FVSE Embraces The Challenge Ahead

Tuesday 16 October, 2018

FVSE have recently launched their next project delivery plan, taking the social enterprise into 2020 and beyond. It concludes a 5-year journey where, despite often encountering incredibly challenging circumstances out with its control, this local social enterprise has worked hard to grow its main event – Sruighlea, Stirling's Summer Festival. However, as FVSE's Director Matt McGrandles explains, these external factors have not brought as much growth as the enterprise would have liked.

"Now that we are through it, to say this last year has been a challenge is an understatement," comments FVSE's Director Matt McGrandles. "As most small businesses will appreciate, it's the decisions out with our control that can have the greater impact on smaller organisations. The closure of the Stirling Kerse Bridge stemming the flow of traffic to and from the event site, the change of date for The World Pipe Band Championships to accommodate The European Championships in Glasgow and of course the decision to bring Runrig to Stirling on our weekend, all weren't really part of the grand finale to our 5-year delivery plan. It's been a bit of a rollercoaster ride."

Sruighlea, Stirling's Summer Festival which incorporates its key attraction, Stirling Highland Games is FVSE's core annual fundraising event, allowing the social enterprise to generate income through ticket sales. With only 40% of its funding achieved from this year's event it provides an ongoing budget headache for FVSE's Board, but the team are committed to exploring funding options for not only this project delivery plan but also for a 2020 Legacy project.

Matt explains, "As we start to deliver our new project delivery plan, that takes us through the exciting 150-year anniversary celebrations of Stirling Highland Games, we can only hope that our concerns are taken on board by the people who make these decisions. We have delivered the event on the same weekend for the last 5 years and will continue to express our thoughts that a co-ordinated approach to events in the city would be more beneficial. I am sure most local businesses would also prefer to see any bigger events incorporated into an existing local event plan rather than the current approach."

This year's Festival saw even more on offer to visitors and included Stirling Highland Games, a Foodie Festival, the Traders Village, an Activities Challenge area, On the Fringe performances, over 40 Walking Tours and live music in the evening at the Sruighlea Sessions. This quote from a visitor sums up the event nicely: "The enthusiasm of everyone in attendance – organisers, VIPs, competitors, stall holders, spectators and all. It made for a great atmosphere in one of the most beautiful settings in Scotland. Long may this event continue."

FVSE's Director offers huge praise to his small team and 72 volunteers that helped deliver their annual event in Stirling. Reviewing some of the organisations 5-year stats not only highlights the enormous amount of planning that goes into this Stirling focused tourism event but also showcases the practical training opportunities offered for up to 120 young people and the £1.2m economic impact it has brought to Stirling.

"We simply couldn't deliver the Festival without our fantastic volunteers who provided 610 volunteer hours at this year's event. A big thanks also to our 2018 Games Chieftain, Simone Lahbib as well as our guest Chef this year, Tony Singh. Both were so supportive of the Festival and FVSE's social aims."

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Now armed with its 2018 event stats, the organisation sets its sights on creating and renewing their Partnerships as well as developing its Training Academy offering in Scotland for young people. Further details about FVSE's Projects can be found at www.fvse.org.uk or by calling the office on 01786 273556.



Company Contact:

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Ceangail

T. 0330 122 1997
E. office@ceangail.org
W. https://www.ceangail.org

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