Financial Statements

Under Article 8 of the Tourism (Northern Ireland) Order 1992, Northern Ireland Tourist Board trading as Tourism NI is required to prepare a statement of accounts for each financial year in the form directed by the Department for the Economy with the approval of the Department of Finance. The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and show a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Northern Ireland Tourist Board trading as Tourism NI and of the net expenditure, cash flows and changes in taxpayers' equity for the financial year.

Results for the Year

The Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure notes a net expenditure for the year of £25.5 million compared to £23.4 million for the 2017-18 financial year.

Total expenditure was £25.5 million, which was an increase of £2 million from 2017-18 (£23.5 million). This reflects the ever changing priorities within tourism. The digital agenda increased its prominence during the 2018-19 year, receiving additional support. Investment in the experience brand was started in 2017-18 and continued into 2018-19.

Related income was £0.2 million (2017-18 £0.3 million). This excludes funding received from the Department for the Economy in respect of Tourism Ireland of £13.6 million (2017-18 £12.6 million) which was directly paid over to Tourism Ireland when received.

Going Concern

The Statement of Financial Position as at 31 March 2019 shows net liabilities of £12.2 million (2017-18 £11.1 million), reflecting liabilities due in future years, in particular the pension liability of £8.3 million (2017-18 £8.3 million).

It is considered appropriate to adopt a going concern basis for the preparation of the financial statements as the Department for the Economy, sponsor department of Tourism NI, is supply financed. There is no reason to believe that the Department's future sponsorship and future Assembly approval will not be forthcoming to meet Tourism NI's liabilities as they fall due.

Performance Analysis

Financial Performance

Targets and Achievements

Tourism NI sets out its annual objectives within an Operating Plan that contains targets for the various Divisions and Units of the organisation. Performance against targets is measured continuously throughout the financial year, in formal end-of-quarter reports reviewed by the Senior Management Team, by the Tourism NI Board and by our parent department, the Department for the Economy.

Operating Plan objectives for the 2018-19 financial year were encapsulated in six key strategic themes as follows;

- Strategic leadership
- Outstanding experiences
- Delivering Excellence
- Investing in enterprise
- Promoting Northern Ireland
- Investing in skills

All themes above are all aligned to our mission 'to provide strategic leadership and work collaboratively to accelerate growth in Tourism', with the vision that 'Northern Ireland is an internationally competitive destination renowned for world class 3-5 day breaks'.

In the ongoing absence of an Assembly, the Northern Ireland Civil Service issued a work programme for all government agencies early in the Operating Plan cycle. This identified four priority areas of work for Tourism NI:

- Consultation on the draft Tourism Strategy;
- Delivery of our technology platform;
- Tactical marketing campaigns in the ROI and domestic market; and
- Delivery of The 148th Open.

Tourism NI's Risk Register is aligned to the objectives in the Corporate Plan and Operating Plan to ensure risks and uncertainty are linked to KPIs. Risks are initially identified by the Senior Management Team (SMT) and the Risk Register is reviewed and updated at quarterly SMT meetings. The SMT also conduct a formal review of the Risk Register each quarter and report to Tourism NI and DfE Audit Committees.

Performance and Activities

The latest tourism data released by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) indicates a very positive 2018 performance for tourism. Northern Ireland welcomed 5

million visitors from January to December 2018, spending an unprecedented £968m - up 5% compared to the previous year. On average, £2.7million was spent by visitors each day (up from £2.5million in 2017).

Northern Ireland attracted a record 2.8m overnight visitors from outside NI. Growth was largely driven by the ROI market (+23%). GB and other overseas trips increased by 2%.

A record breaking 591,000 trips were taken by ROI residents, while expenditure by ROI residents rose by 20% to over £108million.

Great Britain and Other Overseas

Great Britain and Other Overseas accounted for 45% of all overnight trips taken in NI, 63% of all nights and 58% of all spend. Strong growth was evident for holiday trips by GB and overseas visitors which grew by 12%.

GB visitors spent £327 million during January to December 2018, an increase of 3% year on year. While growth for GB trips was up 2%, nights remained flat at 5.7m nights, when compared to January to December 2017.

Mainland Europe experienced a drop overall (-8%) in trips to NI, due to declines in those visiting friends and relatives and those travelling for business. However, holiday trips from Mainland Europe increased by 5%, with holiday nights increasing by 45% (+208,000) and holiday spend increasing by 11% (+3.4m).

Visitors from North America took more than 300,000 trips during January to December 2018, an increase of 18% year on year. These trips generated £91.5m up 15% (+£12m) on 2017.

Republic of Ireland

The ROI accounted for 12% of all overnight trips taken in NI, 9% of all nights and 11% of all spend. There were 254,000 holiday trips taken by ROI residents in NI during January to December 2018, an increase of 7%, when compared to the same period in 2017. Holiday trips accounted for 43% of all ROI trips to NI.

ROI visitors spent a record £108 million in NI during 2018, an increase of 20% on 2017, with the strong exchange rate possibly encouraging ROI residents to spend more.

Domestic

Domestic trips accounted for 44% of all overnight trips taken, 28% of all nights and 31% of all spend. Domestic trips remained unchanged in 2018 after strong growth in 2017, with NI residents taking more trips to the ROI and overseas. However, NI residents spent close to £300 million on domestic trips in 2018 (+11% or £30m more compared with January to December 2017).

Performance Analysis

Accommodation

Supporting the positive tourism performance figures, overall 4.5 million bed-spaces were sold in hotels, guest houses, guest accommodation and B&Bs during January to December 2018, an increase of 4% on January to December 2017. 2018 was a record year for NI hotels in terms of room and bed sales, during which stock increased significantly.

Strategic leadership

Throughout the year Tourism NI continued to demonstrate strong strategic leadership in partnership with a range of other organisations, agencies and stakeholders.

Tourism Strategy

In 2018-19 a revised draft Tourism Strategy was developed in preparation for a period of consultation, following new legislation brought forward by the Secretary of State in the absence of an Assembly. The revised strategy aligns with targets for 2030 of £2 billion tourism spend and 25,000 new jobs, and was complemented by work to develop a new experience brand for Northern Ireland.

A programme of meetings continued between the senior management teams of Tourism NI, Tourism Ireland and Fáilte Ireland, fostering collaboration in important areas of work with mutual benefits. This included Tourism Ireland's review of the Great Britain Market, aimed at better understanding the needs and motivations of visitors from that market and addressing barriers to growth. To complement that work the Tourism NI Board approved the commencement of a review of the Northern Ireland domestic market.

As part of our commitment to work closely with Tourism Ireland overseas, Tourism NI attended Berlin's ITB Trade Show in March. A member of Tourism NI staff was also seconded to manage Tourism Ireland's Nordics office for a year, gaining important new learnings and valuable experience of working in-market in Europe.

Experience Brand

Work continued to define and develop the new experience brand (or 'proposition of scale') in preparation for a proposed launch towards the end of 2019. The brand will be fundamental to realising the ambitions of the Tourism Strategy to 2030 and will represent a distillation of the core elements of the Northern Ireland visitor experience. Extensive market testing took place to ensure that the brand is meaningful, relevant and robust.

Tourism NI also carried out research to inform experience development and product investment over the period of the

draft Tourism Strategy to 2030. This involved extensive market testing of 37 individual concepts for visitor experiences and attractions, which will help to inform how we identify and prioritise future projects for investment. The exercise also informed the submission of the Belfast and Derry~Londonderry city deals and supported activity with product clusters.

Also commissioned was a study focusing on visitor management and capacity on the North Coast. It was designed to give an evidence-based understanding of the visitor experience along the Causeway Coastal Route, identify opportunities for improvement and create an action plan to support them.

Policy Responses

During the year Tourism NI supported the formulation of a bid led by VisitBritain to get Government to include a Tourism Sector Deal within the UK Industrial Strategy. The UK Government granted approval in November 2018 to the development of a tourism sector deal, which will create a new partnership between Government and industry and inform tourism policy and investment for years to come. The aim is to make the UK's tourism industry the most accessible in the world. The UK Prime Minister announced this deal on 27 June 2019.

Tourism NI also supported a Departmental response to the UK Treasury's call for evidence on the impact of VAT and air passenger duty on tourism, particularly in Northern Ireland. These policy areas are critically important to Northern Ireland's tourism industry, given its unique competitive position as the only UK region with an EU land border. The new Northern Ireland Tourism Alliance also submitted a response as the industry's new representative voice.

Tourism NI partnered with Belfast City Council and surrounding local authorities to develop the Belfast Region City Deal bid. We supported the development of a Tourism Product Development Framework and a research study to do some high-level market testing of proposed tourism development concepts with Ireland's three biggest incoming tour operators.

The Belfast Region City Deal bid led to an announcement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer of a £350 million investment package in the Autumn Budget, which, it is hoped, will be supplemented by private sector investment and other contributions. Tourism NI also worked with Derry City & Strabane District Council on the tourism elements of its draft city deal bid.

In terms of Brexit, Tourism NI participated in a Departmental Working Group set up to identify potential threats and opportunities presented by Britain's exit from the European Union. A proposed action plan and resource bid were submitted for activities to mitigate the impact of a 'hard' Brexit. These

Performance Analysis

included increasing the promotion of staycations by Northern Ireland residents, sustaining market growth in the Republic of Ireland, growing golf and business tourism and supporting Tourism Ireland's overseas PR activity.

With excellent networking and engagement opportunities and giving Northern Ireland a distinct voice and greater visibility across the UK and Ireland, during the year Tourism NI joined the British Irish Chamber of Commerce and Dublin Chamber of Commerce for an initial one-year period. We also applied for affiliate membership of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation. This will see Tourism NI joining an international platform from which to interact with stakeholders, gain access to international data and events and learn from the UN's efforts to advance sustainable tourism globally.

Following August's devastating fire at the Bank Buildings in Belfast, Tourism NI acted as the conduit for £400,000 from government to assist the city centre in recovering.

During the year the Tourism NI's Board raised concerns with the Department for the Economy about the timeliness, robustness and usefulness of current sources of tourism statistics. We argued that there is a need for definitive targets for visitor numbers and spend to form an evidence base for supporting strategic ambitions. In response, the Department set up a working group to investigate how data might be gathered from a range of sources to provide it, Tourism NI and Tourism Ireland with more robust statistics.

Strategic Capital Projects

Work was undertaken with local authorities including Mid and East Antrim Council, Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Council and Derry City and Strabane District Council to develop a range of capital projects. Many of these are at an early stage but present exciting possibilities for future new tourism product.

Outstanding experiences

In addition to our work on defining Northern Ireland's exciting new experience brand, throughout the year Tourism NI worked on a range of other initiatives to provide the best possible experience for visitors.

Cluster Development

Following a very successful pioneering scheme on the Causeway Coastal Route, Tourism NI initiated an extension of its development programme supporting new product clusters across Northern Ireland including in Fermanagh, Derry~Londonderry, Strangford, Belfast (Titanic Quarter) and Mid Ulster. Clustering helps businesses to collectively develop sellable packaged visitor experiences and equips them with

advice and expert help to build their knowledge and skills in areas such as brand development, sales, marketing and digital capability.

The initiative delivered tangible results, with for example those businesses that acted on the findings of digital audits reporting an upturn in their web traffic. Tourism NI sought to align the cluster approach with Invest NI's collaborative growth programme where possible.

In 2018-19, new visitor experiences continued to emerge from the now well-established Causeway Coastal Route cluster. As part of its support to the cluster, Tourism NI committed £10,000 towards a 'Slow Road' social media campaign by Tourism Ireland, promoting the route across European markets.

Immersive Technology Capital Scheme

Digital transformation is having a significant impact on the tourism industry. New technologies have transformed how visitors can engage with a destination and its authentic stories, enabling them to enjoy a completely immersive experience.

During the year, Tourism NI made a successful bid for £1 million of capital funding for an Immersive Technology Programme to enhance the visitor experience across Northern Ireland. This built on recent demand for funding under the previous year's Augmented Reality Competition.

The Enhancing Visitor Experiences through Immersive Technology Programme focuses on projects that have a technology solution at their core, and which create new immersive experiences that give compelling reasons for visitors to come to Northern Ireland, stay longer and spend more. Applications were welcomed from across the public, private and voluntary and community sector, with successful applicants gaining access to funding of £25,000 to £500,000.

European Year of Cultural Heritage

The European Year of Cultural Heritage (EYCH) saw nine projects awarded funding through a £500,000 Culture and Heritage Fund available from Historic Environment Division, Tourism NI and the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Tourism NI supported the projects in maximising their tourism potential through a focus on segmented marketing and collaboration with other tourism providers. We also engaged with the heritage sector to ensure uptake of wider industry development support, including the new cluster programme and seminars on topics including experience-enhancing immersive technology.

The Experience Development and Communications teams developed a campaign to enhance the heritage product's profile and to help address story and content gaps. An integrated

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consumer communications plan supported EYCH and the European Heritage Open Days, included FAM trips with key Northern Irish influencers. A Young Travel Writers Competition was launched to promote family trips in Northern Ireland and link to the EYCH by exploring iconic and hidden cultural gems and building profile and content.

Food and Drink

During the year, Northern Ireland continued to benefit from the legacy of the 2016 Year of Food and Drink, winning 'Best Food Destination in 2018' at the International Travel and Tourism Awards held at London's World Travel Market in November.

To reflect the increasing importance of our culinary excellence to the tourism product as a whole, Tourism NI appointed a new Food Experience Development Officer to engage with food networks, food experience providers, local authority food representatives and Food NI and to act as our project manager for the forthcoming all-island season of food, 'Taste the Island'. Preparations were also made to welcome the BBC Good Food Show back to Northern Ireland as part of the Hillsborough Castle Food Festival in July 2019.

In January 2019 Tourism NI partnered with George Best Belfast City Airport and all 11 councils in the province to launch the search for Northern Ireland's Best Small Visitor Attraction – with £30,000 of free marketing support and brand visibility at the airport on offer to the winner.

Major Events

Events remain central to providing outstanding visitor experiences in Northern Ireland, and Tourism NI supported 14 events in 2018-19 through the International Tourism Events Fund. These included the Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival, the Ulster Grand Prix, the NI Open and Derry Halloween 2018, which linked in with the 400th anniversary of the completion of the construction of the City Walls.

A total of 43 events were supported through the National Tourism Sponsorship Events Fund. These events were spread across Northern Ireland, creating authentic reasons to visit and showcasing unique local character and culture. Highlights included the Balmoral Show, Garden Show Ireland, the Irish Game Fair, the Living History Festival, the Royal 13th Festival and the O'Neill Foyle Cup.

An evaluation of the Tourism Events Funding Programme 2011–16 conducted on behalf of Department for the Economy concluded that it delivered significant benefits to Northern Ireland. These included:

- Around 7.7 million spectators
- Some 842,000 bed nights

- An average economic impact per event of circa £931,000
- An average return on investment of £24.15:£1
- Over £106 million in advertising equivalent value

Arising from this review of tourism events funding, the process began to develop a new Tourism Events Strategic Vision for Northern Ireland to 2030. This will support Tourism Strategy targets and complement the new experience brand, presenting a new model for how Tourism NI supports and categorises events in future.

Golf

During the year, Tourism NI's promotion of Northern Ireland's golfing product stepped up significantly ahead of The 148th Open, which took place in July 2019. The importance of the golf market and the scale of opportunity that The 148th Open represents for Northern Ireland were highlighted by the publication of results of the 2017 Golf Tourism Monitor which showed a 12% increase in golf tourism revenue, bringing annual income to £39.9m from 123,200 golf visitors.

Tickets for The 148th Open went on sale on 9 July 2018 and it quickly became the fastest-selling event in the tournament's history, with all four championship days selling out in record time. An expected 215,000 visitors will descend on Royal Portrush for the event.

Tourism NI's activity engaged and connected all those with an interest in the event – organisers, spectators, visitors, stakeholders, partners, businesses and residents alike. This included work to prepare the industry and volunteers to support delivery on the ground, and on dressing and activation of Portrush, key hub towns and gateways into Northern Ireland.

The Events Team organised a learning journey to The 147th Open at Carnoustie for agencies involved in planning 2019's event. This allowed our partners to get a sense of the size and scale of the event and the intricacies of the planning required.

All of this activity was supported by a comprehensive plan for integrated marketing and communications to engage international visitors, media and people locally, underlining the event's economic and social significance to the whole of Northern Ireland and to underline how far Northern Ireland has come as a tourism destination.

The campaign entered high gear with January's 'Eyes on The Open' gala at Titanic Belfast, which received excellent media coverage. This was followed by The Epic Journey, a community engagement project visiting towns and cities across Northern Ireland, which was launched at Belfast City Hall in March.

The Ireland Golf Tour Operator Association, in association with Tourism NI hosted the 21st National Golf Tourism Conference

Performance Analysis

and 2018 Gala Irish Golf Awards in October at the Galgorm Resort and Spa in Ballymena. In addition, Tourism NI's Golf Marketing manager undertook an extensive programme of promotion of Northern Ireland as a golf destination at trade shows and tournaments throughout the year, including the North American Golf Tourism Conference in June 2018 and the International Golf Travel Market in October 2018. Tourism NI also exhibited in July 2018 at the Irish Open in Ballyliffin and The 147th Open in Carnoustie.

Further opportunities to promote our golf product came in January when Tourism NI, alongside Tourism Ireland and Fáilte Ireland, attended the golf industry's leading trade event, Orlando's PGA Merchandise Show. For the first time we attended the Asian Golf Tourism Convention at the end of March 2019 and preparations also began for the inaugural Northern Ireland Golf Tourism Convention at the Slieve Donard Resort, Newcastle, in April 2019.

The annual Writer Cup competition is a firm favourite with journalists and in 2018 the competition saw 16 high profile sporting media figures from across the island of Ireland staying in the Slieve Donard Hotel, Newcastle, and playing Ardglass and Warrenpoint golf clubs.

Quality and Standards

The Quality and Standards team supports the development of a quality visitor experience by providing development advice, certification and quality grading to new and existing accommodation businesses and attractions. The team had an exceptionally busy year with unprecedented increases in applications to register as new visitor accommodation.

A total of 1,324 new venture applications were received in 2018, representing 250% growth; 203 new applications were received in November and December alone, 50% of which were from the Causeway Coast and Glens council area. The increases were driven in part by publicity around enforcement action taken against unregistered providers and for ventures along the North Coast, in anticipation of an uplift in business as a result of The 148th Open.

During spring 2018, Tourism NI ran a localised awareness campaign on the North Coast. This highlighted the process and fees, made traders aware of their legal obligations and encouraged providers to price their offers fairly, to ensure a positive and high-quality visitor experience during The 148th Open. The summer months then saw the team working with major new Belfast hotel developments including the Maldron Hotel, the AC by Marriott and the Grand Central Hotel. The Quality and Standards team also supported a range of industry events for people setting up tourist accommodation.

The significant growth in the accommodation sector created

some resourcing issues for the inspection teams, which managed to maintain an average target time from application to inspection at 12 weeks. Tourism NI is required by Government to recover the full cost of certification and quality schemes, and a leading firm of chartered accountants is undertaking a review of fees for these.

During the year the Tourism NI Board agreed to commission an independent review of the existing certification legislation, although any amendments will represent a challenge in the absence of an Assembly.

Industry Development

The Industry Development team continued to support businesses and individuals across the tourism and hospitality industry with programmes of sponsorship, workshops and masterclasses, sessions on the Republic of Ireland market opportunity, digital workshops and sales training to market-ready clusters.

The Ulster University Business School carried out work on Tourism NI's behalf to identify the development needs of tourism businesses and establish what support the industry would find most valuable from the Industry Development team. The report made recommendations to help shape future training provision. A diagnostic tool that can be used by Tourism NI to identify the specific needs of small and micro-enterprises was also developed.

A significant innovation during the year was the launch of the new Tourism Enterprise Development (TED) programme, which included a number of very well-attended events. As part of this new model of business support Tourism NI appointed a managed service provider in early 2019 to deliver support directly to the industry. It is also hoped this will help to develop the knowledge and skills of Tourism NI staff. We also appointed a contractor to develop the digital version of the Tourism Business Health Check, which identifies the support that businesses need under the TED programme.

Towards the end of the year a Market Growth Programme began with a conference delivered in partnership with Tourism Ireland. Initiatives within this programme relate to key markets such as the Republic of Ireland, Great Britain and China. A 'China Ready' programme was delivered in partnership with the Centre for Competitiveness and a steering group was convened to identify practical steps that tourism businesses can take to meet the needs of Chinese visitors.

Other initiatives during the year included a number of Tourism NI-sponsored workshops on GDPR to prepare the industry to meet its obligations, the organisation and hosting of the GB & ROI Coach Operators' Workshop, and the support of the high-profile Social Travel Summit Conference in Belfast in September.

Performance Analysis

A Review of Tour Guiding was also completed, resulting in a proposal to commission a new skills development programme for tour guides.

In September, a Tourism and Hospitality Careers and Jobs Fair, led by Belfast City Council in partnership with the Department for the Economy, the Department for Communities, Tourism NI, Invest NI and the Northern Ireland Hotels Federation, offered over 350 employment opportunities and highlighted the critical role all agencies have for engaging with directly with jobseekers.

In the run up to The 148th Open in July, a series of WorldHost Ambassador workshops for golf events were held in the Causeway Coast and Glens region and were rolled out across other council areas in Northern Ireland in advance of July 2019.

A Meet the Buyer event in the autumn gave local suppliers the chance to meet Sodexo, the contract caterers for The 148th Open, to secure contracts relating to the event and other possible future business.

Delivering excellence

Tourism NI maintained its commitment to delivering excellence throughout 2018-19 through excellent organisational efficiency, effective deployment of all staff resources and good corporate governance.

The organisational culture and all working practices are underpinned by the Investors in People Standard, the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) framework and the Customer Service Excellence (CSE) Standard, which was attained in 2018-19 by Tourism NI's Business Support & Events and Marketing Divisions.

Resourcing

During the year, Tourism NI commissioned a piece of work from a management consultancy specialist to review the organisation's existing structures and capabilities, and identify the requirements that will be needed to deliver on the ambition of the Tourism Strategy to 2030. Discussions also took place with the Department for the Economy in relation to the resources required to implement the structural changes. As a first step Tourism NI identified a number of priority posts that it considers to be essential to meeting the objectives set out within the forthcoming 2019-20 Operating Plan.

The Department had also asked its arms-length bodies for breakdowns to show how they might achieve potential budget reductions of 5% during the next year. For Tourism NI that would represent a reduction of £926,000. We made it clear to the Department that this would impact upon our ability to deliver Programme for Government targets and to fulfil other

obligations – for example, supporting the policing costs for The 148th Open.

Corporate Governance

In November the Board agreed a framework of new sub-committees to support its work and that of the Executive team, with the intention of recruiting at least one independent member to bring specialist experience and support to each committee.

Our Chief Digital Officer joined us for two years on a full-time basis, having previously been shared with Invest NI. Working full time for Tourism NI has allowed him to develop a Digital Services Unit and accelerate the digital transformation programme, with work to include the implementation of new CRM, HR and Finance systems, the gathering of aggregated real-time tourism data through new partnerships, stakeholder engagement and the deployment of sensor technology at key tourist sites, as well as capital funding for immersive augmented and virtual reality experiences.

In early 2019 Tourism NI migrated its IT infrastructure to a new and enhanced cloud-based network service following the end of a managed service contract with BT. Also in the early part of the year we were forced to deal with a sequence of virus attacks on our IT functions, which presented staff with significant challenges in their day to day work. As a result, we initiated a series of new security protocols to better protect Tourism NI's IT functionality alongside a new programme of awareness-training for staff.

In line with our core values of excellence and integrity, Tourism NI developed a new complaints handling procedure to support the delivery of high quality services for customers by addressing complaints as soon as they arise and getting it right first time. Key features include an online complaints form and a centralised complaints database to facilitate reporting, analysis and the continuous improvement agenda.

Another major body of work during the year involved preparing the organisation for its obligations under GDPR, which came into force on 25 May 2018. Amongst other actions, GDPR awareness training was delivered to all Tourism NI staff and to the Board. The Industry Development Team also undertook a programme of communication with over 10,000 industry and stakeholder contacts to consolidate databases.

The Business Planning and Improvement Team supported the recent assessments of the Business Support and Events and Marketing Divisions, in which they attained recognition under the Customer Service Excellence (CSE) process. Developed by the Cabinet Office, CSE offers a practical tool for driving customer-focused change. The CSE standard helps organisations to improve areas that research indicates are a

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priority for customers. Both divisions were found to meet the CSE standard and the assessor recommended that in eight elements, the teams should be recognised for 'Compliance Plus', which is awarded when an organisation goes beyond the requirements of the standard with approaches that can be considered as examples of best practice.

To ensure that Tourism NI continued to meet its legislative and statutory obligations, the Board approved a new Disability Action Plan in June 2018 and a revised Equality Scheme in December.

Corporate Social Responsibility

The year-end marked the conclusion of a three-and-a-half-year association with Guide Dogs NI, during which time Tourism NI staff raised £6,500 through a variety of activities such as bake sales and participation in the Belfast Marathon. Following a poll of staff by the Corporate Social Responsibility group, Air Ambulance NI was selected as Tourism NI's new charity partner.

Investing in enterprise

Throughout 2018-19 Tourism NI invested in enterprise across the tourism sector by developing effective collaborative approaches with local government and other key stakeholders for the delivery of business support programmes. We also worked with businesses and initiatives that have potential to drive export growth identified through industry development programmes.

Screen Tourism

Northern Ireland's unique relationship with the biggest television show in the world continued to pay dividends for our screen tourism product in the run up to the show's final season. Game of Thrones® and screen tourism-related Familiarisation (FAM) trips and insight events generated real excitement amongst delegates and participants.

The arrival of GAME OF THRONES™: The Touring Exhibition to Belfast was announced in December, with the opening timed to coincide with the start of Season 8 in April 2019 and tickets on sale ahead of Christmas. Partnership activity with Titanic Belfast Ltd and Tourism Ireland encouraged international visitors to experience the exhibition in the authentic 'Home of Thrones'.

In May 2018, over 230 people registered to attend our Game of Thrones® industry insight event at the Odeon cinema. Speakers included the Managing Director of Amanti Tourism, who spoke about the New Zealand screen tourism opportunity, and two Finnish screen tourism bloggers, along with a guest appearance by Game of Thrones® actor Ian McElhinney. The event emphasised the significant and continued opportunity of

on Northern Ireland's association with the show and generated real excitement amongst delegates.

In the autumn, HBO announced plans for a Game of Thrones® legacy project to be based in Northern Ireland. To be based at the Linen Mills Studios in Banbridge, the attraction will allow fans the opportunity to visit iconic sets from the show and immerse themselves in the world of Westeros, giving more people reasons to visit or extend their stay. Game of Thrones® continues to be a popular feature of requests for visits by international media.

In early 2019, Tourism NI's Corporate Communications team supported the premiere of the second series of the hit Channel 4 comedy Derry Girls, shot on location in Northern Ireland.

Digital Services

Work progressed on our tourism data hub, with the roll-out of Internet of Things (IoT) sensors and object recognition cameras beginning in early 2019. This will allow Tourism NI to start collating data that provides meaningful insights both for the industry and the organisation.

The Department for the Economy confirmed funding of £1 million for an Immersive Technology scheme. The Capital Funding Team developed processes and documentation for the scheme's launch and economic appraisers were procured to support assessment. The team worked with Tourism NI's Chief Digital Officer to determine what could be delivered by 31 March 2019, within the procurement requirements of capital funding programme.

Funds were awarded to seven winners of the Tourism Augmented Reality Challenge competition including digital tours and experiences at Armagh Planetarium, Silent Valley, Carrickfergus Castle, the Causeway Coast and Glens Food Network, the Ulster Folk & Transport Museum and on board the Glider.

Another new competition, the Tourism AI Challenge, encouraged the tech sector to come up with innovative ways of applying artificial intelligence/machine learning to Tourism NI datasets in order to improve the visitor experience. Funding was awarded to three winners of this Small Business Research Initiatives competition.

Business Tourism

Throughout the year the Business Solutions Team participated in sales missions and trade shows in the UK, Europe and overseas, partnering with Tourism Ireland and VisitBritain, meeting with operators and promoting Northern Ireland as a business and incentive destination.

April 2018's Meet the Buyer workshop in Belfast Waterfront

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was the biggest to date, with 146 Northern Ireland tourism organisations attending (a 40% increase on 2017). More than 5,000 sales appointments took place, with industry representatives meeting 211 international operators from 22 markets. Subsequent evaluation indicated that 97% of operators who attended were likely to contract with a new Northern Ireland supplier, with a significant proportion (78%) expecting to do business in 2018 and 2019.

Another major business-to-business networking platform was September's GB and RoI Coach and Group Workshop in St Anne's Cathedral, which showed increased participation from tour operators from both Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland, as well as from Northern Ireland tourism companies. This is the second biggest such event after Meet the Buyer during the year and it saw 52 operators meeting 48 local tourism business representatives, along with the launch of the international travel trade sales brochure.

In 2018-19 Tourism NI supported visits by a number of major associations and conferences with the potential to significantly boost Northern Ireland's profile as a meetings, incentive, conferences and event (MICE) destination. May, for instance, saw Tourism NI sponsoring a meeting of the UK Association of Leading Visitor Attractions hosted by National Museums NI at the Ulster Museum.

Most significantly, however, Belfast was the venue for the prestigious Host Global Forum, with 200 top destination management companies and MICE buyers coming into the city in June. The event was held outside the US for the very first time and a full FAM programme, special showcase events and activities were arranged by Tourism NI. Bespoke experiences were provided for media reporting on the forum and the destination, and this produced significant coverage in North American markets. Subsequent feedback from participants and local trade showed that the event was a huge success with 96% of survey respondents saying that they would consider bringing meetings and incentive programmes back to Northern Ireland.

As part of the Hosts Global legacy, Tourism NI jointly hosted a Northern Ireland trade evening in New York in March 2019, as part of Successful Meetings University International. Tourism NI and five delegates representing the Northern Ireland meetings and incentive market had the opportunity to network with over 100 buyers representing an economic value of £104 million of international travel programmes annually. Also as a result of Hosts Global, Northern Ireland was shortlisted to host a prestigious incentive programme in 2020 for a top US construction company.

In September, Belfast was in the social media spotlight as more than 50 of the world's top travel influencers and tourism industry leaders gathered in the city for a two-day summit

focused on travel marketing. Along with Tourism NI, Britain's national tourism organisation, VisitBritain, sponsored the summit. The delegate satisfaction survey for the event showed an overall satisfaction score of 4.8/5, the highest score ever. Three-quarters of delegates also responded that their experience of Northern Ireland throughout the summit exceeded their expectations and 100% of delegates agreed they received a warm welcome.

There was also positive feedback from November's Incoming Tour Operators Association sales workshop, which was held in Northern Ireland for the first time. It is hoped that this may become an annual event.

Working with Brendan Travel in Dublin, Tourism NI secured The Travel Company (TTC) Annual Leadership Conference for Belfast in 2019. TTC owns some of the world's leading travel companies and this presents an outstanding opportunity to showcase Northern Ireland to top agents. The team also collaborated with Visit Belfast and ICC Belfast on another huge business tourism platform in August 2019, the C&IT Agency Forum.

Promoting Northern Ireland

Marketing and promoting Northern Ireland as a destination both at home and in the Republic of Ireland is one of Tourism NI's key roles. A series of compelling marketing and communications initiatives was developed and delivered in 2018-19, with particular emphasis on The 148th Open and Game of Thrones® and ensuring that the right content was delivered to the right people, through the right channels and at the right time.

Destination Marketing

Activity to promote The 148th Open took place around the Irish Open campaign at Ballyliffin Golf Club. Tourism NI had advertisements sited around Derry-Londonderry and the course environs. An extensive range of marketing material for print and broadcast was produced, supplemented by briefings for commentators.

Preparations for Tourism NI's autumn campaign included stakeholder engagement with Visit Belfast, National Museums NI, Titanic Belfast and the local councils, and based on the previously successful 'Say Hello to More' catchline the campaign went live in mid-October. The spring 'Say Hello to More' campaign went live in January 2019 with activity focusing on Belfast, Game of Thrones® and a partnership with publishers in the Republic of Ireland to engage with the 'active maximisers' market segment.

In the Republic of Ireland market our marketing campaigns

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intensified between January to March 2019. A new campaign called 'What's Keeping You', in partnership with Irish comedian Neil Delamare, was prepared for launch in April, along with a week-long promotion with the Newstalk radio station. This consisted of outside broadcasts across Northern Ireland at the start of March and showcased what the region has to offer while aiming to mitigate any negative publicity arising from the Brexit process. There was also a series of Game of Thrones® activity in the run-up to the official opening of GAME OF THRONES™: The Touring Exhibition, which will run from April - September 2019.

International Media Visits

During the year, Northern Ireland's increasing appeal was evident from the number of requests that Tourism NI received to facilitate international press visits. Game of Thrones® remained of particular interest to visiting media, as did our golf product as interest rose in advance of the 148th Open.

In June we hosted a Chinese group to celebrate the launch of Hainan Airlines direct flights from Beijing, which should see a considerable increase in our Chinese visitor numbers.

The Republic of Ireland team undertook an extensive programme of promotion during the year, resulting in the securing of a great deal of high-profile and often innovative television and radio coverage of Northern Ireland. Examples include a 30-minute programme with journalist Edward Finn exploring Northern Ireland's Game of Thrones® territory and a visit arranged from four of the Republic's leading motoring journalists to The Fast and The Furious tour at Belfast's SSE Arena, followed by a road trip visiting key destinations along the Causeway Coast.

The Department for Economy provided £692,000 to address Brexit's impact, delivering a domestic spring campaign, helping to maintain market growth and maintaining the uplift of PR FAM trips from the Republic of Ireland.

Social and Digital

In 2018-19 Tourism NI migrated to a new web development agency and the development plan for the year included work on compliance with GDPR, the implementation of a User Experience Strategy, and the development of a digital presence to support business tourism.

The Social and Digital Unit also worked with Tourism Ireland and Fáilte Ireland to procure a joint media library platform, which will launch to stakeholders in 2019. The media library allows Northern Ireland content to be distributed to media and stakeholders alike and is an invaluable tool for the promotion of Northern Ireland worldwide.

Work also commenced on developing a Digital Marketing Roadmap to identify technology trends that will impact global

tourism over the next few years. This will help to redevelop the consumer website discovernorthernireland.com in support of the new Northern Ireland experience brand and Visitor Information Plan.

The spring 2019 social media campaign focused on Belfast, Game of Thrones® and a partnership with publishers in the Republic to engage with the 'active maximisers' market segment. In addition, we collaborated with Tourism Ireland on a Season 8 Game of Thrones® campaign which started in April and involved investing £50,000 in the production of content assets for use by both agencies.

Visitor Information

Together with local authorities, during the year Tourism NI established an Implementation Working Group to map the potential future structure of Northern Ireland's Visitor Information Network.

Corporate Communications

Among the highlights of Tourism NI's corporate communications activity in 2018-19 was a superb gala evening at the Europa Hotel for the 40th anniversary of the Northern Ireland Tourism Awards in May. Delivered by the Communications and Events teams, new awards sponsors included DWF and Hoseasons, joining existing sponsors Diageo, First Trust Bank, Tourism Ireland and Ulster University. A celebratory anniversary video was created for the event, showcasing the highlights of four decades of Northern Ireland tourism. The event received tremendous coverage in print, broadcast and social media.

Strong results in the annual Golf Tourism Monitor were used to promote Northern Ireland as a key golf destination and achieved robust print and broadcast coverage.

A plan was developed to highlight the scale and importance of June's Hosts Global Forum and generate positive coverage showcasing Belfast and Northern Ireland for business tourism.

In August Tourism NI developed and published its Annual Review for 2017-18. Called 'Creating a Compelling International Destination', print copies went to key media and stakeholders and the review received widespread positive coverage.

At the end of January, Tourism NI hosted a special red carpet event named 'Eyes On The Open'. The event marked the start of the official build up to The 148th Open at Royal Portrush with a celebration of Northern Ireland talent from across the worlds of sport, music, media, television and the arts. Hosted by broadcasters Stephen Watson and Claire McCollum, the theme of the event was 'We've Come a Long Way' and included the unveiling of a short film by award-winning director and producer Martin Stalker. The film was set to an original poem

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by local poet Paula Matthews, and narrated by leading actors Ian McElhinney, Bronagh Waugh, Saoirse-Monica Jackson and Shaun Blaney and accompanied by an original score composed and performed by Belfast-born virtuoso pianist Michael McHale. It has since been distributed widely across key tourism markets.

A sporting panel at the event included record-breaking champion jockey Sir Anthony McCoy OBE and four-time Superbike World Champion, Jonathan Rea MBE, who shared their experiences of competing at the top of their profession and representing Northern Ireland on the world stage. Also interviewed was legendary golfing commentator Peter Alliss. Voices of support were added to the night from global golfing icons including Rory McIlroy, Graeme McDowell and Darren Clarke, as well as up-and-coming golfing stars Stephanie Meadow and Tom McKibbin.

Investing in Skills

The tourism and hospitality sector relies on people to deliver top quality service to visitors to Northern Ireland. As the sector grows, the need to attract, develop, reward and retain talent is a priority.

Throughout the year Tourism NI worked on a number of areas relating to tourism and hospitality skills, including the development of Level 4–6 Tourism Apprenticeships in partnership with People 1st and a new Careers Portal for Hospitality and Leisure in partnership with the Department of Education.

Following the submission of applications from further education colleges, Belfast Met was appointed as the lead for a new Curriculum Hub for Tourism and Hospitality. A SMART action plan is being developed also to deliver the skills-related objectives within the Belfast Region City Deal.

Long-term expenditure trends

Looking to the future, Tourism NI plans to spend its resources on the marketing and promotion of Northern Ireland as a tourist destination to the Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland markets, for both leisure and business tourism, to support the development of the Tourism Industry and to continue to develop tourism products to attract visitors.

Information including social matters, anti-corruption and anti-bribery matters

Rural Needs

The Rural Needs (NI) Act 2016 introduced a new statutory duty on Northern Ireland departments, district councils and other specified public bodies to have due regard to rural needs

when developing, adopting, implementing or revising policies, strategies and plans and when designing and delivering public services. The Act became operational for government Departments and district councils from 1 June 2017 and covers two main duties.

The first is a duty to have due regard to rural needs (referred to as the 'due regard duty') and the second relates to monitoring and reporting on how the due regard duty has been exercised. The latter duty requires that public authorities publish this information in their annual reports, and provide a copy of this information to the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) on an annual basis. Tourism NI has due regard to rural needs when undertaking new or revised policies/ activities by subjecting them to rural needs impact assessments, in accordance with guidance issued by DAERA.

Anti-corruption and Anti-bribery

Tourism NI adheres to and promotes good practice guidance on anti-corruption and anti-bribery matters through a range of measures including anti-fraud and whistleblowing arrangements.

In 2017-18 the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) issued a good practice guide on managing the risk of bribery and corruption. This guidance was issued to all staff.

Tourism NI's Gifts and Hospitality guidance is also a key control in place to mitigate against corruption and bribery. This guidance outlines the types of instances in which it is, and is not, appropriate for staff to accept or offer gifts and hospitality as part of their official duties. Registers of gifts and hospitality are monitored and published on an annual basis on Tourism NI's website.

Sustainability Report

Tourism NI's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Programme is built around three key strands:

- **People** - Our Health & Wellbeing activities focus on developing and promoting a healthy workplace;
- **Planet** - Our Environmental activities aim to help Tourism NI be a sustainable organisation;
- **Place** - we aim to have a positive impact on our community through support, volunteering and fundraising.

In 2018-19 the key results from our CSR Programme included the following:

People – Health & Wellbeing Activities

In 2018-19 Tourism NI's Health and Wellbeing strand of our CSR programme has focused on promoting staff awareness of health issues, with a view to improving the overall health and motivation of our people. Health and Wellbeing initiatives included yoga sessions, a screening service for staff as well as staff regularly donating blood.

Planet – Environmental Activities

We continue to maintain our Sustainable Visitor Charter to provide information and tips to visitors on how to travel around NI sustainably, and we have promoted our Green Guide to help encourage and support tourism and hospitality businesses to 'go green' (<https://tourismni.com/Grow-Your-Business/sustainable-tourism/>).

In 2018-19 Tourism NI has introduced measures to reduce the use of plastic in the workplace as well as encouraging staff to recycle.

Place – Volunteering, Fundraising & Community Engagement Activities

In 2018-19 the partnership with Guide Dogs Northern Ireland came to an end, and Tourism NI staff voted to appoint a new charity partner - Air Ambulance Northern Ireland. In total staff have managed to raise £700 for this worthy cause through staff fund raising activities.

Tourism NI hosted six university placement students in various units throughout the organisation in 2018-19, imparting valuable knowledge, experience and career skills in the process, with the aim of helping to build the leaders of tomorrow.

Signed:



Accounting Officer
20 September 2018

Board Members



Terence Brannigan Chairman

Appointed April 2015

Terence Brannigan is the current Chairman of the Maze Long Kesh Development Corporation (MLKDC). MLKDC is responsible for the regeneration and development of the site at Maze Long Kesh which, at 347 acres, is twice the size of Titanic Quarter and four times the size of Canary Wharf. He is a Board member of Co-operation Ireland, a Visiting Professor attached to the Business Institute, Ulster Business School at Ulster University, a former Chairman of the CBI in Northern Ireland and was the founder and CEO of resource™, one of Northern Ireland's largest private sector employers.



Angelina Fusco

Appointed July 2014

Angelina is an independent media and journalism training consultant in Northern Ireland. She works with Channel56, a locally based communications company, helping individuals and organisations communicate more effectively. She spent more than 30 years in BBC Northern Ireland and held a variety of roles. For 15 years she was Head of the Television 'BBC Newslines' production team providing coverage of all breaking news stories and live programmes on special events. She was a trainer at the BBC's College of Journalism in London. She was awarded an Ochberg Fellowship on Journalism and Trauma from the Dart Centre, Columbia University, NYC. Angelina is also a member of Ofcom's Content Board, London and the Northern Ireland Committee of the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Board Members



Geoff Wilson

Appointed March 2015

Geoff runs his own marketing and communications consultancy business, with a focus primarily on sport. Previously Head of Marketing and Communications (Irish FA) he was responsible for public relations, commercial programmes, brand development and communication to fans. Geoff works with the likes of FIFA, UEFA, AFC, FIBA and other global sports organisations in a wide range of areas from strategic planning, marketing and communications, digital, fans engagement, public affairs and knowledge sharing / exchange programmes. In addition, Geoff consults with a number of sports tech companies in the CRM, eSports, wearable and fans engagement space. Geoff is a part-time lecturer in marketing at Queen's University Belfast and is Chair of Netball Northern Ireland.



Michele Shirlow

Appointed January 2015

Michele is the Chief Executive of FoodNI, a membership organisation dedicated to enhancing the reputation of Northern Ireland's food and drink, representing over 450 member companies (including 200 Taste of Ulster Restaurants) and acting as a strategic driver to support the industry to achieve greatness. Michele was central to delivery in 2016 of the first ever Year of Food and Drink, which increased positive visitor attitudes towards Northern Ireland food and drink by 23% and resulted in Northern Ireland winning the International Travel and Tourism Awards – Best Food Destination 2018-19. She is now spearheading the Taste the Greatness strategy to establish Northern Ireland as a leading food region in the UK by 2021.

Board Members



Terry McCartney

Appointed July 2014

Terry McCartney is the owner and manager of the multi award winning Belmore Court & Motel, Enniskillen. He is responsible for the day to day leadership and management of the 60-bedroom, four star guest accommodation as well as its sister property The Lodge At Lough Erne, a luxury self-catering home on the grounds of Lough Erne Resort. He was a lecturer in Hospitality and Computers at the South West College in Fermanagh and prior to that he held positions as a Field Sales Executive for Finlay Hydrascreees and Promotion and Sales Executive for Dillon Bass. In 2011, Terry was appointed High of Sheriff of County Fermanagh for the year. He is also a rugby referee, an amateur photographer and in January 2018 he trekked to the top of Kilimanjaro for charity.



Colin Neill

Appointed January 2015

Colin Neill is Chief Executive of Hospitality Ulster, the representative body of Northern Ireland's hospitality industry, which sustains 60,000 jobs and contributes £1bn annually to the NI economy. Colin holds an MBA from the Ulster University. He is also a Board member of the Northern Ireland Tourism Alliance.

Board Members



Michael McQuillan

Appointed July 2013

Michael became CEO at EnterpriseNI in August 2018. ENI supports 28 local enterprise agencies, engaging with 3,000 micro and small businesses every week across Northern Ireland. Prior to joining ENI he spent five years as Director of the Business Institute and Centre for SME Development at Ulster University Business School. Before joining Ulster University, he established and managed several businesses. Most notably, as co-founder of the streat, he developed the award winning cafe business to a network of more than 90 outlets before acquisition in 2010. Through McQuillan Associates he consulted and mentored more than 250 SMEs across Northern Ireland from 2010 to 2014. He is a Non-Executive Director on several Northern Irish businesses. He has had a long involvement with the Northern Ireland skills development agenda, and was appointed to Visiting Professor (UUBS) in 2010. Michael is a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy.

Accountability Report

Corporate Governance Report

The purpose of this report is to explain the composition and organisation of Tourism NI's governance structures and how they support the achievement of its objectives.

Directors' Report

The Directors present their report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2019. The net expenditure after interest and tax for the year is £25.5 million, (2017-18 - £23.4 million).

Directors

The Directors are the Board Members as listed in Section 2.1 of the Governance Statement. Please see previous section on Board Members for further detail. The Senior Management Team are listed in the Remuneration and Staff Report. For the year ended 31 March 2019, John McGrillen was in position of Chief Executive Officer.

Prompt Payment Policy

Tourism NI is committed to the prompt payment of bills for goods and services received in accordance with the Government's Better Payments Practice Payment Code.

Unless otherwise stated in the contract, payment is due within 30 days of the receipt of the goods, or services, or presentation of a valid invoice or similar demand, whichever is later. Regular reviews conducted to measure how promptly Tourism NI paid its bills found that 99% (2017-18 - 100%) of bills were paid within this standard.

In December 2008 the Government and Institute of Credit Management launched the new Prompt Payment Code setting a target of paying invoices within 10 days. Under this initiative Tourism NI achieved 99% of bills paid within 10 days (2017-18 - 99%).

Register of Interests

The Chairman, Board Members and Senior Management Team are required to register all interests, direct or indirect, which members of the public might reasonably think could influence their judgement. The register of interests is available for public inspection by contacting the Communications Team, Tourism Northern Ireland, Linum Chambers, Floors 10-12, Bedford Square, Bedford Street, Belfast, BT2 7ES.

Personal Data Related Incidents

There were no reported Personal Data Related Incidents in 2018-19 or 2017-18.

Complaints Handling

Tourism NI aims to provide a professional, high quality service to our customers and stakeholders and we welcome any feedback which will help us to improve our service.

Our complaints and feedback procedures are broken down into two key areas: giving feedback about tourist accommodation premises or other tourist amenities, including visitor attractions or making a complaint specifically about Tourism NI services (Corporate Complaints).

In the case of Corporate Complaints, the process was reviewed in 2018-19, which resulted in the development of an online complaints form and updated guidance for both complainants and Tourism NI Staff.

In relation to complaints about Tourism NI Services, we will acknowledge complaints within 3 working days and endeavour to provide a response within 10 working days. If it is not possible to provide a full response within 10 working days, we will advise of the progress of our investigation, and provide an indication of the likely response date.

If complainants are dissatisfied with our response they can refer the matter to the Tourism NI Chief Executive within 28 days of the date of the initial response, and if they still consider that Tourism NI has not dealt with the matter either properly or fairly, they can refer their complaint to the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO).

There was one complaint made about the services provided by Tourism NI in 2018-19 (six in 2017-18). This complaint was in relation to the Tourism NI consumer website (Discover Northern Ireland).

Further information on the handling and monitoring of complaints is available by contacting complaints.feedback@tourismni.com

Charitable and Political Donations

No charitable or political donations have been made by Tourism NI in 2018-19 (2017-18 - £nil).

Auditors

The Comptroller and Auditor General is the external auditor for Tourism NI. Total payments of £1,156 were made during 2018-19 (2017-18 - nil) to the Northern Ireland Audit Office in respect of non-audit work.

Statement of the Board and Accounting Officer's Responsibilities

Under Article 8 of the Tourism (Northern Ireland) Order 1992, the Department for the Economy (with approval from the Department of Finance) has directed Tourism NI to prepare for each financial year a statement of accounts in the form and on the basis set out in the Accounts Direction.

The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and show a true and fair view of the state of affairs of Tourism NI at the year end, and of its income and expenditure, Statement of Financial Position and cash flows for the financial year.

In preparing the accounts, the Accounting Officer is required to comply with the requirements of the Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) and in particular to:

- Observe the Accounts Direction issued by the Department for the Economy, including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis;
- Make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis;
- State whether applicable accounting standards as set out in the Government Financial Reporting Manual have been followed, and disclose and explain any material departures in the financial statements;
- Prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis, unless it is inappropriate to presume that Tourism NI will continue in operation;
- Confirm that the annual report and accounts as a whole is fair, balanced and understandable and that he or she takes personal responsibility for the annual report and accounts and the judgements required for determining that it is fair, balanced and understandable.

The Accounting Officer of the Department for the Economy has designated the Chief Executive as Accounting Officer of Tourism NI. As Accounting Officer, the Chief Executive has responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances for which he is answerable, for the keeping of proper records and for safeguarding Tourism NI's assets, as set out in Managing Public Money Northern Ireland, issued by the Department of Finance.

As Accounting Officer, I can confirm that there is no relevant audit information of which the auditors are unaware. I have taken all the steps that I ought to have taken to make myself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are informed of it.

Tourism NI
Floors 10-12, Linum Chambers
Bedford Square
Bedford Street
BELFAST
BT2 7ES

Governance Statement

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Statement is to attest the continuing effectiveness of the governance arrangements of the Tourism Northern Ireland (Tourism NI) that support the achievement of our organisational policies, aims and objectives.

Corporate Governance refers to the system by which the organisation is directed and controlled. The effectiveness of direction and control of an organisation can be linked to:

- **Governance:** how well an organisation plans, sets, communicates and monitors progress against its corporate objectives;
- **Risk Management:** how the organisation identifies, considers and manages the risks to the achievement of its objectives; and
- **Business Controls:** how the organisation's Board assures itself and its stakeholders that it is in control of the business and the associated risks.

2. GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

As Accounting Officer, I am personally responsible for the overall accountability arrangements of the organisation which include: maintaining a sound system of corporate governance; an effective system of Internal Controls; assessing the organisational capacity to handle and manage risk; and maintaining propriety and regularity of public finances, in accordance with the responsibilities assigned to me in Managing Public Money Northern Ireland (MPMNI).

I am also responsible for ensuring compliance with the requirements of Tourism NI's Management Statement and Financial Memorandum (MSFM) agreed between Tourism NI and the Department for the Economy (DfE) and ensuring compliance with other government directives and guidance on good practice in corporate governance.

Compliance with Corporate Governance Code

As a Non Departmental Public Body (NDPB) of DfE, Tourism NI has been expected to adopt the practices set out in HM Treasury's "Corporate Governance In Central Government Departments: Code of Good Practice (NI) 2013" (the Code). Tourism NI has complied with the principles of good practice in the Code.

In compliance with the Code, Tourism NI has established and maintained key organisational structures which support the delivery of corporate governance.

Organisation and Structures

The key organisational structures which support the delivery of corporate governance are the

- Tourism NI Board;
- Audit and Risk Assurance Committee; and
- Fortnightly Senior Management Team meetings.

2.1 Tourism NI Board

Northern Ireland Tourist Board trading as Tourism Northern Ireland operates under the Tourism (Northern Ireland) Order 1992. Tourism NI's principal functions are to encourage tourism; to encourage the provision and improvement of tourist facilities and amenities; and the certification of tourism accommodation.

The Board consists of a Chairman and up to 8 non-executive Board Members, who are appointed by the Minister for the Economy, in accordance with the Code for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland. There were two vacancies during the year that remain vacant in the absence of a Minister. The Board takes an objective long-term view of the business, providing strategic oversight and scrutiny to assist the Accounting Officer in meeting his Corporate Governance responsibilities. The performance of Board Members is formally assessed by the Chairman on an annual basis. The Board meets a minimum of 8 times per year.

The Board has corporate responsibility for ensuring that Tourism NI fulfils the aims and objectives set by the Department and approved by the Minister, and for promoting the efficient, economic and effective use of staff and other resources by Tourism NI. To this end, and in pursuit of its wider corporate responsibilities, the Board:

- establishes the overall strategic direction of Tourism NI within the policy and resources framework determined by the Department;
- ensures that the Department is kept informed of any changes which are likely to impact on the strategic direction of Tourism NI or on the attainability of its targets, and determine the steps needed to deal with such changes;
- ensures that any statutory or administrative requirements for the use of public funds are complied with; that the Board operates within the limits of its statutory authority and any delegated authority agreed with the Department, and in accordance with any other conditions relating to the use of

Governance Statement

public funds; and that, in reaching decisions, the Board takes into account guidance issued by the Department of Finance and the Department;

- ensures that the Board receives and reviews regular financial information concerning the management of Tourism NI; is informed in a timely manner about any concerns relating to the activities of Tourism NI; and provides positive assurance to the Department that appropriate action has been taken on such concerns;
- demonstrates and ensures high standards of corporate governance are observed at all times. This includes using the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee to help the Board address key financial and other risks facing Tourism NI; and
- appoints a Chief Executive of Tourism NI subject to the approval of the Department and, in consultation with the Department, sets performance objectives and remuneration terms linked to these objectives for the Chief Executive which give due weight to the proper management and use of public monies.

Board Performance and Effectiveness

During 2018-19, the Tourism NI Board met a total of 10 times. Details of the attendance of members during the year are shown below:

Board Member	Number of Meetings Attended*	Out of a Possible
Terence Brannigan (CM)	10	10
Angelina Fusco	10	10
Michael McQuillan	10	10
Terry McCartney	8	10
Colin Neill	10	10
Michele Shirlow	9	10
Geoff Wilson	10	10

*Included within these meetings are two special meetings held during the year; a special meeting on 20 June 2018 to discuss the digital programme and resources/structure, and; on 11 September 2018 to discuss the Experience Brand.

In addition to the scheduled Board meetings, the Board held a facilitated workshop in February 2019 to discuss and agree priorities for Tourism NI's Operating Plan.

The Board focussed on the strategic objectives of Tourism NI and monitored performance against these targets. The Board received management information reports including Financial and Risk Management to discharge its duties.

The Board, in discharging its responsibilities, delegates the day to day management of Tourism NI to the Senior

Management Team (SMT), which consists of a Chief Executive, and 7 Executive Directors. The SMT is responsible for implementing the strategy of the organisation and formulating robust policies and strategies in pursuance of corporate aims and objectives.

Conflicts of Interest

All interests of both Board Members and SMT are recorded on a Register of Interests. This is updated as any new appointments occur to ensure that any conflict is recognised immediately. Conflicts of interest are also declared at the beginning of all Board and Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Meetings and Members will excuse themselves from the relevant discussion. Fourteen conflicts of interest were declared in Board meetings during the year. These related to Events programme, Hospitality Ulster, Northern Ireland Tourism Alliance, Bank Buildings Recovery Steering Group, UK Hospitality, and Food NI. On each occasion where the discussion involved decision making the members involved excused themselves. Two conflicts of interest were declared in the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee meetings. As no decisions were required and the proceedings involved discussion only, the Members remained in attendance.

Tourism NI has a policy for Directorship on External Boards to provide greater clarity for Board Members and staff members alike about the process for accepting invitations to sit on External Boards.

The process for dealing with Conflicts of Interest is held centrally by HR and is available to all staff and members of the Board.

Key Issues Considered by the Board

Below are some of the key issues the Board considered during 2018-19:

- Development and approval of the annual Operating Plan and budget allocation against organisational priorities and resulting pressures;
- Quarterly review of performance – operating plan, management accounts and risk management;
- 2017-18 Annual Report and Accounts and Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) Report to Those Charged with Governance;
- Annual Report of Audit & Risk Assurance Committee, and Audit Committee Self-Assessment Report;
- Formation of new Committees; Finance & Casework, Business & Industry Development;
- Tourism Ireland Market Reviews;

Governance Statement

- HMS Caroline;
- The 148th Open;
- Experience Brand;
- Organisational Restructure; and
- Draft Tourism Strategy.

The Board hosted dinners in April 2018, October 2018, and March 2019 with groups of invited tourism stakeholders.

2.2 The Tourism NI Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

The work of the Board is supported and advised by an Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. The Committee includes three non-executive members and one independent member. The Chief Executive, Director of Finance, Director of HR and Organisational Development, Finance Manager, Internal Audit Service (IAS) and External Audit (NIAO) and a representative from DfE are invited to attend all meetings.

The Committee supports the Board and the Accounting Officer by reviewing the comprehensiveness, reliability and integrity of assurances in meeting the Board and Accounting Officer's responsibilities. This includes the risk management framework and internal control environment. The Committee reviews the Annual Report and Financial Statements before submission to the Board to ensure a true and fair view of the financial position is presented.

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee was chaired by Colin Neill. There were no vacancies during the year.

During 2018-19, the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee met a total of four times. Details of the attendance of members during the year is shown below.

Audit Member	Meetings Attended	Out of a Possible
Colin Neill*	4	4
Angelina Fusco	4	4
Brian McClure (Independent)**	3	4
Michael McQuillan	3	4

*Colin Neill resigned as Chair in March 2019.

**Brian McClure resigned from the Committee in March 2019.

There were regular meetings between the Chair and both the NIAO and Head of IAS during the year.

The Tourism NI Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Reports

Matters considered by the Committee during 2018-19 included the following:

- Annual Report & Accounts 2017-18;
- NIAO Report to those Charged with Governance 2017-18;
- NIAO Audit Strategy 2018-19;
- Review and discussion of the Quarterly Risk Register;
- Approval of the Internal Audit Plan 2018-19 and review of all Internal Audit reports completed during the year, including the Annual Report and Opinion 2017-18;
- Review and discussion of all outstanding Internal Audit Recommendations;
- Audit Committee Effectiveness;
- Update on Tourism NI pay scales issue;
- Organisational restructure;
- Chair's Annual Report to the Board
- Fraud Notifications; and
- Direct Award Contracts.

The Board is also supported by three sub committees, a Marketing Committee, a Strategic Partnership Committee and a Casework Committee. The Committees meet on an ad hoc basis with a responsibility of reviewing and recommending for Board Approval issues aligned with their specific Terms of Reference. A review of the current Committees was carried out during the year, and it was agreed that two new Committees were required; Finance & Casework Committee (replacing existing Casework Committee) and Business & Industry Development Committee.

Governance Statement

2.3 The Senior Management Team

During the year, the Senior Management Team meets as follows:

- Quarterly to formally review the operating plan, budget and risk management and for oversight/review of progress on key projects;
- Monthly to review the budget, financial performance and to monitor risk and progress on key projects; and
- Fortnightly to discuss ongoing operational issues.

2.4 Business Planning

The Annual Operating Plan is a key reference tool for setting organisational aims and objectives. It provides the framework to ensure that Tourism NI makes best use of available financial, staff, and technological resources and that budgets are aligned to the plan following a robust budget challenge process. The budget process challenges managers to demonstrate efficiency and value for money in the provision of services to meet the needs of our stakeholders.

Tourism NI's annual Operating Plan is set in the context of the 4-year draft Corporate Plan and the Programme for Government. The 2018/19 Operating Plan was approved by the Board, and the Department for the Economy (DfE). Formal reporting to the Board and DfE is on a quarterly basis against Operating Plan objectives and budget.

The Board and the SMT regularly review and monitor performance against business objectives and challenge managers at all levels to ensure business targets and objectives are achieved.

2.5 Risk Management

Tourism NI aims to manage risk at a reasonable level to achieve its policies, aims and objectives. As Accounting Officer, it is my responsibility to ensure that an appropriate risk management process is in place within the organisation to assist with the decision making process. We do not aim to eliminate all risk, but we do aim to mitigate and manage risks through risk management strategies and policies.

Risk management is fully incorporated into the corporate planning and decision making processes and Tourism NI has in place a Corporate Risk Register that is reviewed by SMT on a quarterly basis. The appropriate action plans are put in place to manage and mitigate risks to ensure objectives and targets are achieved.

The Risk Register is updated on a regular basis taking account of any new risks identified by the SMT and with any new information on existing risks.

The Risk Register is presented to the Board and Audit and Risk Assurance Committee in order to monitor and review any significant risks that could prevent Tourism NI achieving its strategic goals. The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee has responsibility for ensuring an appropriate risk management process is embedded throughout the organisation and that appropriate training is given to support this. Risks are proactively managed at business unit level.

The Tourism NI Risk Register is reported to DfE through their Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and DfE's Oversight and Liaison Committee meetings.

2.6 Annual Assurance Statements

As Accounting Officer, I have to provide Annual Assurance Statements to DfE regarding the system of internal controls. This is supported by regular accountability meetings with senior DfE Officials which monitors organisational progress against plans and targets. This is also supplemented by meeting with the Board Chair, the Chief Executive, and DfE Officials after every Board meeting.

As part of the Assurance process for DfE, I have delegated responsibility to Directors and other Senior Managers to provide me with mid-year and annual assurance statements in respect of their compliance with corporate governance arrangements, within their respective areas of responsibility.

Governance Statement

2.7 Data Security

As Accounting Officer, I have overall responsibility for ensuring that information used for operational and reporting purposes is handled appropriately and that risks are assessed and mitigated to an acceptable level. This responsibility is discharged through the Chief Digital Officer, who is the Senior Information Risk Officer (SIRO) who provides focus for the management of information risk at SMT and Board level and has responsibility for the overall information risk policy and for advising the Accounting Officer on the information risk aspects of the governance arrangements. The SIRO is supported in this role by the IT Manager who has day to day responsibility for information management and security; the integrity of electronic information; and contingency and business continuity arrangements. A letter of assurance is provided to DfE on information governance on an annual basis. Despite the organisation suffering a malware attack in January 2019, there have been no data losses during the 2018-19 financial year.

2.8 Internal Audit

The Internal Audit function for Tourism NI is undertaken by Internal Audit Service (IAS), Department of Finance. Internal audit services are delivered in accordance with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. The work of IAS is informed by an analysis of the risks to which Tourism NI is exposed. The annual Audit Plan is based on this risk analysis and is designed to provide regular Internal Audit Reviews and assessment on our systems, processes and procedures.

Five audits were scheduled for 2018-19 (including one follow-up of outstanding recommendations), one of which was deferred to 2019-20. Two were completed, of these, one reported a satisfactory opinion and one was given a Limited opinion. One report remains ongoing as at Q1 in 2019-20. All recommendations accepted by Management are in the process of being implemented or they have already been implemented.

A Limited opinion was reported in relation to GDPR Compliance Review, principally around the maintenance of records of work and training that has been undertaken. An action plan to address these issues is in place and will be closed off by the end of Q1 2019-20.

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee provides scrutiny and oversight of the Internal Audit Plans and subsequent Reports and ensures that 'management responses' to recommendations are implemented. All Internal Audit Recommendations are held centrally and their progress closely monitored and challenged. Annually, IAS provides Tourism NI with a report on their activity. This Report includes

their independent opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Tourism NI's risk management, control and governance processes.

The overall audit opinion for 2018-19 was "Satisfactory".

2.9 External Audit

The External Audit of our Statutory Financial Statements is undertaken by the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO), in accordance with Auditing Standards issued by the Auditing Practice Board; the Financial Reporting Manual (FRM); and other government guidance. This independent scrutiny of the Financial Statements against Government Audit Standards provides me with additional assurance in respect of financial regularity.

The External Audit Strategy for 2018-19 and the Report to those charged with Governance (RTTCWG) for 2017-18 have been presented to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. As Accounting Officer, I can confirm that all recommendations included within the RTTCWG have been accepted and have been implemented or are currently being progressed.

2.10 Quality Of Data Used by Tourism NI Board

The Tourism NI Board uses information based on a number of data sources. In relation to performance targets, the Board draws assurance from the fact that a number of the data sources used are also utilised for the publication of official or National Statistics. Tourism NI also commissioned independent economic appraisals for capital investment decisions and for the evaluation of key activities such as events. Data relating to Finance and HR is derived from systems that are subject to regular scrutiny by DfE's Internal Audit Service. Information received by the Board allows the Board to discharge its duties with regard to its assurance needs, its decision making and its accountability obligations.

2.11 Ministerial Directions

There were no Ministerial or Departmental Directions received in 2018-19.

2.12 Financial Management

The organisational financial management arrangements conform to the requirements of Managing Public Money NI and other directions issued by the Department for the Economy. The Director of Finance has responsibility at SMT level for the proper management of the organisation's finances. Responsibility is delegated for the management of

Governance Statement

finances to Directors through the allocation of budgets. The Director of Finance is supported in this role by the Finance Manager, who is responsible for providing detailed financial procedures, guidance and financial advice for Managers, as well as maintaining effective systems of budgetary control and financial reporting.

The Northern Ireland Assembly was dissolved from 26 January 2017 for an election which took place on 2 March, on which date Ministers also ceased to hold office. An Executive was not formed following the election within the period specified in the legislation. The Budget Act 2018 was progressed through Westminster, receiving Royal Assent on 20 July 2018, followed by the Northern Ireland Budget (Anticipation and Adjustments) Act 2019 which received Royal Assent on 15 March 2019. This enabled the Department of Finance to allocate resources.

2.13 Fraud Policy

Tourism NI promotes an anti-fraud culture which requires all staff to act with honesty and integrity at all times and to take appropriate steps to safeguard public assets. Tourism NI has implemented a range of policies and procedures that are designed to ensure probity, business integrity and minimise the likelihood and impact of incidence of fraud arising. The Director of Finance is responsible for managing the Fraud Policy and the Fraud Response Plan. All reported suspected and actual Frauds are fully investigated and robust actions are taken where fraud can be proven.

3 GOVERNANCE ISSUES ARISING DURING THE YEAR

3.1 Internal Audit Issues

There was one Limited opinion issued in 2018-19 in relation to GDPR Compliance. An action plan was put in place to address all the recommendations. IAS will review the implementation of these recommendations in early 2019-20.

There was one limited opinion issued in 2017-18 in relation to the Strategic Partnership Grant Fund. All accepted recommendations have been implemented by management and it is anticipated that this will be reviewed by IAS in Q1 of 2019-20.

3.2 Other Governance Issues

Tourism NI Pay Scales

Tourism NI obtained approval to pay Belfast staff increases in salaries since 2014-15 up to 2017-18. These had previously been withheld due to queries about Tourism NI pay scales and pension contributions. Authorisation to make the payment was subject to the condition that the issue with regard Tourism NI pay scales would be progressed. A Business Case has been prepared and is being progressed with DfE to resolve the pay scale issue.

ROI Pay Award

In August 2018, Tourism NI implemented pay rises for its staff in the ROI office. When requesting approval it came to light that prior pay rises, dating back to 2013 and beyond, had not received full approval. Department of Finance granted retrospective approval for these payments on 5th September 2019.

In August 2018, January 2018 pay scales were applied rather than the April 2017 scales as per approved Pay Remit. Despite these scales not being approved in the pay remit submitted to DfE, these monies are due to Tourism NI ROI staff as they are set in advance by Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) in the Republic of Ireland. Department of Finance granted retrospective approval for these payments on 5th September 2019.

Governance Statement

Payments to Tourism Ireland

Tourism Ireland was formed by the Government of the Republic of Ireland and the Northern Ireland Executive, under the auspices of the North/South Ministerial Council (NSMC). It is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association and by the Financial Memorandum approved by the NSMC and prepares detailed three-year Corporate and one year Operating Plans to guide its activities. It is joint funded by both Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport (DTTAS) in the Republic of Ireland and the Department for the Economy (DfE) in Northern Ireland. As part of this funding arrangement, funding is made available via payments from Tourism Northern Ireland directly to Tourism Ireland. As a result of the collapse of the NI Executive in January 2017, the NSMC has been suspended and therefore Corporate and Operating Plans have not been approved. Whilst this is beyond DfE control, the C&AG took the decision to qualify his regularity opinion on the DfE 2018-19 accounts on the basis that the relevant plans had not been approved and therefore expenditure had been incurred without the necessary approvals in place. Tourism NI have no control over regularising these payments and continue to make them under instruction from DfE.

Attempted Frauds

There were no cases of attempted fraud during the 2018-19 year.

4 CONCLUSION

As Accounting Officer, I also have responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the Governance arrangements. This review is informed by Executive Directors within Tourism NI who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance framework and the work of Internal and External Auditors and their comments and recommendations. I have advised the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee of my review of the governance arrangements and my plans for continuous improvement of the governance arrangements.

Beyond those specific issues listed in Section 3, I can confirm that there have been no other governance issues identified during the year that are considered significant in relation to Tourism Northern Ireland's overall ability to achieve its corporate aims and objectives and that the governance arrangements, as detailed above, provide assurances of the effectiveness of the systems of corporate governance in place within Tourism NI.

Tourism NI continues to review and strengthen its governance and internal controls arrangements in line with government guidance, audit recommendations and best practice.

Remuneration & Staff Report

Remuneration Report

The Remuneration and Staff report sets out Tourism NI's remuneration policy for our Board Members and Senior Management Team (SMT), reports on how that policy has been implemented and details the amounts awarded to Board Members and SMT. It also provides details on remuneration and staff that the Northern Ireland Assembly and others see as key to accountability.

Remuneration Policy

Chairman and Board Members

The Chairman and Board Members are appointed in accordance with the Code of Practice of the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland. The Chairman and Board Members are appointed for a fixed period of up to three years. Thereafter they may be re-appointed in accordance with the Code of Practice.

The remuneration of the Chairman and Board is set by Department for the Economy (DfE). Increases are calculated in line with the recommendations of the Senior Salaries Review Board. There are no arrangements in place for the payment of a bonus. Neither the Chairman nor any Board Member receives pension contributions from Tourism NI or DfE. Tourism NI reimburses the Chairman and Board Members for any incidental expenses incurred for carrying out their duties relevant to the organisation.

Remuneration and Pension Entitlements

Remuneration (including salary) and Pension Entitlements – Board Members (Audited)

a) Remuneration Report

	2018/19			2017/18		
	Salary £'000	Benefits in Kind £'000	Total £'000	Salary £'000	Benefits in Kind £'000	Total £'000
Terrence Branigan Chairperson	25-30	-	25-30	25-30	-	25-30
Katy Best* Board Member	-	-	-	0-5	-	0-5
Michael McQuillan Board Member	5-10	-	5-10	5-10	-	5-10
Angelina Fusco Board Member	5-10	-	5-10	5-10	-	5-10
Terry McCartney Board Member	5-10	-	5-10	5-10	-	5-10
Michele Shirlow Board Member	5-10	-	5-10	5-10	-	5-10
Geoff Wilson Board Member	5-10	-	5-10	5-10	-	5-10
Colin Neill Board Member	5-10	-	5-10	5-10	-	5-10

*Katy Best's term concluded on 30th September 2017

Tourism NI Board Members do not have any pension entitlements.

Remuneration & Staff Report

Chief Executive and Senior Management Team

Progression for the Chief Executive is in accordance with the Senior Civil Service (SCS) Pay Strategy 2008, which is consistent with Cabinet Office guidelines. The Chief Executive's remuneration is subject to a pay band minima and maxima in line with pay arrangements in place for SCS staff. The effective date for pay award is 1 April each year.

Members of the Senior Management Team are paid in line with the Northern Ireland Civil Service pay agreement. Their performance against previously agreed targets is assessed annually by the Chief Executive. Pay increases are entirely performance-based.

Directors are normally placed on the bottom point of a 5 point scale on appointment. Thereafter, there is annual incremental progression, based on performance, until the maximum of the scale is reached. A common incremental date of 1st August is used for all Directors.

Service Contracts

The Chief Executive and the Senior Management Team appointments are made in accordance with Tourism NI's recruitment and selection policy. The policy requires appointments to be made on merit and on the basis of fair and open competition.

Unless otherwise stated, the employees covered by this report hold appointments that are open ended. Early termination, other than for misconduct, would result in the individual receiving compensation as set out in Tourism NI's redundancy policy.

Remuneration & Staff Report

Remuneration (including salary) and Pension Entitlements – Senior Management Team

	2018/2019				2017/18			
	Salary	Benefits in Kind to Nearest £100	Pension Benefits to Nearest £1,000	Total	Salary	Benefits in Kind to Nearest £100	Pension Benefits to Nearest £1,000	Total
	£'000			£'000	£'000			£'000
John McGrillen Chief Executive	95-100	-	12	110-115	95-100	-	4	100-105
Louise Kearney Director of HR	60-65	-	23	80-85	50-55	-	12	65-70
Laura McCorry* Director of Product Development	-	-	-	-	5-10 (50-55 FTE)	-	2	10-15
Rosemarie McHugh Director of Product Development	50-55	-	18	70-75	45-50	-	17	60-65
Naomi Waite Director of Marketing	65-70	-	25	90-95	45-50	-	14	60-65
Jill McKee Acting Director of Finance	55-60	-	20	75-80	25-30 (45-50 FTE)	-	14	40-45
Una Foy* Acting Director of Finance	-	-	-	-	20-25 (45-50 FTE)	-	7	25-30
Aine Kearney Director of Business Support & Events	65-70	-	24	90-95	45-50	-	14	60-65
Aine Robinson* Acting Director of Finance	35-40 (50-55 FTE)	-	22	60-65	-	-	-	-

*Laura McCorry left Tourism NI on 2nd May 2017

*Una Foy was appointed maternity cover for Acting Director of Finance on 3rd November until 15th September 2017

*Aine Robinson was appointed maternity cover for Acting Director of Finance on 1 November 2018.

The Director for Corporate Development's role is via secondment from the NICS.

The Chief Digital Officer role is via secondment from the SIB.

Note: The value of pension benefits accrued during the year is calculated as (the real increase in pension multiplied by 20) plus (the real increase in any lump sum) less (the contributions made by the individual). The real increases exclude increases due to inflation or any increase or decreases due to a transfer of pension rights.

Salary

'Salary' includes gross salary; overtime; recruitment and retention allowances; private office allowances and any other allowance to the extent that it is subject to UK taxation and any ex-gratia payments. This report is based on payments made by Tourism NI and thus recorded in these accounts.

Remuneration & Staff Report

Bonuses

During the year 2018-19 there were no bonuses paid (2017-18 – £nil) to the Chief Executive and Senior Management Team.

Benefits in Kind

The monetary value of benefits in kind covers any benefits provided by the employer and treated by the HM Revenue and Customs as a taxable emolument. Neither Members of the Board nor senior management received any benefits in kind during 2018-19 (2017-18 - £nil).

Pension Entitlements

	Accrued Pension at Pension Age as at 31/03/2019	Accrued Lump Sum	Real Increase in Pension	Real Lump Sum at Pension Age	CETV as at 31/03/2019	CETV as at 31/03/2018 New Factors	CETV as at 31/03/2018 Old Factors	Real Increase in CETV
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
John McGrillen Chief Executive	40-45	75-80	0-2.5	-0-5	883	835	759	18
Louise Kearney Director of HR	10-15	0-5	0-2.5	0-5	159	135	122	16
Rosemarie McHugh Director of Product Development	0-5	0-5	0-2.5	nil	45	33	28	7
Naomi Waite Director of Marketing	5-10	0-5	0-2.5	nil	73	53	47	13
Jill McKee Acting Director of Finance	5-10	0-5	0-2.5	nil	54	40	34	8
Aine Kearney Director of Business Support & Events	5-10	0-5	0-2.5	nil	62	45	39	11
Aine Robinson Acting Director of Finance	0-5	0-5	0-2.5	nil	31	21	17	7

Note: The real increase figure shows adjustment for inflation. The CETV real increase also shows an adjustment for changes in market investment factors. New transfer factors, effective 7 January 2019, have been used to recalculate the 2017/18 CETV and for the 2018/19 CETV. This is because the real increase in CETV should exclude the impact of any change in factors.

Tourism NI Board Members do not have any pension entitlements.

Remuneration & Staff Report

Pensions

Tourism NI participates in the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) for senior staff, which is also available to all employees. From 1 April 2015, the scheme changed to become a career average revalued earnings scheme which means that all active members will 'bank' pension savings each year into their pension accounts. The amount of pension banked each year from 1 April 2015 will equal 1/49th of the member's pensionable pay.

All current active members were moved to the new Scheme on 1 April 2015 and will therefore have a pension at retirement composed of two elements: a final salary pension (on either 1/80th accrual and/ or 1/60th accrual) and a career average revalued earnings pension. The final salary pension will be calculated on the final pay at retirement (less overtime and additional hours' payments). This is known as the 'final salary link'. Those members who were within 10 years of retirement at 1 April 2012 have a protection called the statutory underpin. This means that if they would have been better off under the old final salary scheme an additional amount of pension will be paid into their pension account at retirement or on reaching their old normal pension age (usually age 65).

From 1 April 2015, the death grants of an active member changes from being three times pensionable pay to be three times Assumed Pensionable Pay (APP). If the active member under the 2015 scheme also has deferred benefits or a pension in payment, then only the highest death grant is payable and not the sum of all death grants. Survivors' pensions continue to be payable to eligible parties. These benefits are generally calculated on a fraction of the deceased members pensionable pay times the period of membership in the Scheme plus an enhancement to take account of each year that could have been worked from the date of death to the deceased members NPA. Medical retirement is possible in event of serious ill-health. In this case pensions are brought into payment early.

The Scheme is funded by contributions made by both employees and employers. An actuarial valuation of the Scheme is carried out every three years and the results of this valuation determine employers' contribution rates for the next three years. The valuation for the three years ended 31 March 2016 set the employers' contribution rates at 18%, 19% and 20% from 1 April 2017 and the following two years. Tiered employee contribution rates were introduced from 1 April 2009 and the employee contribution rates for 2018-19 are outlined below.

Pensionable Pay	Employee Contribution Rate 2017/18
Up to £14,500	5.5%
£14,501 to £22,100	5.8%
£22,101 to £36,900	6.5%
£36,901 to £44,700	6.8%
£44,700 to £88,300	8.5%
More than £88,300	10.5%

The accrued pension quoted is the pension the member is entitled to receive when they reach pension age, or immediately on ceasing to be an active member of the scheme if they are at or over pension age. Pension age is 65 for members however from 1 April 2015 normal retirement age will no longer be age 65, it will be the same as the state pension age. State pension ages have been increasing and the relevant state pension age can be found at www.gov.uk/calculator-state-pension. This means that your new normal retirement age for benefits built up under the 2015 Scheme could be older than age 65. Further details about the LGPS pension arrangements can be found at the website www.nilgosc.org.uk

The inflation rate used in 2018-19 calculations is 2.4%.

Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV)

A CETV is the actuarially assessed capitalised value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. The benefits valued are the member's accrued benefits and any contingent spouse's pension payable from the scheme. A CETV is a payment made by a pension scheme or arrangement to secure pension benefits in another pension scheme or arrangement when a member leaves a scheme and chooses to transfer the benefits accrued in their former scheme. The pension figures shown relate to the benefits that the individual has accrued as a consequence of their total membership of the pension scheme, not just their service in a senior capacity to which disclosure applies.

The figures include the value of any pension benefit in another scheme or arrangement which the individual has transferred to the LGPS arrangements. They also include any additional pension benefit accrued to the member as a result of their purchasing additional years of pension service in the scheme at their own cost. CETVs are calculated in accordance with The Occupational Pension Schemes (Transfer Values) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 and do not take account of any actual or potential reduction to benefits resulting in Lifetime Allowance Tax which may be due when pension benefits are taken.

Remuneration & Staff Report

The Real Increase in the Value of the CETV

This is the increase in CETV effectively funded by the employer. It does not include the increase in accrued pension due to inflation; contributions paid by the employee (including the value of any benefits transferred from another pension scheme or arrangement) and uses common market valuation factors for the period.

However, the real increase calculation uses common actuarial factors at the start and end of the period so that it disregards the effect of any changes in factors and focuses only on the increase that is funded by the employer.

Compensation for Loss of Office and Early Retirement (audited)

No member of the senior management team received compensation for loss of office and no member of senior management retired early in either the current or previous year.

Payments to Past Directors (audited)

No payments were made in 2018-19 to past Directors (2017-18 - £nil).

Fair Pay Disclosures (Audited)

Tourism NI is required to disclose the relationship between the remuneration of the highest paid director and the median remuneration of the organisation's workforce.

The banded remuneration of the highest paid Director during the financial year 2018-19 was £95,000 - £100,000 (2017-18 - £95,000 - £100,000). This remuneration was 3.2 times (2017-18 - 3.3) the median remuneration of the workforce, which was £30,149 (2017-18 - £29,317).

	2018/19 £	2017/18 £
Remuneration of Highest Paid Director	95-100	95-100
Remuneration of Lowest Paid Employee	15-20	15-20
Median Employee Remuneration	30,149	29,317
Ratio	3.2	3.3

The calculation is based on the gross salary of full-time equivalent staff as at 31 March 2019 on an annualised basis. It does not include employer pension contributions and the cash equivalent. In 2018-19, there were no employees that received remuneration in excess of the highest-paid director (2017-18, nil).

b) Staff Report

Analysis of Staff Costs

The following section is subject to audit.

	2018/19 £000	2017/18 £000
Wages and Salaries		
Permanent	3,608	4,006
Others	600	590
Social Security Costs		
Permanent	386	352
Others	32	35
Pension Contributions		
Permanent	1,202	1,056
Others	52	49
Seconded Costs Reimbursed	(37)	(49)
Staff Costs Charged to Net Expenditure Account	5,843	6,039

Other costs are made up of temporary and agency staff costs.

Pensions

IAS 19 requires employers participating in a defined benefit pension scheme to account for their share of assets and liabilities in the scheme. In preparing the Accounts for 2018-19 additional information has been included in note 14 and the valuation at 31 March 2019 has been included in the Statement of Financial Position. The latest full actuarial valuation of the scheme was at 31 March 2016.

Pension Benefits are provided through the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). This scheme is a defined benefits fund and is invested in suitable investments, managed by the Northern Ireland Local Government Officers' Superannuation Scheme Committee (NILGOSC).

The employer contribution rate for 2018-19 was increased to 19% (2017-18 - 18%), and between 5.5% and 10.5% for the employee.

The total employer contribution paid under the scheme in 2018-19 was £825,667 (2017-18 - £733,261).

The total employer contribution made for the Defined

Remuneration & Staff Report

Contribution Scheme provided by Zurich for ROI employees in 2018-19 was £34,302 (2017-18 - £24,581). For both 2018-19 and 2017-18, the contribution rates were 16% for the employer and 6% for the employee.

During 2018-19 there was one early retiree, however there was no financial impact to Tourism NI (2017-18 – one).

Average Number of Persons Employed:

The following section is subject to audit. The average number of whole-time equivalent persons employed during the year was as follows:

	2018/19 No.		2017/18 No.	
	Permanent	Other	Permanent	Other
Business Support & Events	25	6	26	5
Product Development	24	0	25	2
Corporate Development	14	2	15	1
Senior Management Team and Board	13	0	13	1
Organisational Development and Finance	16	6	14	6
Marketing	29	4	30	4
Digital Services	1	1	-	-
Total	122	19	123	19

There were five ROI staff members as at 31 March 2019.

Staff Composition (Gender Analysis) as at 31 March 2019

A breakdown of staff in Tourism NI is included below.

	2018/19 No.			2017/18 No.		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Board Members	5	2	7	5	2	7
Senior Management Team*	1	6	7	1	5	6
Employees	28	96	124	30	100	130
Total	34	104	138	36	107	143

*Includes one member from Senior Management Team who is a senior civil service staff (or equivalent) as defined with Grade 5 or above.

Sickness Absence Data

During the year 2018-19 Tourism NI recorded a staff sickness absenteeism rate of 7.08% or 17.2 days per employee (2017-18 – 5.3% or 13.07 days).

Remuneration & Staff Report

Other Employee Matters

Employee Policies

Tourism NI aims to act as a good employer in all matters relating to its responsibilities and obligations for health & safety at work, ensuring that the way business is conducted does not harm the health and safety of staff, visitors, suppliers or third parties and making sure all legal requirements are met.

Tourism NI is committed to the development of its staff and to policies that enable them to best contribute to the performance and long term effectiveness of the organisation. In particular, active involvement and communication with employees is conducted both directly and through the recognised Trade Union (NIPSA) in all relevant matters. The organisation is also committed to the continuing development of its staff and to maximising their contribution to the continuous improvement of service delivery.

Tourism NI gives full and fair consideration to applications for employment made by disabled persons, having regard to their particular aptitude and abilities, for the continuing employment of, and for arranging appropriate training for, employees of Tourism NI that have become disabled persons during the period when they were employed by the organisation, and otherwise for the training, career development and promotion of disabled persons employed by Tourism NI.

The Learning and Development function supports the development of all staff by providing internal and external training to develop skills and expertise. Tourism NI ensures that all learning interventions are aligned to the business strategy and organisational values.

Compensation and Exit Packages for all Staff

The following section is subject to audit.

Exit Package Cost Band	Number of Compulsory Redundancies		Number of Other Departures Agreed		Total Number of Exit Packages by Cost Band	
	18/19	17/18	18/19	17/18	18/19	17/18
<£10,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
£10,000 - £25,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
£25,000 - £50,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total number of exit packages	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Resource Cost	-	-	-	-	-	-

Redundancy and other departure costs have been paid in accordance with the provisions of the NICS Voluntary Exit Scheme, a statutory scheme made under the Superannuation Act 1972. Exit costs are accounted for in full in the year of departure. Where the NDPB has agreed early retirements, the additional costs are met by the NDPB and not by the Local Government Pension Scheme. Ill-health retirement costs are met by the pension scheme and are not included in the table.

Equality Scheme

Tourism NI is committed to upholding equality of opportunity and regard to the desirability of promoting good relations across persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

Tourism NI's Equality Scheme is developed in accordance with Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. It is available on www.tourismni.com.

In 2018-19 Tourism NI's Section 75 Equality Scheme was subject to review in line with Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI) guidance. ECNI guidance stipulates that public bodies are obliged to review their scheme every five years.

The purpose of a 5-year review is to examine how equality arrangements have been applied and to assess how effective they have been in assisting public bodies to comply with the Section 75 duties.

Expenditure on consultancy

In 2018-19 there was £nil expenditure on consultancy (2017-18 - £5,920).

Off-payroll engagements (greater than £58,200)

There were no off-payroll payments in 2018-19 (2017-18 - nil).

Assembly Accountability and Audit Report

The Assembly Accountability and Audit Report brings together the key Assembly accountability documents within the annual report and accounts.

Regularity of Expenditure

The following is subject to audit. Tourism NI's Accounting Officer has overarching responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances and for keeping proper records and for safeguarding the assets of Tourism NI.

In 2018-19, Tourism NI has £4,481 irregular spend to report (2017-18 - £5,920).

In August 2018, January 2018 pay scales were applied rather than the April 2017 scales as per approved Pay Remit. Despite these scales not being approved in the pay remit submitted to DfE, these monies are due to Tourism NI ROI staff as they are set in advance by Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) in the Republic of Ireland. Department of Finance granted retrospective approval for these payments on 5th September 2019.

Fees & Charges

The following section is subject to audit.

Certification of Tourist Accommodation	2018/19 £	2017/18 £
Income	134,494	119,742
Cost	(174,764)	(116,632)
Surplus/(Deficit)	(40,270)	3,110

The financial objective of the certification of tourist accommodation is to recover the full cost of providing this service. This objective was not met in 2018-19.

Grading of Tourist Accommodation	2018/19 £	2017/18 £
Income	66,954	64,825
Cost	(73,453)	(65,239)
Surplus/(Deficit)	(6,499)	(414)

The financial objective of the grading of tourist accommodation is to subsidise the cost of providing this service. This objective was met in 2018-19.

Additional inspectors recruited in 2018-19 to address the backlog of new applications received as a result of The Open (1,573 new applications in 2018-19 in comparison to 562 in 2017-18). Overtime expenditure was also incurred and grading resources reallocated to certification resources as a result of this influx of applications to ensure compliance with legislation in advance of event taking place in July 2019.

Remote Contingent Liabilities

The following section is subject to audit.

Tourism NI is currently working to resolve the issue which exists where Tourism NI's pay scales are higher than NICS pay scales. A number of options for resolution are being considered with DfE. Depending on which option is preferred, a future liability may arise. There is no way to quantify this at this point in time.

Tourism NI has no other remote long term liabilities to report in 2018-19 (2017-18 - £nil).

Losses and Special Payments

The following section is subject to audit.

	2018/19 Losses £'000	2018/19 Number of Cases over £250k	2018/19 Number of Cases under £250k	2017/18 Losses £'000	2017/18 Number of Cases over £250k	2017/18 Number of Cases under £250k
Total	0	0	0	29	0	4

There were nil special payments made in 2018-19 (2017-18 - 2).

Signed:



Accounting Officer

Date

Assembly Accountability and Audit Report

Northern Ireland Tourist Board (Trading as Tourism NI) The Certificate & Report of the Comptroller & Auditor General to the Northern Ireland Assembly

Opinion on Financial Statements

I certify that I have audited the financial statements of the Northern Ireland Tourist Board for the year ended 31 March 2018 under the Tourism (Northern Ireland) Order 1992. The financial statements comprise the Statements of Comprehensive Net Expenditure, Financial Position, Cash Flows, Changes in Taxpayers' Equity and the related notes. These financial statements have been prepared under the accounting policies set out within them. I have also audited the information in the Remuneration and Staff Report and the Assembly Accountability and Audit Report that is described in the report as having been audited.

In my opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Northern Ireland Tourist Board's affairs as at 31 March 2018 and of the Northern Ireland Tourist Board's net expenditure for the year then ended
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the Tourism (Northern Ireland) Order 1992 and the Department for the Economy directions issued thereunder.

Opinion on Regularity

In my opinion, in all material respects the expenditure and income recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by the Assembly and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

Basis of Opinions

I conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs) and Practice Note 10 'Audit of Financial Statements of Public Sector Entities in the United Kingdom'. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of this certificate. My staff and I are independent of the Northern Ireland Tourist Board in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Financial Reporting Council's Revised Ethical Standard 2016, and have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. I believe that the audit evidence obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinions.

Other Information

The Board and Accounting Officer are responsible for the other information included in the annual report. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements, the parts of the Accountability Report described in the report as having been audited, and my audit certificate. My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with my audit of the financial statements, my responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or my knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact. I have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on Other Matters

In my opinion:

- the parts of the Remuneration and Staff Report and the Assembly Accountability and Audit Report to be audited have been properly prepared in accordance with the Department for the Economy directions made under the Tourism (Northern Ireland) Order 1992
- the information given in the Performance Report and Accountability Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

Responsibilities of the Board and Accounting Officer for the Financial Statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of the Board and Accounting Officer Responsibilities, the Board and the Accounting Officer are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

My responsibility is to audit, certify and report on the financial statements in accordance with the Tourism (Northern Ireland) Order 1992.

I am required to obtain evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error.

TO BE SUPPLIED

Assembly Accountability and Audit Report

Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

A further description of my responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of my certificate.

In addition, I am required to obtain evidence sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the expenditure and income recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by the Assembly and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

TO BE SUPPLIED

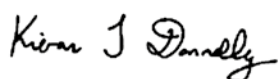
Matters on Which I Report by Exception

I have nothing to report in respect of the following matters which I report to you if, in my opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or
- the financial statements and the parts of the Remuneration and Staff Report and the Assembly Accountability and Audit Report to be audited are not in agreement with the accounting records, or
- I have not received all of the information and explanations I require for my audit, or
- the Governance Statement does not reflect compliance with the Department of Finance's guidance.

Report

I have no observations to make on these financial statements.



KJ Donnelly
Comptroller and Auditor General
Northern Ireland Audit Office
106 University Street
Belfast
BT7 1EU

28 September 2018

*'The more string you cut
out, of course, the higher and
more spectacular your flight.'*



Michael Heaney
MICHAEL HEANEY (1939-2019) was a poet, novelist, and translator. He was the youngest son of Seamus and Marie Heaney. He studied at St. Columba's College, Derry, and at the University of Cambridge. He was a member of the Irish Literary Revival and the Irish Literary Theatre. He was also a member of the Gaelic League and the Gaelic Athletic Association. He was a member of the Irish Writers' Guild and the Irish PEN Club. He was a member of the Irish Academy of Letters and the Irish Academy of Music and Drama. He was a member of the Irish Academy of Letters and the Irish Academy of Music and Drama. He was a member of the Irish Academy of Letters and the Irish Academy of Music and Drama.



*Before the kite plunges down into
the wood / and this line goes useless
/ take it in your two hands, boys
and feel / the strumming, rooted,
long-tailed, of the Carib.*

Northern Ireland Tourist Board Trading as **Tourism NI**

Financial Accounts for the Year Ended 31 March 2019

Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure

for the Year Ended 31 March 2019

	Note	2018/19 £000	2017/18 £000
Revenue from Contracts with Customers	6	135	128
Other Operating Income	6	78	156
Total Operating Income		213	284
Staff Costs	3	(5,843)	(6,039)
Purchase of Goods and Services	3	(11,364)	(9,105)
Depreciation and Impairment Charges	3	(192)	(149)
Provision Expense	3	(713)	121
Grant Expenditure	4	(1,305)	(2,270)
Other Operating Expenditure	3	(5,878)	(6,060)
Loss on Donation of Assets	3	(208)	-
Total Operating Expenditure		(25,503)	(23,502)
Tourism Ireland			
Paid to Tourism Ireland	5.2	(13,579)	(12,639)
Grant Received from DfE	5.2	13,579	12,639
		-	-
Net Operating Expenditure		(25,290)	(23,218)
Finance Income		3	2
Finance Expense		(206)	(189)
Net Expenditure for the Year		(25,493)	(23,405)

The notes on pages 61 to 85 form part of these accounts.

Other Comprehensive Net Expenditure

	Note	2018/19 £000	2017/18 £000
Items which will not be Reclassified to Net Operating Expenditure:			
Net Gain/(Loss) on Revaluation of Property, Plant and Equipment	7	(5)	(14)
Actuarial Gain/(Loss) on Pension Scheme Liabilities	14d	641	(175)
Comprehensive Expenditure for the Year		(24,857)	(23,594)

The notes on pages 61 to 85 form part of these accounts.

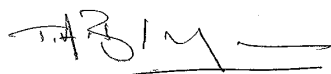
Statement of Financial Position

as at 31 March 2019

	Note	2018/19 £000	2017/18 £000
Non-Current Assets			
Property, Plant & Equipment	7	326	630
Intangible Assets	8	34	-
Total Non-Current Assets		360	630
Current Assets			
Trade and Other Receivables	10	379	459
Cash and Cash Equivalents	11	2,529	2,826
Total Current Assets		2,908	3,285
Total Assets		3,268	3,915
Current Liabilities			
Trade and Other Payables	12	(6,068)	(6,385)
Provisions	13	(355)	(329)
Total Current Liabilities		(6,423)	(6,714)
Total Assets less Current Liabilities		(3,155)	(2,799)
Non-Current Liabilities			
Pension Liabilities	14d	(8,300)	(8,331)
Provisions	13	(713)	-
Total Non-Current Liabilities		(9,013)	(8,331)
Total Assets less Total Liabilities		(12,168)	(11,130)
Taxpayers' Equity and Other Reserves			
General Fund		(12,198)	(11,373)
Revaluation Reserve		30	243
Total Equity		(12,168)	(11,130)

The notes on pages 61 to 85 form part of these accounts.

The financial statements on pages 56 to 60 were approved by the Board on 3 October 2019 and were signed on its behalf by:



Chairman

Date:



Chief Executive

Date:

Statement of Cash Flows

for the Year Ended 31 March 2019

	Note	2018/19 £000	2017/18 £000
Cash Flow from Operating Activities			
Net Deficit after Interest and Tax		(25,493)	(23,405)
Adjustment for Non Cash Transactions			
Amortisation	8	17	-
Depreciation	7	175	149
Pension Interest Charge	14d	205	189
Non Cash Actuarial Pension Charges		405	335
(Increase)/Decrease in Trade and Other Receivables	10	80	7,596
Increase/(Decrease) in Trade Payables	12	(317)	307
Less: Movements in Payables Relating to Items not Passing Through the Net Expenditure Account		(11)	-
Increase/(Decrease) in Provision	13	739	(121)
Loss on Donation of Assets		208	-
Net Cash Outflow from Operating Activities		(23,992)	(14,950)
Cash Flows from Investing Activities			
Purchase of Intangible Assets	8	(51)	-
Purchase of Property, Plant and Equipment	7	(73)	(14)
Net Cash Outflow from Investing Activities		(124)	(14)
Cash Flows from Financing Activities			
Government Grant from Sponsoring Department		23,819	17,000
Net Financing		23,819	17,000
Net Increase/(Decrease) in Cash and Cash Equivalents in the Year	11	(297)	2,036
Cash and Cash Equivalents at the Beginning of the Year	11	2,826	790
Cash and Cash Equivalents at the End of the Year	11	2,529	2,826

The notes on pages 61 to 85 form part of these accounts.

Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity for the Year Ended 31 March 2019

	Note	General Fund £000	Revaluation Reserve £000	Taxpayers' Equity £000
Balance at 31 March 2017		(4,793)	229	(4,564)
Grants from Sponsoring Entity		17,000	-	17,000
Gain/(Loss) on Revaluation of PPE	7	-	14	14
Actuarial Gain/(Loss)	14d	(175)	-	(175)
Comprehensive Net Expenditure for the Year		(23,376)	-	(23,376)
Auditors Remuneration	3	(29)	-	(29)
Balance at 31 March 2018		(11,373)	243	(11,130)
Grants from Sponsoring Entity		23,819	-	23,819
Net Gain/(Loss) on Revaluation of PPE	7	-	(5)	(5)
Actuarial Gain/(Loss)	14d	641	-	641
Comprehensive Net Expenditure for the Year		(25,464)	-	(25,464)
Transfer Between Reserves		208	(208)	-
Auditor's Remuneration	3	(29)	-	(29)
Balance at 31 March 2019		(12,198)	30	(12,168)

The notes on pages 61 to 85 form part of these accounts.

Notes to the Accounts

for the Year Ended 31 March 2019

1. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of Preparation

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the 2018-19 Government Financial Reporting Manual (FRm) issued by the Department of Finance. The accounting policies contained in the FRm apply International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) as adapted or interpreted for the public sector context. Where the FRm permits a choice of accounting policy, the accounting policy which is judged to be most appropriate to the particular circumstances of Tourism NI for the purpose of giving a true and fair view has been selected. The particular policies adopted by Tourism NI are described below. They have been applied consistently in dealing with the items that are considered material to the accounts.

Accounting Convention

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention modified to account for the revaluation of property, plant and equipment, and intangible assets.

Property, Plant and Equipment, Intangible Assets, Depreciation and Amortisation

- (i) All property, plant and equipment have been valued on net current replacement costs as a proxy guide to fair value with the exception of Paintings, which have been valued by Irish Art Restorers in 2018-19.

Indices supplied by the Office for National Statistics are used to calculate the net current replacement cost.

The de minimis level for capitalisation of all categories of Property, Plant and Equipment is £1,000. TNI policy is to "group" assets by category i.e. When the total cost of all individual items purchased together, exceed the de minimis level, they are capitalised.

- (ii) Intangible Assets – Computer Licences for internal recording and reporting systems are capitalised as intangible assets. The de minimis level for capitalisation of an intangible asset is £1,000.

They are amortised over a period of three to five years on a straight line basis.

- (iii) Depreciation and amortisation is provided on property, plant and equipment and intangible assets at rates calculated to write off the cost of each asset evenly over its expected useful life as follows:

Furniture and Equipment	10 years
Motor Vehicles	4 years
Leasehold Fixtures and Fittings	Over the lease term
Computer Equipment/Software	3 to 5 Years
Computer Licences	Over the licence period

- (iv) Tourism NI assesses at each year end date whether there is any objective evidence that a financial asset or group of financial assets classified as available-for-sale or loans and receivables is impaired. A full year of depreciation is provided on assets in the year of their purchase unless it is deemed prudent not to do so.

Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprises cash and demand deposits with commercial banks. As at each reporting date, the carrying value of cash and cash equivalents approximates their fair value due to their short term nature.

Trade receivables

Trade receivables are recognised and carried at original invoice amount less an allowance for any uncollectible amounts. Provision is made when there is objective evidence that Tourism NI will not be able to recover balances in full. Balances can only be written off when non-recovery is considered certain and after the appropriate approvals have been granted.

Trade payables

Trade payables are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of business from suppliers. Accounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities.

Prepayments

The de-minimis threshold for any prepayments is set at £500.

Provisions

Tourism NI makes provisions for liabilities and charges where, at the year-end date, a legal or constructive liability exists (that is a present obligation from past events exists), where the transfer of economic benefits is probable and a reasonable estimate can be made.

Notes to the Accounts

for the Year Ended 31 March 2019

Contingent Liabilities

In addition to contingent liabilities disclosed in accordance with IAS 37, Tourism NI discloses for Assembly reporting and accountability purposes certain statutory and non-statutory contingent liabilities where the likelihood of a transfer of economic benefit is remote, but which have been reported to the Assembly in accordance with the requirements of Managing Public Money Northern Ireland.

Where the time value of money is material, contingent liabilities which are required to be disclosed under IAS 37 are stated at discounted amounts and the amount reported to the Assembly separately noted. Contingent liabilities that are not required to be disclosed by IAS 37 are stated at the amounts reported to the Assembly.

Accounting Estimates

The use of reasonable estimates is an essential part of the preparation of financial statements and does not undermine their reliability. Changes in accounting estimates result from new information or new developments and, accordingly, are not corrections of errors. The effect of a change in an accounting estimate, shall be recognised by including it in Net Expenditure Account in

- a) The period of the change, if the change affects that period; or
- b) The period of the change and future periods, if the change affects both.

Leased Assets

Operating lease payments are charged to the Net Expenditure Account on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease.

Foreign Currencies

Assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies have been translated into sterling values at the rate of exchange ruling at the date of the Statement of Financial Position. Transactions in foreign currencies are recorded at the rate ruling at the date of the transaction. All exchange differences are taken to the Net Expenditure Account.

Irrecoverable Value Added Tax

Tourism NI is subject to a very limited recovery of VAT on inputs calculated in accordance with a formula agreed with HM Revenue & Customs. Expenditure is charged in the accounts inclusive of VAT. The VAT recoverable is credited to other operating charges.

Financial Instruments

Financial assets and liabilities are recognised in Tourism NI's Statement of Financial Position when Tourism NI becomes a party to the contractual provision of the instrument.

Financial Assets

Financial assets are classified into the following specified categories: at "fair value through profit or loss" ("FVTPL"); held-to-maturity investments, "available-for-sale" ("AFS") financial assets and "loans and receivables". The classification depends on the nature and purpose of the financial assets and is determined at the time of initial recognition. Tourism NI's financial assets comprise Trade and Other Receivables and Cash and Cash Equivalents, and are classified as Loans and Receivables and are held at cost, which approximates to fair value because of their short maturities.

Financial Liabilities

Financial liabilities of Tourism NI, including Trade and Other Payables, are measured at cost which approximates to fair value because of their short maturities.

Financing

The Department for the Economy (DfE) is the parent department of Tourism NI. DfE provides Tourism NI with its Grant-in-Aid during the year to enable Tourism NI to discharge its duties, powers and functions under the agreed operating plan and budget. Grant-in-Aid is credited to Reserves.

Income from activities

Income from activities represents the invoiced amount of goods sold or services provided (net of VAT) and includes fees collected from statutory inspection activities, non - statutory star grading of accommodation, the sale of WorldHost training materials and income attributable to the promotion and exhibiting at trade events.

Under the requirements of IFRS 15, Tourism NI has presented separately any income derived from statutory inspections under the heading 'Revenue from contracts with customers', as these fall under the definition of a contract per the standard.

Grant Expenditure

Under the Scheme, Tourism NI is able to provide selective financial assistance in the form of grants, loans or investments in tourism-related projects. Grants paid and payable on expenditure incurred in the year by grant recipients are charged to the Net Expenditure account under the heading "Grant Expenditure".

Notes to the Accounts

for the Year Ended 31 March 2019

Events

Where Tourism NI has entered into an agreement to support an event, and payment(s) are made prior to the event taking place, the expenditure is recognised in the year of payment.

Pension Costs

Past and present employees in Northern Ireland are covered by the provisions of the Local Government Pension Scheme. In the year 2018-19, Tourism NI contributed 19% of Pensionable Pay to the scheme, whilst staff contributed between 5.5% and 10.5% of Pensionable Pay. Further information on the pension scheme can be found at note 14.

For those staff employed in the Republic of Ireland from 1 January 2007, a Trust Based Defined Contribution Scheme has been available for staff to join. The contributions are managed by Zurich Life Assurance Plc and the advisors to the Scheme are Towers Watson (Ireland) Limited, trading as Willis Towers Watson. Tourism NI contributed 16% of Salary during the year whilst the staff members will continue to contribute 6%. Tourism NI are aware that there they may be a potential liability in the future.

Notional Costs

In order to disclose the full cost of activities, notional costs for the provision of the services received from Internal Audit Services of the Department for the Economy (DfE) are included. The 2018-19 notional charge was £44,647 (2017-18 - £73,240).

Adoption of New and Revised Standards

Management has reviewed new accounting standards that have been issued but are not yet effective (IFRS 16 – Leases), nor adopted early for these accounts. Management consider that these are unlikely to have a significant impact on the accounts in the period of initial application.

Notes to the Accounts

for the Year Ended 31 March 2019

2. STATEMENT OF NET EXPENDITURE BY OPERATING SEGMENT

2018/19	Gross Expenditure £000	Income £000	Net Expenditure £000
Business Support & Events	4,377	212	4,165
Product Development	917	-	917
Organisational Development and Finance*	10,915	-	10,915
Corporate Development	815	-	815
Marketing	7,598	1	7,597
Digital Services	718	-	718
TOTAL	25,340	213	25,127
Reconciliation to SoCNE - Finance Specific Costs			
Interest Receivable	-	-	(3)
Pension Interest (Income)/Charge	-	-	206
Corporation Tax	-	-	-
Credit in Respect of Notional Charges	-	-	(45)
Loss on Donation of Assets	-	-	208
			25,493
2017/18	Gross Expenditure £000	Income £000	Net Expenditure £000
Business Support & Events	6,067	211	5,856
Product Development	3,236	15	3,221
Organisational Development*	8,211	37	8,174
Corporate Development	661	-	661
Marketing	5,400	21	5,379
TOTAL	23,575	284	23,291
Reconciliation to SoCNE - Finance Specific Costs			
Interest Receivable	-	-	(2)
Pension Interest (Income)/Charge	-	-	189
Corporation Tax	-	-	-
Credit in Respect of Notional Charges	-	-	(73)
			23,405

*All salary costs are included under Organisational Development and Finance

Business Support & Events Division comprises of the following Units – Industry Development, Events and Quality and Standards. The Director of the Division reports to the Chief Executive.

Product Development Division comprises of the following Units – Regional Managers, who cover Northern Ireland's Council Areas, Markets and Product Experiences Development and the Capital Funding Team. The Director of the Division reports to the Chief Executive.

Organisational Development Division comprises of the following Units – HR and Central Services and computer services. Finance Unit costs are included in this segment with the Director of Finance reports directly to the Chief Executive.

Corporate Development Division comprises of the following Units – Corporate Communications, Research and Evaluation, Business Planning and Improvements and Policy & Insights. The Director of the Division reports to the Chief Executive.

Notes to the Accounts

for the Year Ended 31 March 2019

Marketing Division comprises of the following Units – Visitor Information, Business To Business, Destination Marketing and PR, Republic of Ireland, Social & Digital Media and Golf Sales and Marketing. The Director of the Division reports to the Chief Executive.

Digital Services comprises the IT Digital team and the Chief Digital Officer report to the Chief Executive. In the prior year these costs were reported under the Organisational Development Division, as the unit was not fully in operation until 2018/19.

3. EXPENDITURE

	2018/19 £000	2017/18 £000
Staff Costs		
Wages and Salaries	4,208	4,596
Social Security Costs	418	387
Other Pension Costs	1,254	1,105
Recoveries in Respect of Outward Secondments	(37)	(49)
Total Staff Costs¹	5,843	6,039
Purchase of Goods and Services		
Marketing, Advertising and Promotions	9,281	7,221
Premises Cost	383	442
Printing and Stationery	60	57
Legal Fees	30	79
Professional Fees	179	152
Catering and General Office Expenses	149	126
Staff Development (Training and Recruitment)	115	64
Publications	142	142
Press and Public Relations	628	422
Hospitality	30	33
Rentals under Operating Leases	367	367
Non-Cash Items		
Notional Charges	45	73
Reversal of Notional Charges	(45)	(73)
Total Purchase of Goods and Services	11,364	9,105

	2018/19 £000	2017/18 £000
Other Operating Expenditure		
Events	3,527	5,382
Licensing and Information Services	2,151	1,227
Travel and Subsistence – Board Members	25	7
Travel and Subsistence – Other Employees	146	138
Gain/(Loss) on Exchange Rate	(2)	(724)
Auditor's remuneration and expenses	29	29
Non-cash items		
Profit/(Loss) on Disposal of Property, Plant and Equipment	-	-
Depreciation and Impairment Charges	192	149
Bad Debts Written Off	2	1
Provision Provided for in Year	713	121
Loss on Donation of Assets	208	-
Total Other Operating Expenditure	6,991	6,330

¹Further analysis of staff costs is located in the Staff report on page

Marketing, Advertising & Promotions

Marketing expenditure includes approximately £2.9m in respect of Marketing Campaigns and PR in ROI and NI. A further £1.8m was spent on Digital & Social Media support for the campaigns, PR and evaluations. In December 2018, an additional £0.4m was spent on marketing activity targeted at increasing the level of footfall in Belfast City Centre as a result of the fire at Bank Building. In relation to EU Exit, £0.7m was spent on marketing activity in the last quarter of 2018-19.

Events

Events expenditure includes £3.5m of expenditure towards a number of Global events, which have either been hosted in Northern Ireland or will be in the near future and the Tourism Events Funding (TEF) Programme, which supports both National and International events held in Northern Ireland and is administered through an application process.

Notes to the Accounts

for the Year Ended 31 March 2019

Auditor's Remuneration – non audit services

The external audit fee included in Other Operating Expenditure totalled £29,000 in 2018-19 (£28,500 in 2017-18). During the year Tourism NI purchases of non-audit services from the Northern Ireland Audit Office were £1,156 (2017-18 - £nil).

4. GRANT EXPENDITURE

	2018/19 £000	2017/18 £000
Capital Funding Programme	1,246	2,156
Other Related Expenditure	59	114
Total	1,305	2,270

The Immersive Technology Programme and the Visitor Servicing Programmes were opened in 2018-19 and these were under the capital funding programme. In 2017-18, the majority of the expenditure was in relation to HMS Caroline under the Tourism Development Scheme which is now closed.

5. GRANTS

5.1 Grants from European Union

European Regional Development Funds (ERDF)

There were no funds received in relation to ERDF in 2018-19.

Investment in Growth and Jobs Programme for Northern Ireland 2014-2020

There were no funds received in relation to the above funding in 2018-19.

5.2 Grant from the Department for the Economy

In 2018-19, Tourism NI as a Non Departmental Public Body credited the Grants and Grants-in-Aid for revenue purposes as contributions from controlling parties as giving rise to a financial interest in the residual interest of Tourism NI and hence has accounted for them as financing. As a result of this treatment, the General Reserve has been credited and not the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure.

During the year, Tourism NI received grants from DfE, on behalf of Tourism Ireland Limited to the value of £13,578,788 (2017-18 - £12,638,770). The total of this grant was paid to Tourism Ireland Limited in its entirety.

6. INCOME

	2018/19 £000	2017/18 £000
Statutory Certification Fees	135	128
World Host, Promotions, Exhibitions	-	7
EU Income	-	37
Grading	77	75
Other Income	1	37
Total Operating Income	213	284

Notes to the Accounts

for the Year Ended 31 March 2019

7. PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

	Leasehold Improvements £000	Furniture & Equipment £000	Computers £000	Paintings £000	Total £000
Cost or Valuation					
At 1 April 2018	564	5	581	220	1,370
Additions at Cost/Valuation	-	-	84	-	84
Donated	-	-	-	(208)	(208)
Indexation	17	-	1	-	18
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-
Revaluation	-	-	-	(12)	(12)
Disposals / Write-off	-	-	-	-	-
At 31 March 2019	581	5	666	-	1,252
Depreciation					
At 1 April 2018	226	5	509	-	740
Charge for Period	113	-	62	-	175
Indexation	11	-	-	-	11
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-
At 31 March 2019	349	5	571	-	926
Net Book Value					
At 31 March 2019	232	-	95	-	326
At 31 March 2018	338	-	72	220	630

Note all Tourism NI Plant, Property and Equipment assets are owned.

In 2018-19, all paintings were transferred in year to National Museums Northern Ireland (NMNI) at NIL profit or loss.

Notes to the Accounts

for the Year Ended 31 March 2019

7. PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT (CONT'D)

	Leasehold Improvements £000	Furniture & Equipment £000	Computers £000	Paintings £000	Total £000
Cost or Valuation					
At 1 April 2017	544	5	468	220	1,237
Additions at Cost/ Valuation	-	-	109	-	109
Indexation	20	-	4	-	24
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals / Write-off	-	-	-	-	-
At 31 March 2018	564	5	581	220	1,370
Depreciation					
At 1 April 2017	109	5	468	-	582
Charge for Period	109	-	40	-	149
Indexation	8	-	1	-	9
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-
At 31 March 2018	226	5	509	-	740
Net Book Value					
At 31 March 2018	338	-	72	220	630
At 31 March 2017	435	-	-	220	655

Note all Tourism NI Plant, Property and Equipment assets are owned.

Notes to the Accounts

for the Year Ended 31 March 2019

8. INTANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Software Licences £000		Software Licences £000
Cost or Valuation		Cost or Valuation	
At 1 April 2018	1,113	At 1 April 2017	1,113
Acquisitions	51	Acquisitions	-
Disposals	-	Disposals	-
Transfers	-	Transfers	-
Write off	-	Write off	-
At 31 March 2019	1,164	At 31 March 2018	1,113
Amortisation		Amortisation	
At 1 April 2018	1,113	At 1 April 2017	1,113
Charge for Period	17	Charge for Period	-
Disposals	-	Disposals	-
Transfers	-	Transfers	-
Write-off	-	Write-off	-
At 31 March 2019	1,130	At 31 March 2018	1,113
NBV at 31 March 2019	34	NBV at 31 March 2018	0
NBV at 31 March 2018	0	NBV at 31 March 2017	0

Note all Tourism NI Plant, Property and Equipment assets are owned.

9. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

As the cash requirements of Tourism NI are met through Grant-In-Aid provided by DfE, financial instruments play a more limited role in creating and managing risk than would apply to a non-public sector body. The majority of financial instruments relate to contracts to buy non-financial items in line with Tourism NI's expected purchase and usage requirements and Tourism NI is therefore exposed to little credit, liquidity or market risk.

10. TRADE AND OTHER RECEIVABLES

	2018/19 £000	2017/18 £000
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Trade Receivables	24	37
Prepayments and Accrued Income	338	393
Other Receivables	17	25
EU Receivables	-	4
	379	459
Total receivables at 31 March	379	459

Notes to the Accounts

for the Year Ended 31 March 2019

11. CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

	2018/19 £000	2017/18 £000
Balance at 1 April	2,826	790
Net Change in Cash and Cash Equivalent Balances	(297)	2,036
Balance at 31 March	2,529	2,826
The Following Balances at 31 March were held at:		
Commercial Banks and Cash in Hand	2,529	2,826
Balance at 31 March	2,529	2,826

12. TRADE AND OTHER PAYABLES

	2018/19 £000	2017/18 £000
Amounts Falling Due within One Year:		
Accruals	5,158	5,820
Trade Payables	752	442
Deferred Income	58	36
VAT Payable	97	87
Other Payables	3	-
	6,068	6,385

13. PROVISIONS FOR LIABILITIES AND CHARGES

	Legal £000	Dilaps £000	Pension £000	2018-19 Total £000	Legal £000	Dilaps £000	2017-18 Total £000
Balance at 1 April	20	309	-	329	20	430	450
Adjustment to opening balance	-	26	-	26	-	-	-
Adjustment to opening balance at 1 April	20	335	-	355	20	430	450
Provided in the year	-	-	713	713	-	-	-
Provisions Not Required Written Back	-	-	-	-	-	(121)	(121)
Balance at 31 March	20	335	713	1,068	20	309	329

Analysis of Expected Timing of Provision

	Total £000
Not Later Than One Year	355
Later Than One Year and Not Later Than Five Years	-
Later Than Five years	713
Balance as at 31 March 2019	1,068

Of the above provision, £20k relates to outstanding legal proceedings between Tourism NI and a former employee and £0.335m to dilapidations on vacating St Anne's Court premises in June 2016.

Notes to the Accounts

for the Year Ended 31 March 2019

The McCloud Judgement

In December 2018 the Court of Appeal ruled against the Government in the 'McCloud/Sargeant' judgement which found that the transitional protection arrangements put in place when the firefighters' and judges' pension schemes were reformed were age discriminatory. The ruling potentially has implications for all public sector schemes which were reformed around the same time and could lead to members who were discriminated against being compensated.

The Government applied to the Supreme Court for permission to appeal this judgement, however the Supreme Court rejected the government's request on 27 June 2019. The next stage is for the case to be referred to the Employment Tribunal to agree the remedy, following appropriate consultation.

The Government Actuary Department (GAD), under instruction of the LGPS Scheme Advisory Board (England and Wales) was asked to calculate the worst case scenario impact at Scheme level, and in their paper titled "Local Government Pension Scheme Potential impact of McCloud/Sargeant ruling on pension accounts disclosures" dated 10 June 2019, they state, that for a salary increase assumption of CPI +1.5% (as used for employers in the Northern Ireland Local Government Officer's Pension Fund), the worst case scenario impact will be a 3.2% increase in the active liabilities. Whilst their analysis was based on England and Wales data the view of Aon Hewitt is that these figures are also appropriate to accounting for benefits in the NILGOSC Pension Fund.

GMP Indexation and Equalisation

Guaranteed Minimum Pension (GMP) is a portion of pension that was accrued by individuals who were contracted out of the State Second Pension prior to 6 April 1997. All of the public service schemes, including the LGPS (NI) were contracted out.

On 26 October 2018 the High Court ruled in the Lloyds Bank case that equalisation for the effect of unequal GMPs is required. The ruling confirmed that trustees have a duty "to equalise benefits for men and women so as to alter the result which is at present produced in relation to GMPs".

In March 2016 the government introduced an interim solution to members in public sector schemes with GMPs who were set to lose out from the removal of AP. This was done by paying full increases on GMP pensions for individuals reaching State Pension Age (SPA) from 5 April 2016 through 5 December 2018 (GMP Rules do not require schemes to pay any increases on GMPs earned before April 1988, and to cap increases at 3% p.a. on GMPs earned after April 1988). This additional liability was included in the balance sheet for years ending in 2017 and recognised through OCI in the same year.

In January 2018 the interim solution was extended for individuals reaching SPA before 5 April 2021. The additional liability from extending the interim solution was not measured over the year ending in 2018 as it was deemed extremely unlikely to be material and would have been complex to measure accurately without undertaking a full valuation of the liability.

Broadly, If HM Treasury's solution was to extend the interim solution indefinitely, it is expected that the impact will be an increase in the defined benefit obligation of 0.3% for an average mature employer in the LGPS (which includes the liability for members reaching SPA after 5 December 2018 which has not previously been accounted for).

At the request of the Tourism NI, an allowance has been included within the accounting disclosure for the potential impact of the McCloud judgement, which has been derived based on the GADs figures above, and GMP Equalisation and Indexation, based on Aon Hewitt's estimated impact.

Please note that the percentage of active liability used in the above calculations is based upon the results of 31 March 2016 actuarial valuation, which in turn based upon the full membership data as 31 March 2016 for Tourism NI. The percentage of active liabilities could have changed since that date.

Please note the above figures are estimates, based upon a number of unknowns. The actual impact, if any, could be materially different to the above estimate. In particular, GAD's calculation of the impact on scheme liabilities is appropriate for the Scheme as a whole. The membership profile of individual employers will differ to the whole Scheme, and this will impact the result at employer level. In the extreme, if the employer's membership comprised only post 2012 joiners (with pension liability accrued post 2012 only) we would expect the overall impact to be negligible or nil.

The estimated provision for Tourism NI in relation to the McCloud judgement and GMP Indexation and Equalisation is £713k; McCloud (£592k) and GMP (£121k).

Notes to the Accounts

for the Year Ended 31 March 2019

14. PENSION COMMITMENTS

a) Local Government Pension Scheme

The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Northern Ireland is a funded defined benefit pension scheme, which provides retirement benefits for employees on a career average revalued earnings basis from 1 April 2015. Prior to that date benefits were built up on a “final salary” basis.

From 1 April 2015, a member builds up retirement pension at the rate of 1/49th pensionable pay for each year. Pension benefits in relation to membership between 1 April 2009 and 31 March 2015 were built up at the rate of 1/60th pensionable pay for each year of membership. There's no automatic lump sum provided in respect of membership after 31 March 2009. Pension benefits in relation to any membership before 1 April 2009 were built up at the rate of 1/80th (pension) and 3/80ths (tax-free lump sum) of pensionable pay for each year of membership up to 31 March 2009. At retirement, members may give up some pension for additional lump sum subject to HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) limits.

As part of a general review of public sector pension schemes from 1 April 2009, the government has introduced changes to the contribution rates. Instead of most people paying a standard contribution rate of 6% of their pensionable pay,

there are now different contribution rates for different pay bands. The scheme's professionally qualified actuaries recommended the rates for administrative employees between 5.5% and 10.5% of pensionable pay. Rates can be seen in the Remuneration Report.

Under IAS 19 Tourism NI is required to account for their share of assets and liabilities in the scheme. Added years' discretionary benefits awarded to former employees who retired early are also accounted for as a defined benefit scheme, as in accordance with IAS 19. This liability represents the actuarial liability of future costs to LGPS in respect of past employees who retired early. Given projected lifespans this liability will be payable over a number of years.

The latest formal actuarial valuation of the fund was carried out as at 31 March 2016. In calculating the Tourism NI's assets and liabilities the fund's actuaries have rolled forward and updated the values calculated at the latest valuation (March 2019). The fund's actuaries had to make a number of assumptions about events and circumstances in the future meaning that the results of actuarial calculations are subject to uncertainties within a range of possible values.

b) Actuarial Assumptions

The following actuarial assumptions were accepted on the recommendation of the actuary:

As at 31 March Actuarial Assumptions Used	31 March 2019	31 March 2018	31 March 2017	31 March 2016	31 March 2015
Rate of Increase in Pensions	2.2%	2.1%	2.0%	1.8%	1.8%
Rate of Increase in Salaries	3.7%	3.6%	3.5%	3.3%	3.3%
Discount Rate	2.4%	2.6%	2.6%	3.5%	3.2%
RPI Inflation	3.3%	3.2%	3.1%	2.9%	2.9%
CPI Inflation	2.2%	2.1%	2.0%	1.8%	1.8%

Mortality Assumptions

Actuarial Assumptions for Average Future Life Expectancy	Males 31 March 2019	Males 31 March 2018	Females 31 March 2019	Females 31 March 2018
Member aged 65 at accounting date	22.6 years	23.3 years	24.9 years	25.9 years
Member aged 45 at accounting date	24.3 years	25.5 years	26.7 years	28.2 years

Notes to the Accounts

for the Year Ended 31 March 2019

Sensitivity Analysis

IAS 19 valuation results depend critically on the principal assumptions used in the calculations. The discount rate used to value the liabilities is prescribed under IAS 19 and the results are particularly sensitive to the discount rate. A reduction in the net discount rate will increase the liabilities as a higher value is placed on benefits in the future.

Regarding mortality assumptions, if longevity improves at a faster rate than allowed for in the assumptions then, a higher value would be placed on the employer's liabilities. Further increases in pensionable pay, inflation and hence pension, more than allowed for in the assumptions, will increase the value of the liabilities.

The approximate impact of changing the key assumptions on the present value of the funded defined benefit obligation as at 31 March 2019 and the projected service cost for the year ended 31 March 2020 is set out below.

Funded LGPS benefits

Discount Rate Assumption

Adjustment to Discount Rate	+0.1% p.a.	-0.1% p.a.
Present Value of Total Obligation (£M's)	40.124	41.819
% Change in Present Value of Total Obligation	-2.0%	2.1%
Projected Service Cost (£M's)	1.331	1.414
Approximate % Change in Projected Service Cost	-3.0%	3.1%

Rate of General Increase in Salaries

Adjustment to Salary Increase Rate	+0.1% p.a.	-0.1% p.a.
Present Value of Total Obligation (£M's)	41.185	40.743
% Change in Present Value of Total Obligation	0.5%	-0.5%
Projected Service Cost (£M's)	1.372	1.372
Approximate % Change in Projected Service Cost	0.0%	0.0%

Rate of Increase to Pensions in Payment and Deferred Pensions Assumption, and Rate of Revaluation of Pension Accounts Assumption

Adjustment to Pension Increase Rate	+0.1% p.a.	-0.1% p.a.
Present Value of Total Obligation (£M's)	41.595	40.341
% Change in Present Value of Total Obligation	1.5%	-1.5%
Projected Service Cost (£M's)	1.414	1.331
Approximate % Change in Projected Service Cost	3.1%	-3.0%

Post Retirement Mortality Assumption

Adjustment to Mortality Age Rating Assumption*	-1 year	+1 year
Present Value of Total Obligation (£M's)	42.269	39.669
% Change in Present Value of Total Obligation	3.2%	-3.2%
Projected Service Cost (£M's)	1.425	1.320
Approximate % Change in Projected Service Cost	3.9%	-3.8%

A rating of +1 year means that members are assumed to follow the mortality pattern of the base table for an individual that is 1 year older than them.

c) Asset Valuations

The fair value of the assets held by the pension scheme attributable to the Tourism NI are analysed as follows:

Assets	Assets at 31 March 2019 %	Assets at 31 March 2018 %
Equities	59.5	71.4
Government Bonds	16.5	5.2
Corporate Bonds	7.0	7.2
Property	11.2	10.0
Cash	2.7	4.5
Other *	3.1	1.7
Total	100.0	100.0

Employers who report under IAS 19 are no longer required to recognise an expected return on assets therefore assumptions are no longer disclosed.

* Other may include hedge funds, currency holdings, asset allocation futures and other financial instruments

Notes to the Accounts

for the Year Ended 31 March 2019

Statement of Financial Position

The following amounts at 31 March 2019, 2018, 2017, 2016, and 2015 were measured in accordance with the requirements of IAS 19:

	31 March 2019 £'000	31 March 2018 £'000	31 March 2017 £'000	31 March 2016 £'000	31 March 2015 £'000
Fair Value of Scheme Assets	32,588	29,956	28,218	23,646	22,764
Present Value of Defined Benefit Obligations	(40,888)	(38,287)	(35,850)	(27,925)	(28,715)
Net Pension Liability	(8,300)	(8,331)	(7,632)	(4,279)	(5,951)

d) Amounts Charged to Expenditure

	2018/19 £'000	2017/18 £'000
Analysis of Amount Charged to Net Expenditure Statement in Respect of Defined Benefit Scheme:		
Current Service Cost	(1,286)	(1,064)
Curtailments and Settlements	-	-
Past Service Cost	-	-
Employer Contributions	825	671
Contributions in Respect of Unfunded Benefits	56	58
	(405)	(335)
Analysis of Amounts Charged to Other Finance Costs:		
Interest on Net Defined Benefit Liability/(Asset) (Funded)	(187)	(171)
Interest on Net Defined Benefit Liability/(Asset) (Unfunded)	(18)	(18)
	(205)	(189)
Analysis of Amounts in the Statement of Taxpayers' Equity:		
Actuarial Gains/(Losses)	641	(175)
	641	(175)
Movement in Deficit During the Year		
Deficit in Scheme at the Beginning of the Year	(8,331)	(7,632)
Movement in the Year:		
Current Service Cost	(1,286)	(1,064)
Employer Contributions	825	671
Contributions in Respect of Unfunded Benefits	56	58
Past Service Cost	-	-
Financing costs	(205)	(189)
Actuarial Gain/(Losses)	641	(175)
Deficit in Scheme at the End of the Year	(8,300)	(8,331)

Notes to the Accounts

for the Year Ended 31 March 2019

e) Employer Contribution Rates

The liabilities show the underlying commitment that Tourism NI has in the long term to pay retirement benefits. The total pension liability is £40.9 million (2017-18 - £38.3 million) and results in a net overall deficit balance of £8.30 million (2017-18 £8.33 million) which is recorded on the Statement of Financial Position.

The deficit on the LGPS scheme will be funded over a period of many years through increased employer contributions over the remaining working life of employees as assessed by the scheme actuary.

For 2018-19, employers participating in the scheme increased the contribution rate to 19% (2017-18 – 18%).

f) Scheme Gains and Losses

Actuarial gains and losses represent the extent to which actual outcomes have differed from the assumptions which were used in calculating IAS 19 figures.

For assets the gain/loss is normally the difference between the actual and expected return on assets, and for liabilities the gain/loss normally arises from the change in financial assumptions. These actuarial gains/losses are shown in the table below as experience gains and losses.

	31 March 2019 £000	31 March 2018 £000	31 March 2017 £000	31 March 2016 £000	31 March 2015 £000
Actuarial Gain (Loss) on Assets	1,393	717	3,402	(82)	1,760
Actuarial Gain (Loss) on Obligation/Liability	(752)	(892)	(6,610)	1,966	(2,695)
Net Actuarial Gain (Loss) Charged to Statement of Taxpayers' Equity	641	(175)	(3,208)	1,884	(935)
Fair Value of Scheme Assets	32,588	29,956	28,218	23,646	22,764
Present Value of Defined Benefit Obligations	(40,888)	(38,287)	(35,850)	(27,925)	(28,715)
Net Pension Liability	(8,300)	(8,331)	(7,632)	(4,279)	(5,951)

g) Republic of Ireland Employees

For those staff employed in the Republic of Ireland from 1st January 2007, a Trust Based Defined Contribution Scheme has been available for staff to join. The contributions are managed by Zurich Life Assurance Plc and the advisers to the Scheme are Towers Watson (Ireland) Limited, trading as Willis Towers Watson. Tourism NI contributed 16% of salary during the year whilst the staff member will continue to contribute 6%.

The total contributions payable to Zurich Life Assurance Plc by Tourism NI for 2018-19 was £34,301 (2017-18 - £24,581).

15. COMMITMENTS UNDER OPERATING LEASES

Total future minimum lease payments under operating leases are given in the table below for each of the following periods (amounts net of VAT). Lease types include buildings, car parking and photocopiers. There are no land leases.

	2018/19 £000	2017/18 £000
Not Later Than One Year	348	329
Later Than One Year and Not Later Than Five Years	514	600
Later Than Five Years	-	-
	862	929

There are no finance leases.

Notes to the Accounts

for the Year Ended 31 March 2019

16. CAPITAL COMMITMENTS

There were no capital commitments at 31 March 2019 or 31 March 2018.

17. OTHER FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS

Tourism NI has entered into non-cancellable contracts to provide financial assistance under the Tourism Development Scheme and the Tourism Event Funding Programme. The payments to which Tourism NI is committed are as follows:

	2018/19 £000	2017/18 £000
Not Later Than One Year	1,014	1,000
Later Than One Year and Not Later Than Five Years	-	396
Later Than Five Years	-	-
Present Value of Obligations	1,014	1,396

18. CONTINGENT LIABILITIES

Tourism NI has not entered into any guarantees or indemnities or provided any letters of comfort at 31 March 2019 or at 31 March 2018.

19. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

Tourism NI is a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) sponsored by the Department for the Economy (DfE). DfE and the other bodies it sponsors are regarded as related parties. In addition, Tourism NI has had a small number of transactions with other government departments and other central government bodies.

Tourism NI works with many public and private sector organisations including companies in which Board and SMT Members of Tourism NI have a beneficial interest. Transactions during the year with such companies, which were conducted at arm's length and were subject to normal project and programme rules and tendering procedures, where appropriate, are listed below:

Terence Brannigan Chairman

Board meeting observer of NI Tourism Alliance- strategic partnership- £15,000 (2017-18- £15,000).

Chairman of Maze Long Kesh Development Ltd - services paid - £436 (2017-18 - £nil).

Colin Neill Board Member

Chief Executive Pubs of Ulster (Hospitality Ulster) – sponsorship - £4,995 (2017-18 - £nil).

Director Northern Ireland Tourism Alliance –strategic partnership- £15,000 (2017-18 - £15,000).

Member of Institute of Directors – services paid - £714 (2017-18 - £nil).

Michele Shirlow Board Member

Chief Executive Food NI – grant for year - £66,000 (2017-18 - £72,800) and services paid - £654 (2017-18 - £nil).

Terry McCartney Board Member

Director Northern Ireland Hotels Federation –strategic partnership- £364,223 (2017-18 - £414,997 sponsorship).

Director Belmore - income of £156 in year (2017-18 - £236) and services paid - £140 (2017-18 - £nil).

Notes to the Accounts

for the Year Ended 31 March 2019

Angelina Fusco **Board Member**

Board Member of Visit Belfast – grant in year - £57,125 (2017-18 - £74,224) and services invoiced £15,487 (2017-18 - £1,624)

Member of Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce – sponsorship in year - £10,920 (2017-18 - £nil).

John McGrillen **Chief Executive**

Board Member of Tourism Ireland Ltd – grant paid - £13,578,788 (2017-18 - £12,638,770) services paid - £496,094 (2017-18 - £419,097), and income receipted - £nil (2017-18 - £4,480).

Governor on Board of Belfast Metropolitan College - services paid - £1,172 (2017-18 - £1,180), services receipted - £nil (2017-18 - £478).

Naomi Waite **Director of Marketing**

Observer (Board) of Visit Belfast – grant in year - £57,125 (2017-18 - £74,224) and services invoiced £15,487 (2017-18 - £1,624)

Member of Visit Derry - services paid £395 (2017-18 - £nil).

20. EVENTS AFTER THE REPORTING DATE

There were no events after the reporting date.

Date Of Authorisation For Issue

The Accounting Officer authorised the issue of these financial statements on October 2019.

