

LOCAL AUTHORITY PLANNING PROVISION OF POLICIES AND GUIDELINES FOR EVENT MANAGEMENT: AN IRISH PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract:

This paper examines the role local authorities play in planning for event management on a global scale. More specifically it focuses on assessing the local authority planning provision of policies and guidelines to responsibly manage the process of event management in the Republic of Ireland. This research utilised a quantitative methodology in the form of a content analysis approach. This approach allowed for a valuable cross representation of results in relation to local authority planning for event management in Ireland. Analysis revealed a lack of adoption and integration of planning policies and guidelines within local authorities nationwide. This has implications for the sustainability and longevity of the event industry in Ireland. As such the need to understand the importance of developing and implementing sustainable planning systems for the event industry in Ireland by local authorities cannot be ignored. This paper concludes that while the lack of adoption of planning systems by local authorities in Ireland is worrying, regulating and implementing sustainable planning systems nationwide can improve it.

Keywords: Event Management, Guidelines, Ireland, Local Authorities, Policies

Introduction

Research into local authority planning for event management has been well documented in event management research worldwide (Pugh & Wood, 2004; Wood, 2005; Wood, 2009; Bowdin, O'Toole, Allen, Harris & McDonnell, 2012; Holmes, Hughes, Mair & Carlsen, 2015). However few studies have addressed the role local authorities play in providing planning policies and guidelines for event management globally (Damster & Tassiopoulos, 2005; Wood, 2005; Wood, 2006; Whitford, 2009; Dredge & Whitford, 2010; Dredge, Lamont, Ford,

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Giang, Whitford & Wynn-Moylan, 2010; Dredge & Whitford, 2011; Bramwell & Lane, 2013). Yet the importance of providing effective planning systems such as policies and guidelines for guiding the process of event management cannot be underestimated. In particular the need to understand the difficulties faced when working with or alongside local authorities and associated planning systems for event management is essential. This is significant considering a lack of effective planning systems for event management may have implications for sustaining future event industries (Fredline, Deery & Jago, 2006). This study aims to bridge this gap in research by examining the importance of providing local authority planning policies and guidelines for event management, while providing an insight into the difficulties faced by event managers when using planning systems to plan for event management. It aims to do this by primarily focusing on assessing the local authority provision of effective and sustainable planning systems such as policies and guidelines for event management with a geographic focus on Ireland.

An examination of local authority planning has shown that local government authorities play a central role in the organisation and authorisation of licensing events on a global scale (Raj & Musgrave, 2009; NSW Government, 2011; IRO, 2013; Department for Culture, Media & Sport, 2014). This local authority function seems to be critical in planning for event management. This may be due to local authorities having a legal remit to license events and ensure they are conducted in a way that is safe for event stakeholders (Government of Western Australia, 2009; NSW Government, 2011; Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, 2010). In addition to this, local authorities play a crucial role as policy makers in providing policies and guidelines for a sustainable event industry (UNEP, 2005). As such, the focus on planning policies and guidelines within this study centers on examining the guidance and best practice advice provided within such local authority planning systems for implementing responsible and sustainable events. However policies and guidelines specifically for event management are often unavailable within local authorities at a national or international level. Therefore this study aims to identify the availability and provision of local authority planning policies and guidelines for event management in Ireland.

The provision of local authority planning policies and guidelines to sustainably administer and guide the process of event management seems more important now than ever before. This may be as a result of the global increase in the provision of festivals and events and a realization of using events of varying types to generate benefits and impacts (Raj & Musgrave, 2009; Shipway & Fyall, 2012; Page & Connell, 2012; Getz, 2013; Ziakas, 2014). Event industries on a global scale have become valuable counterparts of worldwide tourism industries. There are on average 5-6 million regularly occurring festivals and events held throughout the world each year. This global popularity is estimated to have an economic impact that reaches

more than \$1 trillion (International Festival and Event Association, 2009). This is significant considering the global development and maturity of the event industry has resulted in events becoming the fastest growing type of tourism attraction (Crompton & McKay, 1997; Taylor & Shanka, 2002; Thrane, 2002; Gursoy, Kim & Uysal, 2004; Cibinskiene, 2012). As a result they now figure prominently in the development and marketing plans of most destinations (Getz, 2007). For this reason, governments are using events as an integral part of their policies for regional development (Whitford, 2009) and are subsequently supporting and promoting events as part of their strategy for economic development, nation building and destination marketing (Hall, 1992; Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell, 2012; Finkel, McGillivray, McPherson & Robinson, 2013). Aside from the economic development events bring to respective regions, they also contribute positively to social and environmental developments in host regions by facilitating growth and social cohesion, enhancing cultural identity and encouraging environmental conservation (Shanka & Alamiyo, 2004; Berneman & Petit, 2005; Léime & O'Shea, 2008; Ruhanen & Whitford, 2011; Richards, 2014) to mention a few. However there is also a growing recognition of the existence of negative economic, social and environmental impacts that are often overlooked. These negative consequences include a loss of authenticity, access issues, crime generation, resource consumption, pollution, land degradation and impacts to ecological systems (Fredaline, Deery & Jago, 2006; UNEP, 2007; Hornsby, 2011; Holmes, Hughes, Mair & Carlsen, 2015). As a result of this, the need to plan for and manage such potential negative impacts is essential and requires planning that is sustainable. Similarly, the need to maintain event growth and further develop and advance event industries requires planning that maximises tourism's positive contributions while minimising tourism costs (Global Sustainable Tourism Council, 2013). For this reason, the adoption, utilization and implementation of sustainability tools and indicators within local authority planning mechanisms such as policies and guidelines integrated into relevant legislation can facilitate the responsibility and sustainability of long lasting event industries.

Thus, this baseline comparative assessment sets forth to address the current state of authority driven planning for event management in Ireland. It examines and assesses the integration of sustainability indicators within local authority planning systems in Ireland. As well as this, it highlights the need for solutions and regulated planning tools to be implemented within local government at global, national and local level to facilitate the process of event management, suitable and applicable to events of all types, size and scale. This study presents a contribution to knowledge by providing an insight into the necessity of planning for event management on a global scale and the current level of Local Authority planning provision for event management in Ireland.

The role of Local Authorities in Planning for Event Management

The role local government authorities play in planning for event management can vary on a global scale. Research has shown that the support of local authorities seems to be crucial in hosting events worldwide (Eardley & Vincent, 2011; NSW Government, 2011; Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government, 2012), so much so that local authorities around the developed world have a legal responsibility to ensure events are conducted and operated in a way that is safe for event stakeholders (Government of Western Australia, 2009; Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, 2010; NSW Government, 2011). However, Dickenson & Arcodia (2010) claim that no investigation has been conducted into how professional associations including local government provide information on sustainable events and how to encourage event operations to become more sustainable. This may explain the lack of information on local authority sustainable planning systems on a global level for event management. Yet, governments realise the potential of events to generate positive benefits (Mair & Whitford, 2013) and have realised the importance of using events within their region to achieve a diverse range of economic, environmental and social objectives (Wood, 2005). These objectives include combating social exclusion and poverty, maximising attractiveness of key locations, maximising economic activity and performance, protecting and enhancing the environment through principles of sustainable development and promoting and supporting economic development. Alongside the positive benefits events bring to a region, they also bring negative social, economic and environmental impacts including land degradation, waste and pollution, increased resource demands, interruption of normal business, and inflated price of products and services (Raj & Musgrave, 2009). Therefore in order to achieve and sustain such positive objectives and minimise negative consequences requires a comprehensive and robust local authority planning approach, which adopts and promotes the use of policies and guidelines. This can effectively support and facilitate the future development of event industries in a sustainable manner both internationally and nationally in Ireland.

The relationship between Local Authorities and planning for event management can be quite complex globally. The strategic preparation of an event as well as the planning and coordination for the execution of the event require professional handling in order to guarantee the optimal interplay between all participants (Thomas, Hermes & Loos, 2008). For this reason, the necessity of facilitating the planning and coordination of an event through local authorities cannot be underestimated. Despite this, little attention has been paid to the way different levels of government collaborate and the quality of government arrangements in place before, during and after the event (Dredge et al, 2010), at an international level. Yet local government involvement is noted to be increasingly

vital to the provision of quality events (Pugh & Wood, 2004). As such Local Authorities in the developed world play a variety of roles in event management from event manager to consent authority (Carnegie, 1997). These functions in relation to local authority planning for event management can be viewed below in Table 1.

Table 1
Local Authority functions in Planning for Event Management

Licensing and Authorizing Events Implementing state laws governing safety aspects of event planning and management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Road closures ➤ Grant temporary trading licenses to ensure ➤ Building Control to ensure safety for the erection of structures
Providing supporting materials and conditions to be complied with Implementing sustainability in Event Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Water supply and sewage ➤ Health and Welfare ➤ Waste Management and removal ➤ Resource Management
Developing Policies Providing advice and guidance (Consultations)

Source: adapted from: Thomas & Wood, 2004; Damster & Tassiopoulos, 2005; Event Scotland, 2006; NSW Government, 2011; DECLG, 2012; Bowdin, Allen, Harris, O’Toole, & McDonnell, 2012).

It is important to note that the above local authority functions for event management can vary worldwide and not all local government authorities implement the same planning process or functions. However a commonality of local authorities at an international level and a primary role local government authorities play in relation to event management around the developed world is licensing and authorising events. This is a legal requirement for local authorities throughout the developed world (Government of Western Australia, 2009; NSW Government, 2011; Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, 2010; South African Consulate General, 2013; Government of British Columbia; 2015). Event licensing ensures events are planned in a way that is safe for event stakeholders as it outlines the regulations and delivery of services for the event development process (Damster & Tassiopoulos, 2005). It also allows for the application and implementation of state laws governing the safe implementation of various aspects of events. Such aspects include the handling of food, sale of liquor, erection of temporary structures and road closures to mention a few. However licensing events and issuing permits for hosting events is dependent on a number of variables including audience size, event type and scale. On a global scale, licensing dependent on crowd size varies with some local authorities outlining statutory obligations to license events where the audience exceeds 3000 spectators whereas in Ireland licensing is required for events exceeding 4999 spectators with the exception of sporting events. However licensing events on a global scale should apply to all events irrespective of type, size and scale since any gathering of people can generate safety concerns and impacts such as overcrowding,

increased waste, land degradation, increased crime levels, vandalism and noise, and resident exodus (Raj & Musgrave, 2009). The lack of planning processes for event licensing taking into consideration overcrowding for example, can create devastating safety concerns and incidents. Therefore it seems tighter planning systems, rules and regulations are required for promoters and event organisations when applying for event licenses. Additionally the issue of unlicensed events and gatherings of people occur on a global scale, which potentially can create many safety concerns, yet these informal activities are not documented or effectively planned. Therefore to manage event licensing and prohibit the occurrence of unlicensed events requires an improved integrated development approach to be implemented and regulated within local authorities globally and nationally.

Additionally local authorities generally provide supporting materials and conditions that must be complied with to ensure that facilities are designed, built and operated in ways that minimise harm (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2012). This is applicable in both an international and national context since supporting materials and conditions contain guidelines outlining the procedures for event safety, erection of structures, road closures, health and welfare, and the application of temporary trading licenses at events to mention a few. The provision of supporting materials, documentation and legislative compliance conditions are necessary to support event organisations and provide assurance in planning concerns (CCMA, 2012). Subsequently the provision of supporting materials such as planning guidelines can promote best practice at every stage in the development management process (Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government, 2007) and can assist with the effective management of events. As such, the provision of supporting materials, documentation and compliance conditions cannot be underestimated and are essential. For this reason, it should be within the local authorities remit to determine a comprehensive planning approach to the distribution of event licensing and documentation provision on a global scale. Thus aiding the development of a planning process with effective and sustainable supporting materials, guidelines and compliance conditions for event management.

Subsequent to this local authorities around the developed world now have a responsibility to ensure events are conducted in a way that is sustainable, taking into consideration economic, socio-cultural and environmental developments (NSW Government, 2011; UNEP, 2012; DECLG, 2014). This may be due to events requiring great amounts of resources such as water and energy. As such, the areas of waste, water, air, transport, food and energy can impact the use of resources, cause pollution and land degradation, contribute to carbon emissions and affect the longevity and quality of the event (Raj & Musgrave, 2009; David, 2009; Jones, 2014). Local authorities throughout the developed world have a function in resource management, waste management and removal, water supply and sewage and health

and welfare, which is significant in achieving sustainability in event planning to manage the impacts that can generate. For this reason, the necessity of planning for and implementing sustainability in the event industry worldwide is vital. In fact the responsibility of ensuring events are planned in a safe and sustainable manner falls to a number of departments within local authorities, which have a close association with the event planning process. These departments include the fire department, planning department, building control and environmental services (Event Scotland, 2006; NSW Government, 2011). They are responsible for a spectrum of services, including planning, building control, developing infrastructure, car parks, signage, roads and road closures, environmental protection, water supply and sewage, waste management, agriculture, health, welfare, recreation facilities and amenities (Council of Europe, 2000; Shone & Parry, 2004; LGMA, 2012; Bowdin et al, 2012). The management of each of these services and resources is detrimental to the quality and health of the environment, society and the economy as well as to the quality of the event. Conversely it has been noted that public sector departments responsible for event provision tend to have limited resources in terms of funding, time and staff expertise (Thomas & Wood, 2004; Wood, 2009; Health Service Executive, 2014). Yet the provision of staff and funding within local authorities for event planning is necessary to support and guide the process of planning for event management. For this reason, the provision of staff, allocation of funding and development of proactive sustainable planning systems for event management implemented within international and national legislation can facilitate efficient planning for successful event industries both at an international and national level in Ireland. It may also safeguard the protection of a socially, economically and environmentally sustainable event industry. Therefore maintaining the quality of the event tourism product.

Another local authority function in planning for event management includes developing and implementing policies and strategies for the development of respective regions in national and international development plans. The necessity of providing policies outlining strategies for the development of events in respective regions cannot be underestimated. At a national level in Ireland, the provision and implementation of local authority policies are legally required in County Development plans (CDP's) under the planning and development act 2000 and 2010. This act ensures the impacts and issues effecting tourism related developments such as events are addressed (DEHLG, 2010). Similarly the development of policies outlining the development for other tourism and event locations is also a requirement at an international level. Development plans and strategies outline planning objectives for the sustainable development of respective regions. They also outline a plan of guidance and procedures for the development of a region to prioritise various economic, socio-cultural and environmental developments of the region. This supports the importance of integrating sustainable planning policies

for event management since events have become critical aspects in the development and economic regeneration of many communities throughout the world. Therefore the necessity of integrating guidelines and policies within local authorities for event management cannot be underestimated and may be beneficial for local authorities at a global level. This would be key in facilitating sustainability in event industries since they can provide valuable guidance on how to achieve sustainability in event management. For this reason, the central role events play in national and international developments require the formation of policies and guidelines to facilitate the development and advancement of the event industry and also to facilitate planning and development for a sustainable and high quality event industry.

Local authorities also provide general advice and guidance (Office of the Ombudsman, 2013), which is essential in clarifying event managers concerns. Providing advice, guidance and a consultation process together with supporting materials containing information to assist in the interpretation of prescribed legislation is fundamental in planning for event management. As such it is a responsibility of local authorities to decide on criteria for the provision of planning for event management, which details the information to be provided by applicants, the level of assessment and the level of consultation required (Health Service Executive, 2014). This will provide local authorities with the ability to set best practice standards in the role they play in event planning. Thus by adopting international best practice tools and indicators to aid sustainability in planning for event management, local authorities may facilitate a transition towards a sustainably viable and responsible event industry both internationally and nationally.

Tools and Indicators to aid Sustainability in Planning for Event Management

Having recognised the importance of tourism activities such as events and the need to plan sustainably for such tourism activities, a number of sustainable planning and management tools and indicator systems have been developed. These tools were developed to aid planners in achieving a sustainably viable event industry. These regulatory instruments include the UNEP/UNWTO 12 aims of sustainable tourism (2005), the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria (2013), the European Tourism Indicator System (2013) and the DIT ACHIEV model of sustainable Tourism and event management (2008). They were developed as solutions to the problems and issues associated with planning for tourism. Yet these tools can be adopted and utilised to achieve desirable levels of sustainability for event management around the world. The UNEP/UNWTO 12 aims of sustainable tourism are a set of aims used in tourism planning, management and monitoring processes which provide accurate results for decision makers (UNWTO & Ministry of Tourism and Environment, 2007). They were initially developed to provide governments with guidance and

a framework for the development of policies for sustainable tourism and tourism activities (UNEP/UNWTO, 2005). These aims are based around two principles. Firstly it minimises the negative impacts on society, the economy and the environment. Secondly, it maximises tourism's positive contribution to local economies and the conservation of natural and cultural heritage as well as the quality of life of hosts and visitors (UNEP, 2005). The GSTC is a tool for managing sustainability in tourism. It strives to achieve best practice in sustainable tourism through the adoption of universal sustainable tourism principles. The indicators from this tool are guiding principles for measuring and monitoring sustainability, which offers an opportunity to reduce and mitigate negative consequences, which may occur. The European Tourism Indicator System also measures performance and monitors results while enhancing sustainability performance (EC, 2015). It identifies areas for improving and managing risks effectively and is based on a concept of shared responsibility and the principles of joint decision-making (EC, 2015; Torres-Delgado & Palomeque, 2014). It encourages tourism development that balances economic, environmental and socio-cultural impacts while ensuring the longevity of the tourism industry. Therefore it can be beneficial to local authorities in getting improved data for informed decision making and establishing an intelligent approach to planning for sustainability in event management. The DIT ACHIEV model of sustainable tourism indicators, which can be adapted for sustainable event management is a management system developed for an Irish context (Griffin, 2009). It focuses on ensuring a sustainable future for Irish tourism. It recognises that the tourism industry and its counterparts are an important source of revenue, investment and employment throughout Ireland. According to Griffin (2009) the implementation of sustainable development principles in the events industry and the integration of indicators from the DIT AVHIEV model can assist in the development of an overall policy/plan for the management of sustainable events, however it requires local administration. Overall these four tools are useful and reliable tools for policy makers as they offer an opportunity to measure, monitor and assess the impacts of events. More specifically they were designed to facilitate government agencies and tourism managers in making informed decisions about future developments. Therefore the consideration and implementation of such tools in event management processes within relevant international and national legislation for event management can aid in the sustainable development of event industries worldwide. It can also aid in maximizing the positive contributions of events and safeguarding against the negative consequences events may generate. Hence, for the purpose of this study, the content analysis tool integrated the above tools and indicator sets to assess which local authorities, if any adopted or were compliant with such management systems in national local authority planning policies and guidelines in Ireland.

Research Method

This nationwide baseline comparative analysis involved extensive data collection and investigation into Local Authority planning provisions, guidelines and policies for event management in the Republic of Ireland. In particular, this study aims to determine the provision of guidelines, policies, and event personnel for administering the process of event management in local authorities. As well as this, it focuses on examining the integration of sustainability tools and indicators for planning and managing events within Irish local authority event planning guidelines and policies. Local authorities in the Republic of Ireland have a legal remit to license events and ensure events are conducted in a way that is safe for event stakeholders under the licensing at outdoor event regulations 2001. To effectively ensure events are produced in a safe manner requires guidance from local authorities through planning systems such as supporting materials like guidelines, policies and consultations with designated local authority event personnel. Similarly, local authorities in Ireland have a legal remit under the planning and development act 2000 and 2010 to plan for economic, environmental and socio-cultural developments in their respective regions. This is achieved through the development and implementation of County Development Plans (CDP's). As such the importance of providing planning guidelines and policies within CDP's in local authorities nationwide to guide the process of event management cannot be underestimated. This is significant considering the event industry in Ireland is of national and local importance to both the Irish economy and society. It generates up to €450m to the Irish economy (Fáilte Ireland, 2013) and generates in excess of two million accommodation bed nights from the domestic market alone annually. Their significance attracts 300,000 overseas holidaymakers each year (Fáilte Ireland, 2014). For this reason the importance of planning sustainably and providing sustainable planning systems to maintain this Irish growth is fundamental to an event industries longevity and success.

In order to determine the level of local authority planning provision of policies and guidelines for event management, it was necessary to identify the documents to assess for the purpose of this study. The type of documents chosen for analysis analysed all 32 local authority event management-planning guidelines. Furthermore it incorporated all local authority County Development Plans (CDP's). CDP's are intended to provide a strategic framework and policy context for all planning decisions in respective regions (DEHLG, 2007). They set out strategies for sustainable development giving precedence to environmental, economic and socio-cultural considerations and objectives. Specifically the findings from this study provided a valuable insight into the provision of policies and guidelines for event management by local authorities and the integration of sustainability indicators within such planning processes in Ireland. In order to facilitate an examination

into the level of planning provided for event management in Ireland by local authorities, criteria were compiled which were then used to develop two assessment frameworks “Local Authority provision of planning guidelines and policies” and “Local Authority event planning guideline and policy compliance” were developed. The criteria within these frameworks incorporated the principle guidelines, tools and indicator systems from international best practice including the UNWTO/UNEP aims of sustainable tourism (2005), the DIT ACHIEV model of sustainable tourism indicators (2007), the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria (2013) and the European Tourism Indicator System (2013). This enabled an assessment and examination of the specific level of local authority planning provided in Ireland and the degree of sustainability incorporated within the policies and guidelines.

Research Instrument

To achieve the aim of this research a content analysis approach was applied to assess and highlight the variations and gaps on the level of local authority provision of planning guidelines and policies for event management in Ireland. This approach also assessed the integration of sustainability tools and indicators within local authority policies and guidelines. The content analysis approach was the primary quantitative analysis tool utilised in this study as it represents quantification on a limited scale and is still anchored in the quantitative research paradigm. This approach may be considered a kind of reliability of the measures and a validation of eventual findings (Sellitz, Jahoda, Deutsch & Cook, 1967). Therefore quantification in content analysis tends to emphasise the procedures of analysis (Berg, 2007). Additionally quantitative research tools take an analytical approach to understand a number of controlled variables. Therefore tourism researchers are increasingly using content analysis as a means of critical investigation when faced with textual forms of data like written documents such as tourism strategies, policies and guidelines. As such this approach was considered ideal in examining the level of local authority planning provisions as it allowed for a valuable cross representation of results in relation to the provision of policies and guidelines and the integration of sustainability tools within such policies and guidelines for event management in Ireland. However this approach is not without its limitations. A content analysis approach is a purely descriptive method and can struggle to provide explanations for particular findings (Rose, Spinks & Canhoto, 2015). The data analysis from the quantitative content analysis is also limited by the availability of document material, which is necessary to conduct a content analysis. This was an issue with this research since the availability of documents in local authorities was limited. As well as this, the content analysis approach can lead to questions about data reliability and validity of the data coding process (Botterill & Platenkamp, 2012). Yet, this approach is flexible and can cope

with large quantities of data therefore was beneficial for the purpose of this research. It can also be used to investigate a topic longitudinally. Therefore this research approach would perhaps benefit from other approaches in future, in particular from qualitative interviews in phase 2 of the research.

In order to facilitate the constant comparison throughout the research process and to highlight the variations between local authorities, data was inputted into content analysis tools. This particular approach enriched the research in technical communication by identifying the frequency of themes and patterns. It can be applied to all kinds of written texts (Rose, Spinks & Canhoto, 2015) therefore it was particularly useful in examining local authority planning processes, guidelines and policies. The analysis within the content analysis approach centered on 39 criteria based on existing theory and incorporated various models, tools and indicators developed by industry which have been identified above. These tools can be applied to achieve desirable levels of sustainability when planning for event management. The data from each category was then analysed and discussed in light of international literature. The criteria assessed within the content analysis tool are outlined below in Table 2.

Table 2
Criteria for assessing LA planning provision of guidelines and policies for Event Management

Table 2
<i>Criteria for assessing LA planning provision of guidelines and policies for Event Management</i>
Assessment Criteria
Local Authority events financially supported (2013 figures)
Local Authority event planning guidelines provided
Year of guideline publication
Local Authority event manager provided
Local Authority online planning system provided
Local Authority event policy provision in County Development Plan (planning and development act 2000 & 2010)
Local Authority event planning guidelines and policies compliant with legislation and Best Practice Standards:
Planning and Development act 2000 & 2010
Planning and Development act (licensing at outdoor events) regulations 2001
Local Authority event planning guidelines and policies compliant with GSTC 2013
➤ Demonstrate effective sustainable management
➤ Maximise economic benefits to the host community and minimise negative impacts
➤ Maximise benefits to communities, visitors and culture and minimise negative impacts
➤ Maximise benefits to the environment and minimise negative impacts
Local Authority event planning guidelines and policies compliant with ETIS 2013
➤ Destination management
➤ Economic value
➤ Social and cultural impacts
➤ Environmental impacts
Local Authority event planning guidelines and policies compliant with the DIT ACHIEV Model 2007
➤ Heritage
➤ Infrastructure
➤ Enterprise
➤ Communities
➤ Visitors
➤ Administration

Local Authority event planning guidelines and policies compliant with UNWTO 12 aims of sustainable tourism 2005
➤ Economic Viability
➤ Local Prosperity
➤ Employment Quality
➤ Social Equity
➤ Local Control
➤ Visitor fulfillment
➤ Community Wellbeing
➤ Cultural Richness
➤ Physical Integrity
➤ Biological Diversity
➤ Resource Efficiency
➤ Environmental Purity

Source: adapted from (UNEP/UNWTO, 2005; Fitzgerald, Flanagan, Griffin, Morrissey & Kennedy-Burke, 2008; GSTC, 2013; EC, 2013; Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, 2015).

Utilising the content analysis investigative tool to assess the above criteria was an effective and fitting way to accumulate the necessary data. The above variables are essential aspects necessary in the formation and implementation of sustainable guidelines and policies for event management not only in Ireland but worldwide. Therefore the use of the above criteria to assess local government authority planning provisions can also be applied in international cases and ideally should be given priority in the integration of local authority planning processes for event management at a global scale. Yet for the purpose of this study, an assessment of the integration of the above criteria in local authority planning provisions such as guidelines and policies in the Republic of Ireland was the primary focus of this study. This approach allowed the authors to assess each individual local authority County Development Plan and event planning guideline for event management. The use of a content analysis approach to assess these variables allowed for the constant comparison of results throughout the research process. The results are discussed in light of relevant literature. In order to provide valid results the authors carefully considered the sampling techniques for this study.

Sampling and Selection

To achieve comparative nationwide perspectives on the national levels of planning provided for event management by local authorities, the authors identified and analysed 32 local authorities and city councils in the Republic of Ireland using the above criteria. The current system of local government in the Republic of Ireland comprises of 31 local authorities in total. There are 26 local authorities who are responsible for local government in twenty-four geographical counties including the County of Dublin. However County Dublin has 3 Local Authorities – South Dublin County Council, Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council and Fingal County Council. In addition to this, there are 2 City and County Councils who are

responsible for local government in Limerick (Limerick City and County Council) and Waterford (Waterford City and County Council). Also there are three City Councils who are responsible for local government in the cities of Dublin, Cork and Galway. This study focuses on the 31 local authorities in the Republic of Ireland, however, one Local Authority “Tipperary” is separated into “Tipperary North” and “Tipperary South”. Therefore 32 local authorities are assessed in total giving a complete population of all local authorities and City Councils in the Republic of Ireland. The sample was chosen carefully to allow for a constant comparison and analysis of local authority planning provisions.

Data Analysis

To facilitate the constant comparison of results throughout the research process and to highlight the variations and gaps between local authorities, data was inputted into content analysis tools. This highlighted the relationship between local authority planning and the integration of sustainability tools and indicators in policy and guideline implementation in Ireland. This structured approach allowed the authors to examine and clearly identify and illustrate the level of planning provided by local authorities in terms of planning guidelines and policies for event management. This flexible and unobtrusive approach was also used to determine the degree of recurring data throughout the research analysis process. The analysis primarily centered on a range of criteria already outlined and assessed their incorporation within local authority planning documents such as event management planning guidelines and policies for event management. The provision of planning guidelines for event management are crucial in providing guidance for event organisers and local authorities in planning for a responsible event industry. Planning guidelines highlight the key areas of consideration essential in planning for event management. The research then focuses on the provision of policies for event management within County Development Plans (CDP's). Therefore it is necessary that sustainable best practice indicators be considered and integrated within such policies and guidelines to aid the development of responsible and sustainable event industries. As such, the importance of developing policies in CDP's and guidelines detailing essential socio-cultural, economic and environmental sustainability considerations for event management cannot be underestimated. The analysis of findings from the content analysis approach provided a valuable insight into the provision of guidelines and policies taking into consideration sustainability variables within planning documents for event management by local authorities. The comparison of results allowed the authors to clearly identify and illustrate the levels of planning provided by local authorities for event management in Ireland under the various categories

assessed. The data generated was inserted into the analyses matrix to assess the Local Authority provision of planning for event management. An example matrix of the content analysis framework is illustrated and explained below.

Table 3
Example of matrix from content analysis framework

Local Authority (LA) Provision of Planning Guidelines (G) and Policies (P) for Event Management																																
Criteria assessed for LA Planning	CW	CN	CE	CK	CL	D	SD	Dr	F	G	Gr	KE	KK	KY	LS	LM	LK	LD	L	MH	MO	MN	O	R	S	Ts	Tn	WD	WH	WX	W	
LA events financially supported (2013)	33	47	64	34	22	41	22	12	26	23	62	29	32	27	46	20	29	58	31	36	35	112	29	37	53	47	31	28	56	36	48	27
LA Planning guidelines provided						x					x						x	x														
Year of guideline publication						12					12									13	13											
LA Event policy Provision in CDP														x																		

Note: x – Local Authority provision made

The above table provides a brief outline of some of the findings. As can be seen above, the first and last letter of the County they represent abbreviates the local authorities displayed in the matrix. For example, “CW” abbreviates the first and last letter of County Carlow. Table 3 clearly highlights the comparison between each local authority and how local authorities varied on the categories assessed. For Example, County Carlow Local Authority (CW) financially supported 33 events in 2013 however they had not provided Local Authority event-planning guidelines for such events. As well as this, they did not develop or provide policies outlining the future development of the event industry within their County Development Plan. This lack of planning guidelines and policy provision may have implications for the way the event industry will be planned and managed in the future, which may be with little or thought given to sustainability or the need to plan for the maximization of benefits and the minimization of negative consequences. The further comparison of results is discussed further in detail in the context of current theory in the subsequent section.

Results and Discussion

The event sector is one of the fastest growing counterparts of tourism industries worldwide (Crompton & McKay, 1997). As such, adequate planning is required to ensure its sustainability. With this in mind, practical up to date planning systems, guidelines and policies are needed not only at national and local level but also at an international level to manage this process and facilitate sustainability in planning for event management. The focus of this study was to provide nationwide perspectives on the level of planning provided by local authorities for event management in Ireland. The content analysis approach applied to this study allowed the authors to firstly comparatively examine the provision of policies, guidelines and event personnel for guiding the event management process within local authorities (Table 4) and secondly, the incorporation of sustainability indicators within local

authority planning policies and guidelines (Table 5). To firstly determine the level of local authority planning provided in terms of policies and guidelines for event management, every local authority and city council in the Republic of Ireland was assessed. This determined which local authority, if any, provided guidelines and policies to plan sustainably for event management. The results from the provision of guidelines and policies by local authorities are illustrated in table 4, below.

Table 4 Local Authority event planning guideline and policy provision

Local Authority (LA) Provision of Planning Guidelines (G) and Policies (P) for Event Management																																			
Criteria assessed for LA Planning	CW	CN	CE	CK	CC	DL	D	SD	Dr	F	G	Gc	KE	KK	KY	LS	LM	LK	LD	L	MH	MO	MN	O	R	S	Ts	Tn	W	D	W	H	WX	WW	
LA events financially supported (2013)	33	47	64	34	22	41	22	12	26	23	62	29	32	27	46	29	29	58	31	36	35	112	29	37	53	47	31	28	56	36	48	27			
LA Planning guidelines provided							x				x								x	x															
Year of guideline publication											12																								
Local Authority event personnel in place							x			x																									
LA Event policy Provision in CDP														x																					

Analysis has highlighted the variation of results from the nationwide assessment of local authority planning provision of policies and guidelines for event management. In particular, the results have revealed the overall lack of planning provision within Irish local authorities. The variation of results illustrates that the provision of planning processes for event management have not been fully embraced by local authorities in Ireland. In relation to the provision of guidelines for event management, analysis revealed that just 4 out of 32 local authorities assessed, provided planning guidelines for event management in Ireland. This was an interesting and concerning observation considering the substantial increase in the provision of festivals and events throughout Ireland and considering local authorities are using events as catalysts for destination marketing, economic development and community builders I respective regions (Pugh & Wood, 2004; Raj, Walters, Rashid, 2009). Therefore the provision of planning processes and guidelines should be a priority in national legislative planning. Specifically planning guidelines can provide a baseline for incorporating and prioritizing significant aspects necessary in planning for event management and can ensure events are planned and organised in a responsible and safe manner, which cannot be underestimated. Of the local authorities that provided planning guidelines, they supplied information on a range of planning concerns including event safety, overcrowding and marketing communications. However no information outlined the importance of ensuring the longevity of event industries for future destination marketing and economic enhancement. Despite this, the planning guidelines provided, offered clarity on how to apply for an event license, the basic planning considerations for events and the requirements to comply with. Additionally the provision of event planning guidelines is quite recent (2012-2013), however their implementation in all local authorities is needed to encourage the operation of

event planning by local authorities. In particular it is important to keep guidelines up to date to comply with any changes in planning legislation. Consequently, the guidelines provided did not clarify the extent of planning required for various type, size and scale of events. However it has been noted that a possible reason for local authorities not considering the significance of the need to provide and implement planning guidelines for event management may be due to the increase in legislation and “red tape” (health and safety, licensing, fire safety, insurance, environmental health, waste management and traffic management) surrounding the event industry (Maguire & Hanrahan, 2016). Yet regardless of the regulations surrounding events the implementation of planning guidelines within local authorities is essential to facilitate a responsible and sustainable event sector. As such, a consistent statewide approach to event planning with comprehensive planning guidelines for events irrespective of size and type is incremental within local authorities in Ireland.

The authors then examined how many if any local authorities provided event personnel to provide clarity and guidance on event planning processes. The provision of event personnel in event planning is vital since local authorities have a common law duty of care towards persons involved with events. Therefore event management personnel within local authorities are required to ensure event safety procedures are followed and provide guidance for various incremental aspects of event management. This is significant in local authorities since they are legally obliged to license events. In fact, it has been noted that the implementation of a managerial system within local authorities can enable planning (Andersson, Getz & Mykletun, 2012). For this reason, local authority involvement in the planning process of event management is required for the coordination and conduct of an event. Subsequently there is now a mandatory requirement in Ireland for event promoters and managers to consult with relevant local authority event personnel prior to organising and hosting events (Planning and Development (Amendment) Regulations, 2015). Analysis here has highlighted just two local authorities (Dublin City Council and Fingal County Council) provided a primary designated event planning-management position. This small percentage raises concern as to who fulfills this role within local authorities and what their background and expertise is. Arcodia and Reid (2004) conducted research, which identified the need for more fully professionalised events with staff that are well-educated and experienced professional event managers. However due to austerity measures implemented by government at national level to overcome the economic crisis effecting economies at a global scale, public sector funding in local authorities has been significantly reduced. As a result, the provision of a local authority budget to fund dedicated event roles or commit to maintaining events in the long term may not be possible. Conversely to address the challenges and concerns of event

management, event personnel are a necessity. As such it has been noted that working closely with stakeholders to generate innovative ideas and processes may generate new sources of financing (Quinn, 2013). Nevertheless it is essential for local authorities to provide designated event personnel to facilitate education and advancement of event management professionals working in the industry and to facilitate the development of sustainable planning for event management at a national and local level.

It was then necessary to assess the provision of policies within local authority County Development Plans. Planning for tourism and tourism activities are given priority in national legislation through the provision and implementation of CDP's. The County Development Plan is intended to provide a strategic framework and policy context for all local planning decisions. The plans set out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the planning authority's region through the objectives included in the plan for a 6-year period. It also outlines the policies, strategies and objectives to achieve specific aims for regional development of tourism and events, housing, planning etc. The responsibility of CDP generation predominantly rests within local authorities across Ireland (DECLG, 2012). It has been noted that high quality development plans lie in the heart of a high quality planning system (DECLG, 2007). Therefore local authorities in Ireland have the potential to develop a more dynamic, objective and inclusive planning system to structure future development that meets wider economic, social and environmental objectives (DECLG, 2007), especially in the context of planning for event management. However a content analysis of Local Authority CDP's discovered no Local Authority had a dedicated section within the plan specifically for events in Ireland with the exception of Kilkenny who provided policies for events within their tourism policies. Thus it seems the importance of implementing event policies are not a priority in any CDP in Ireland. It is worth noting that if events are to be considered an important industry for the Irish economy; a sustainable detailed approach to their development is needed within CDP's. However to safeguard the longevity of the event industry policies should be adopted and implemented in CDP's by local authorities for event management in Ireland now that the event sector is an important component of the national tourism industry.

The authors subsequently assessed the compliance of guidelines and policies with relevant national legislation and the integration of tools and indicators within local authority planning policies and guidelines. These best practice tools and indicators have been identified and discussed in the literature and include the UNEP/UNWTO aims of sustainable tourism, the DIT ACHIEV model of sustainable tourism management, the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria and the European Tourism Indicator System. These tools and indicator systems can be applied to the event management context since events have become an integral element of

tourism industries worldwide. The integration of such sustainable indicators can be beneficial for government at local and national level since they have become a popular tool for measuring and monitoring the sustainable development of tourism related activities. In fact the United Nations World Tourism Organisation has been promoting the use of sustainable tourism indicators since the early 1990's as essential instruments for policy making planning and management procedures for destinations. As a result indicators have become the main recognised evaluation tool used to support sustainable tourism policy implementation (Choi & Sirakaya, 2006; Tanguay, Rajaonson & Therrien, 2011; Rajaonson & Tanguay, 2012). Thus having established the use of events in any given economy as increasingly valuable, it is important to improve its development in a sustainable manner to ensure the long-term success of the industry. Therefore adopting and utilising indicators in guideline and policy making for event management may facilitate sustainability in events and contribute to local authorities achieving its long-term social, environmental, economic and cultural leadership objectives. The results from assessing the integration of sustainability indicators within polices and guidelines are shown in table 5 below.

Table 5 Local Authority event planning guideline and policy compliance

Local Authority (LA) Planning Provision of Guidelines (G) and Policies (P) for Event Management																																						
Criteria assessed within LA guidelines	C	W	CN	CE	CK	CC	D	D	S	D	Dr	F	G	G	C	K	K	K	LS	L	M	LK	L	L	MH	MO	MN	D	R	S	Ts	Tr	WD	W	W	W		
Local Authorities compliant with legislation																																						
Planning and Development act 2000 & 2010							x						x																									
Planning and Development licensing at outdoor event regulations 2001							x						x																									
G & P compliant with GSTC 2013																																						
Demonstrate effective sustainable management																																						
Maximise economic benefits to the host community and minimise negative impacts																																						
Maximise benefits to communities, visitors and culture and minimise negative impacts																																						
Maximise benefits to the environment and minimise negative impacts																																						
G & P compliant with ETIS 2013																																						
Destination management																																						
Economic value																																						
Social and cultural impacts																																						
Environmental impacts																																						
G & P compliant with the DIT ACHIEV Model 2007																																						
Heritage																																						
Infrastructure																																						
Enterprise																																						
Communities																																						
Visitors																																						
Administration																																						
G & P compliant with UNWTO 12 aims of sustainable tourism 2005																																						
Economic Viability																																						
Local Prosperity																																						
Employment Quality																																						
Social Equity																																						
Local Control																																						
Visitor fulfillment																																						
Community Wellbeing																																						
Cultural Richness																																						
Physical Integrity																																						
Biological Diversity																																						
Resource Efficiency																																						
Environmental Purity																																						

Source: adapted from (UNEP/UNWTO, 2005; Fitzgerald, Flanagan, Griffin, Morrissey & Kennedy-Burke, 2008; GSTC, 2013; EC, 2013; Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, 2015).

The relationship between local authority planning systems and their compliance with legislation and international best practice has highlighted that local authorities who provided guidelines and policies all acknowledged compliance with the planning and development act 2000 and 2010 and the planning and development licensing at outdoor events regulations 2001. The planning and development act 2000 and 2010 outlines the regulations for planning and development at a national level in Ireland while the planning and development licensing at outdoor event regulations 2001 highlights the preconditions and regulations for applying for and obtaining event licenses and permits. Compliance with such national legislation is essential for event organisations and local authorities to ensure events are conducted in a safe manner by abiding by relevant statutory requirements outlined in legislation. However it is important to note that while only 4 out of 32 local authorities acknowledged compliance with these acts, it is a legal requirement for all local authorities to abide by such statutory requirements in relation to planning for event management. With this in mind, it is essential to encourage local authorities nationwide to provide planning processes outlining compliance with planning systems and regulations in Ireland.

The integration of sustainable indicators from international best practice within local authority planning guidelines and policies was then assessed. Firstly, the incorporation of the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria was assessed. The GSTC and related performance indicators have been recognised as tools for managing sustainability in tourism. They can be adopted as a guide to become more economically, environmentally, socially and culturally sustainable while focusing on maximising economic, environmental and socio-cultural benefits and minimising negative consequences. Therefore the GSTC would be beneficial in event planning processes to achieve a balance between the benefits and costs of such tourism activities. Results from the content analysis revealed no local authority integrated indicators from the GSTC best practice tool within event planning guidelines and policies. However the adoption of the GSTC by local authorities may be useful in achieving and demonstrating effective sustainable event management by incorporating important socio-cultural, environmental and economic considerations in national event planning processes. Following this the integration of indicators from the European Tourism Indicator System within local authority event guidelines and policies was assessed. Similar to the GSTC, the ETIS focuses on the protection of economic, environmental and socio-cultural values of tourism activities such as events. In fact they were developed to tackle social, cultural, economic and environmental challenges. Therefore implementing indicators from the ETIS within local authority planning processes provides an opportunity to measure performance and monitor results thereby enhancing and improving sustainability performance (EC, 2015). The examination revealed no local authority in Ireland integrated any indicators

from this tool. Nevertheless adopting and utilising the ETIS in planning processes for event management may be valuable in measuring performance in relation to sustainability thus promoting best practice in event management at a national scale.

The integration of indicators from the DIT ACHIEV model of sustainable tourism management, which has been suggested as a tool for sustainable event management was then assessed. This tool again focuses on indicators, which focus on heritage, communities, visitors, enterprise, infrastructure and administration. All aspects necessary in planning for event management. Yet no local authority planning guideline or policy was compliant with any of the variables from the DIT ACHIEV model. Considering this model has been developed specifically for the Irish setting and can be applied specifically to events, it is important to note that no local authority at a national level in Ireland has implemented it. However the adoption of this Irish integrated management approach could perhaps aid in the mitigation of negative impacts of events and maximise the positive impacts of events thus aiding a transition towards sustainability in event management nationally. Finally aims from the UNEP/UNWTO aims of sustainable tourism were assessed. This tool aims to engage and empower local communities in planning and decision making for future developments (UNEP, 2005). It also focuses on fulfilling the experiences of visitors while outlining the importance of protecting cultural richness and heritage, conserving resources and protecting biological diversity. Aside from this, it ensures the economic viability of the tourism activities. However again, no local authority has prioritised any of the aims from this tool within event planning guidelines or policies. Still it is a valuable tool for local authorities to integrate in planning processes for event management and therefore should be incorporated within national planning processes to encourage sustainable event planning and management.

The potential of these tools to contribute to the sustainable development, growth and advancement of the event industry is essential and thus should be incorporated in local authority planning processes. Likewise the implementation of such tools may be considered important blueprints for local authorities to utilise in conjunction with legislation in planning. In particular these tools and indicator systems have been essential instruments in tourism planning and management (UNWTO and Ministry of Tourism and the Environment, 2007). They can act as an early warning system to initiate improved planning and management strategies (Griffin et al, 2012). The usefulness of indicators for measuring progress can also stimulate a learning process to enhance the overall understanding of environmental and social problems, facilitate community capacity building and help in identifying sustainable development goals and sustainable management strategies (Miller & Twinning-Ward, 2005; Reed, Fraser & Dougill, 2006). Therefore indicators have been promoted as useful, reliable and as an easily comprehensible assessment and

communication tools for decision makers (OECD, 2003; UNWTO, 2004). With this in mind it may be important to develop and integrate guidelines and policies that meet such international best practice standards and act as a guide to become more environmentally, economically, culturally and socially sustainable in event planning and management. Hence local authorities in Ireland can benefit for adopting and utilising sustainable indicators in identifying potential problems and issues event activities may generate at local level. The lack of planning provisions suggests that local authorities have not realised that the use of sustainable indicators in policies and guidelines in planning for events, which can be a particularly useful and cost effective means of preventing irreversible impacts created as a result of hosting events. Overall this study has found that national planning provision of policies and guidelines for event management has a low adoption rate by local authorities yet local authorities are in an ideal position to set best practice in sustainable planning for event management. In essence it is clear that there is room for nationwide improvements in relation to local authority planning for event management. Hence the development of planning solutions such as guidelines and policies can act as a mechanism in regulating and managing the impacts and issues associated with events and can contribute to sustaining the sector and growing its potential in a responsible way.

Conclusion

This paper has examined the complexity of the relationship between events and local authorities. More specifically this paper has examined the extent of planning provided nationwide by local authorities in the Republic of Ireland for event management. It raises the issue of the lack of planning provided by local authorities, which highlights the need for planning solutions for event management within local authorities. To investigate the planning provision by local authorities, a content analysis approach was employed. The results from this nationwide comparative analysis revealed the dearth of planning for event management in terms of the scarcity of guidelines, lack of policies and lack of implemented event personnel by local authorities. This clear lack of planning, guidance and support by local authorities highlights the difficulties event organisations, managers and promoters face when planning for event management. Yet in order to plan responsibly for event management and ensure events are organised and operated in a way that is safe commands the adoption, utilisation and implementation of guidelines, policies, event personnel and online planning systems within local authorities, to guide the process of event management. Therefore the realization of the need to integrate

such planning processes within local authorities has not been recognised by local authorities globally and nationally but is essential.

Subsequently analysis from local authority planning provision of guidelines and policies demonstrated that few local authority planning processes were compliant with national legislation such as the Planning and Development act 2000 and 2010 and the Planning and development act licensing at outdoor events regulations 2001. However in terms of assessing local authority planning guidelines and policies and the integration of sustainability indicators and aims from international best practice such as UNEP/UNWTO 12 aims of sustainable tourism, the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria, the European Tourism Indicator System or the DIT ACHIEV Model, guidelines and policies were found not to reflect or be complaint with such sustainable tools. The lack of sustainability indicators in event planning processes prohibits sustainability in planning for event management. However these four tools offer an opportunity to monitor and manage the impacts of events while maximising benefits and minimising costs. Therefore it may be beneficial for guidelines and policies to reflect international best practice tools when planning for environmental, social and economical sustainability in event management. Thus the development and implementation of planning tools such as policies and guidelines which integrate sustainable indicators and aims can effectively and responsibly facilitate a transition towards sustainability in the event sector at a national level for events irrespective of type or scale. This can also aid in the responsibility and longevity of event industries worldwide and in particular, Ireland.

In conclusion the growth and popularity of the event sector in Ireland and the impacts this growth may generate on the economy, society and environment calls for nationwide improvements in relation to planning sustainably for event management. The absence of event planning guidelines and policies with sustainability indicators within local authorities to deal with impacts and issues events may generate is a concern for the future longevity of the event industry. Therefore if the event sector is to be further developed and maintained, the development of policies and guidelines with integrated sustainability indicators within legislative regulations in local authorities can act as a mechanism to aid sustainability in event management. Likewise considering local authorities have a legal obligation in the area of planning enforcement and in particular granting permission for event licenses, a greater emphasis should be placed on providing comprehensive and robust guidelines and policies to support sustainable planning of event management not only in Ireland but worldwide. This paper facilitates an opportunity for future research in the area, which enables a longitudinal analysis.

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