

**FILM IN ARGYLL AND BUTE – REVIEW OF FILM LOCATION CHARGING SCHEDULE**

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**1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider the Film Location Charging Schedule, which was previously approved to run for 1 year as a pilot, for permanent implementation. The Charging Schedule highlights opportunities to make better use of the Council's assets for the purpose of filming by production companies and individuals looking to film in Argyll and Bute. It was adopted to ensure that the Council can continue to offer the film industry a flexible range of location options which are fit for purpose. It is also important that the Council developed a structured transparent process when dealing with filming on our assets to ensure the service provides a fair approach to charging to avoid uncertainty and delay with enquiries. The key focus continues to be how the Council can improve the service it is providing to the industry.
- 1.2 A Screen Industries Update Report, which was recently considered at Economic Development and Infrastructure committee on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2019, outlined the work the Council were doing to promote the area for film linked to the Argyll and Bute Outcome Improvement Plan 2013 - 2023 priorities and Argyll and Bute's Economic Strategy, this report builds on this.
- 1.3 It is recommended that:-
- Policy and Resources consider and approve the Film Location Charging Schedule for permanent implementation. Charges to be reviewed annually as part of the budget process;
- 1.4 The purpose of the Council providing a service to the screen industry is to ensure that we continue to attract inward investment into Argyll and Bute and take advantage of any economic opportunities that may arise as a result of a production filming in the area.
- 1.5 The schedule that was adopted for pilot aligns with the Council's new commercialised approach to delivering services and ensures that we are making best use of our assets wherever possible. ('One Council' property approach). However, the Council recognises the importance that it remains film friendly and flexible when charging so as not to deter filming within the area.
- 1.6 The implementation of the piloted charging schedule in August 2018 has proved successful to date, with the number of film enquires and productions coming to the area continuing to grow. It has been noted in the previous Screen Industries Update report in June 2019 that the film office facilitated 40 productions. Of these productions, 11 entered into a formal film location agreement with Argyll and Bute Council totaling **£7,805** in commercial and statutory fees. Examples of these productions can be found in Appendix 1.
- 1.7 It should be noted that the Council are yet to enter into a formal agreement with a large production company which could potentially raise an income of £1,000 per day in commercial fees for the use of one of the Council's assets. Economic Development will continue to promote the Council's assets as potential locations to forthcoming enquires where appropriate. However, the income generated by filming is entirely industry led and therefore cannot be accurately projected and figures are expected to vary annually.

1.8 It is recommended that the:-

- Policy and Resources committee consider and approve the Film Location Charging Schedule for permanent implementation. Charges to be reviewed annually as part of the budget process.

**FILM IN ARGYLL AND BUTE – FACILITATING THE USE OF COUNCIL ASSETS**

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**2.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to consider the Film Location Charging Schedule, which was previously approved to run for 1 year as a pilot, for permanent implementation. The Charging Schedule highlights opportunities to make better use of the Council's assets for the purpose of filming by production companies and individuals looking to film in Argyll and Bute. It was adopted to ensure that the Council can continue to offer the film industry a flexible range of location options which are fit for purpose. It is also important that the Council developed a structured transparent process when dealing with filming on our assets to ensure the service provides a fair approach to charging to avoid uncertainty and delay with enquiries. The key focus continues to be how the Council can improve the service it is providing to the industry.
- 2.2 A Screen Industries Update Report, which was recently considered at Economic Development and Infrastructure committee on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2019, outlined the work the Council were doing to promote the area for film linked to the Argyll and Bute Outcome Improvement Plan 2013 - 2023 priorities and Argyll and Bute's Economic Strategy, this report builds on this.

**3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the:-

- Policy and Resources committee consider and approve the Film Location Charging Schedule for permanent implementation. Charges to be reviewed annually as part of the budget process.

**4.0 DETAIL**

**4.1 PURPOSE OF PROVIDING A SERVICE TO THE SCREEN INDUSTRIES**

- 4.1.1 The purpose of the Council providing a service to the screen industry is to continue to attract inward investment into Argyll and Bute and to take advantage of any economic opportunities that may arise as a result of a production filming in the area. This includes opportunities to promote and market the area as well as the increased opportunity that film productions may provide to raise the profile of the area from an inward investment and tourism perspective.
- 4.1.2 In 2018 the value of filming in Argyll to date is estimated to be **£1,088,500** as a consequence of the 40 productions known to have been filmed in the area.
- 4.1.3 Screen industries development meets with Argyll and Bute's Outcome Improvement Plan (ABOIP) objective that 'Our Economy is Diverse' and our new Economic Strategy objective under the "Place and People" outcome "Creating a vibrant, cultural experience and strong creative industry" as well as being an excellent opportunity to showcase Argyll and Bute to a national and, in some cases, international audience.

## 4.2 PURPOSE OF FACILITATING THE USE OF COUNCIL ASSETS FOR FILMING

4.2.1 The council has many assets which could potentially be used for filming. To highlight some of the types of property and land the council currently own, please see the below list:

- Office buildings and depots;
- Airports and airfields;
- Schools, community centres and libraries;
- Swimming pools and outdoor centres
- Cemeteries/crematoriums, parks and gardens;
- Landfill sites;
- Piers, jetties and harbours;
- Car parks and bus shelters;
- Monuments and historic sites;
- Trails, footpaths and bridges;
- Toilets and playparks;
- Pitches

4.2.2 We frequently receive requests for filming on Council land, usually small scale productions undertaking filming on footways. However in 2017, there had been a significant increase in demand for Council owned property/land for filming purposes or to facilitate filming. It was identified that Argyll and Bute Council was not in a position to maximise the potential benefits to help sustain assets and facilitate for film. In addition, it was identified that the Council needed to provide clarity to the screen industry around charging for its assets and the governance arrangements to be able to facilitate.

4.2.3 Economic Development conducted a benchmarking exercise and gathered primary information from location managers to establish the standard fee levels and the Council's competitive position within the industry. These findings underpinned the proposed charging model and enforced a more formalised agreement between both the production company and the Council. This arrangement did not require further resource within the Transformation, Projects and Regeneration team or other departments as it was incorporated into the service that the Transformation, Projects and Regeneration team currently provided.

4.2.7 The schedule that was adopted as a pilot aligns with the Council's new commercialised approach to delivering services and ensures that we are making best use of our assets wherever possible. ('One Council' property approach). However, the Council recognises the importance that it remains film friendly and flexible when charging so as not to deter filming within the area.

## 4.3 REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION

4.3.1 The implementation of the piloted charging schedule in August 2018 has proved successful to date, with the number of film enquires and productions coming to the area continuing to grow. It has been noted in the previous Screen Industries Update report in June 2019 that the film office facilitated 40 productions. Of these productions, 11 entered into a formal film location agreement with Argyll and Bute Council totaling **£7,805** in commercial and statutory fees. Examples of these productions can be found in appendix 1.

4.3.3 Feedback from the industry has been collated over the past year and Economic Development can confirm that some of those productions who entered into formal agreements have provided the following feedback:

- "As a Location Manager, I found all members of Argyll & Bute Council incredibly easy to deal with and couldn't be more helpful and flexible. There are some incredibly beautiful spots which work well as filming locations – we will be back!"
- "I would like to thank all of Argyll and Bute Council for the considerable help and assistance afforded us that made shooting this project as flexible as possible. Especially in Lochgilphead and Inveraray where had it not been down to the support and great attitude of the Council we would not have produced such great footage."

4.3.4 As the main point of contact, the Transformation, Projects and Regeneration team within the Economic Development service will continue to be responsible for agreeing the charge for properties and film with the customer once agreed with the appropriate contact managing the asset. Additionally the team will check availability of the site/asset, secure the relevant permissions from the landowner, check appropriate levels of Public Liability Insurance and finally grant a filming permit by way of permission. The Film Officer/Technical Support Officer in consultation with the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure, will continue to have the discretion to vary charges as appropriate in line with the principles of the agreed charging regime.

4.3.6 It should be noted that as of yet the Council are yet to enter into a formal agreement with a large production company which could potentially raise an income of £1,000 per day in commercial fees for the use of one of the Council's assets. Economic Development will continue to promote the Council's assets as potential locations to forthcoming enquires where appropriate. However, the income generated by filming is entirely industry led and therefore cannot be accurately projected and figures are expected to vary annually.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 The implementation of a charging schedule for film has been proposed to provide clarity and structure for our customers within the creative industries. It also aligns with the Council's new commercialised approach to property and protects our assets whilst maximizing their use. However, attracting inward investment from filming into the local economy remains the focus and priority of Argyll and Bute Council's Economic Development department and we will continue to strive to provide a film friendly, flexible service to all our customers to the best of our ability.

## 6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1	Policy	Supports the delivery of the Argyll and Bute Outcome Improvement Plan 2013 - 2023 and Economic Strategy: Creating a vibrant, cultural experience and strong creative industry
6.2	Financial	Income cannot be projected on an annual basis as it will be dictated by the industry.
6.3	Legal	Formalising the arrangement between the Council and companies will protect the assets and interests of the Council.
6.4	HR	Staff currently involved supporting filming in Argyll are EDST, Property Services, Roads and Amenity Services, Planning and Education.
6.5	Equalities/ Fairer Scotland Duty	None.
6.6	Risk	The council misses an opportunity to receive additional income to sustain its assets.
6.7	Customer Service	If the schedule and governance arrangements are not adopted, the Council will not be able to provide an efficient, transparent service to the film industry which could result in missed opportunities.

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12<sup>th</sup> June 2019

**For further information contact:**

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## Appendices

*Appendix 1- Examples of Commercial and Statutory Fees Implemented in 2018*