

## Ayrshire & Arran Tourism Leadership Group

Minutes of inaugural meeting held on  
Monday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2012

At  
County Buildings, Wellington Square, Ayr

### Present

Moira Birtwistle (Chair)  
Daniel Steel  
Alex Anderson [AA]  
Linda Johnston  
Aileen Stevenson

Alan Neish  
Annique Armstrong [AQ]  
Lesley Bloomer  
Guy Redford  
David Mann

Nat Edwards  
Bill Costley  
Mike Macfadyen  
Jordi Tarrida

<b>1. Apologies</b>	Apologies received from Michael Fawcett, Carolyn Elder, and Gillian Forbes	
<b>2. Presentation: Ayrshire &amp; Arran Tourism Strategy 2012-2017</b>	<p>LB presented the new Ayrshire &amp; Arran Tourism Strategy 2012-2017, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Background</li><li>• Development of the Strategy</li><li>• Vision</li><li>• Objectives</li><li>• Scale of the Challenge</li><li>• Offers &amp; Opportunities</li><li>• The Basics</li><li>• Governance</li></ul> <p>LB stated that a Tourism Team of five staff and £100k annual budget will be in place for 5 years, with review after 3, in order to deliver the strategy under the guidance of the TLG.</p>	
<b>3. Role of TLG</b>	<p>AN spoke to a short paper on the proposed role and responsibilities of the TLG. Broad agreement that this is appropriate and should be developed further to include items such as frequency of meetings, length of time each member can sit on group etc.</p> <p>On point 3 of “responsibilities” it was agreed to replace “the public and private sectors” with “all industry stakeholders”</p> <p>NE noted that the strategy commits to reviewing progress 6 months from approval of strategy. Agreed that review this should now take place 6 months from today – 6<sup>th</sup> September 2012.</p> <p>DS tabled proposed meeting dates for 2012. Agreed that meeting every six weeks until summer 2012, then quarterly is appropriate. LJ confirmed 1500hrs is more suitable for ferry to Arran.</p>	

	<p>MB stated that the TLG will need a Vice Chair to support her in role as Chair and deputise as necessary. Members to consider for appointment at next meeting.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review point 3 as agreed</li> <li>• Develop roles and responsibilities paper for review at next meeting</li> </ul>	<p>AN AN</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p><b>Ayrshire &amp; Arran Tourism Team</b></p> <p>AN updated the group on progress towards establishing a Tourism Team for Ayrshire &amp; Arran which will support the TLG in the operational delivery of the strategy and action plan.</p> <p>The team will include 1 Manager, 3 Tourism Development Officers, and 1 Administrator. Posts have been through job evaluation.</p> <p>Timetable for recruitment is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advertise within the next fortnight</li> <li>• Closing date 23<sup>rd</sup> March</li> <li>• Earliest interviews by 2<sup>nd</sup> April</li> <li>• Full team in place before end of May</li> </ul> <p>Agreement from all that recruitment must be done as quickly as possible, as development and delivery of actions will be difficult until team is in place.</p> <p>DM asked how the new team fits with current tourism officer posts and work within the 3 Councils. LB outlined the distinction between local role (e.g. community events) and pan-Ayrshire role (e.g. destination marketing and major events).</p> <p>NE asked if there was any split of £100k budget (e.g. % for marketing, % for events). LB stated that no decisions have been made on this and will evolve to meet priorities of action plan.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment of Tourism Team within stated timescales</li> </ul>	<p>LB/AN/AA/MB</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p><b>Action Planning</b></p> <p>MB stated that development and delivery of action plan is key role of TLG.</p> <p>Group split into 2 workshop sessions focusing on Offers and Opportunities (facilitated by MB) and Basics (facilitated by LB) to identify key actions and projects required to deliver the strategy. Flipchart notes recorded.</p> <p>Plenary discussion on marketing, noting that the following areas are key for developing a sense of place and marketing Ayrshire &amp; Arran as a destination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear brand identity, personality and values</li> <li>• Consistent consumer PR</li> <li>• Strong imagery and “stories” about the area, tailored for market segments</li> </ul> <p>JT stated that with a £100k annual budget, developing meaningful brand recognition will be difficult. Also noted that international marketing appeared not to</p>	

	<p>be a strategic priority in strategy despite comparatively high spending in comparison to domestic tourists.</p> <p>LB reported that an INTERREG application has been submitted by South Ayrshire Council in conjunction with Argyll, Sligo, and Coleraine, for decision in Nov/Dec 2012. DM questioned whether aligning with these areas would benefit Ayrshire brand.</p> <p>LB outlined proposed timescale for finalising action plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collate feedback from today</li> <li>• Industry input via VS Conference on 15<sup>th</sup> March</li> <li>• Further TLG input at next meeting mid-April</li> <li>• Event mid-May to gain further industry input</li> <li>• Tourism Manager input to finalise action plan for TLG meeting end of May</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Output from flipchart session to be fed into action plan</b></li> <li>• <b>Feedback from VS conference to be fed into action plan</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>MB</b> <b>MB</b></p>
<p><b>6. Early Actions</b></p>	<p>DS leading on plans for Ayrshire &amp; Arran presence at VisitScotland Expo. Reported that preparations for national travel trade show on 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> April 2012 are going well. VisitArran, Auchrannie Resort, Simpsinns, Park Hotel, RAD Group Ltd, Menzies Irvine, and Western House are all committed stand partners. Discussing final space with golf courses.</p> <p>MB leading on pilot Service Excellence Programme for Ayrshire &amp; Arran, based on Glasgow Service with Style model. Three-pronged attack targeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Industry Leaders – Pilot “Masterclass” at Whisky Experience in Kirkoswald on 28<sup>th</sup> Feb went well. JT, BC, DS and AQ concurred with success and potential to develop.</li> <li>• Staff – Tailored programme for front of house staff</li> <li>• Youth - “Twittering Tourism” Student Conference on 1<sup>st</sup> March at Ayr Racecourse. Attended by 126 students and feedback very positive.</li> </ul> <p>Group thanked DS and MB for leading work on early actions and asked MB to continue discussions with Scottish Enterprise to secure funding to roll-out the Service Excellence Programme beyond pilot.</p> <p><b>ACTIONS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Secure funding for Service Excellence Programme</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>MB</b></p>
<p><b>7. VisitScotland Conference</b></p>	<p>15<sup>th</sup> March at Gales Hotel will provide opportunity for TLG to gain wider input to inform the action planning process. MB proposed to repeat flipchart exercise looking for key actions on Offers and Opportunities, Basics and Marketing.</p> <p>MB, LB and DS will facilitate the workshop sessions in conjunction with members</p>	

	<p>of the TLG - members to inform MB if they are willing to assist in facilitation.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Inform MB if available to facilitate at VS Conference</b></li> </ul>	<b>ALL</b>
<b>8.</b>	<p><b>AOCB</b></p> <p>MB thanked members for input and re-iterated the urgency of having the Tourism Team in place ASAP.</p>	
<b>9.</b>	<p><b>Date of Next meeting</b></p> <p>Monday 16<sup>th</sup> April 2012 @ 1500hrs, Venue TBC</p>	