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Mr Alastair Keddie
Chief Executive
The Moray Council
High Street
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IV30 1BX

Dear Mr Keddie

Keith Traditional Music & Song Association (TMSA) Festival
Request for Financial Assistance - £2,000

I am writing to request financial assistance for the above festival from The Moray Council Section 20 funding.

The Keith Traditional Music & Song Association (TMSA) Festival is run by the Keith Branch of the TMSA and is held in various venues throughout Keith over a weekend. The Festival was founded in 1976 and has been staged every year since. Many events are held throughout the weekend including concert ceilidhs, dances, sessions and an open air concert. Hotel function halls and pub bars are full of music revellers who flock to Keith especially to hear traditional Scottish music and song. Competitions are also held on the Saturday for people of all ages and competitors are judged to national TMSA standards. The competitions are a huge part of the Festival and are seen as a way to encourage young people to take an interest in Traditional Music.

Keith Festival is a labour of love for all those who run it, as well as for those who perform. Every member of the organising committee is a volunteer and artists are invited on a strictly non-professional basis and those who come to perform do so because they want to help keep the traditions of the area alive and encourage them to grow, not to make money. The Festival does pay for the accommodation, meals and expenses of invited guests and judges.



The Festival has many professional musicians who come and play during the weekend on that basis eg top fiddler Paul Anderson.

It is the support of the people who come to see the concerts and other events that is most valuable to the future of Keith Festival an admission prices are therefore kept as low as possible.

However, the committee now has to pay big name bands to make special appearances in order to attract more people.

With this, and rising costs in other expenses (including administration), the Committee has, in recent years, began to attract sponsorship for the various events. This has been reasonably successful however costs keep increasing every year and even with this sponsorship the Festival is still loosing money.

The Keith TMSA Festival is a huge benefit to the local economy. This Festival is the biggest of its kind in the North East which means people from all over Scotland, and further, are coming to Moray to enjoy the musical traditions of the area.

Last year the Festival received funding from the Highland Year of Culture 2007 pot, in order to bring music back on to the street and in to several shops in Mid Street. This meant having extra guests over and above what there would normally be invited. By having music in the street and in shops it meant that those who do not feel comfortable going in to pubs can enjoy their traditional music and song. The organising committee would like to keep this going however it does bring extra cost and by not having the Highland Year of Culture money this venture could suffer as a result unless other funding is gained.

Like every other voluntary organisation the Keith Festival depends on donations, fundraising and hard work of the volunteers. However Keith Festival is unique in that it is one of only two major events throughout the year in Keith and contributes so much to the ethos and economics of the town.

I hope that Moray Council can see the benefits that the Keith Traditional Music & Song Association Festival gives to so many people and can assist us in running our very successful Festival.

Yours sincerely

Wilma Murdoch
Secretary
Keith TMSA Festival Committee

