

Ayrshire & Arran Tourism Leadership Group

Minutes of meeting held on
Thursday 31 October 2013

At
Largs Sailing Club, Largs Yacht Haven, Largs

Present

Moira Birtwistle (Chair)
Annique Armstrong
Bill Costley
David Mann
Laura Cree (Minutes)

Nat Edwards
Guy Redford
Linda Johnston
Lesley Bloomer

Carolyn Elder
Ros Halley
Sharon Hodgson

1.	Apologies – Charlotte Rostek, Jordi Tarrida, Liz Drysdale, Aileen Stevenston & Karen Yeomans	
2.	Minutes of Previous Meeting – 15 May 2013 Confirmed as an accurate record. Proposed by LB, seconded by BC.	
3.	Financial Overview Gordon Hunter from South Ayrshire Council was due to attend and give an overview of the Tourism Team's budget, however was unable to attend due to another commitment. Discussion ensued and included: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Concerns over the under spend shown in report• Concern over capacity of staff to spend the entire budget allocated• RH advised that South Ayrshire Council finance department do not present data in a way which recognises approval of 2-3 year projects or projects which cut across more than one financial year• Furthermore RH advised that the TLG should bear in mind that most proposals were not approved until late 2012 / early 2013 and therefore it would never have been expected that project spend would be complete by April 2013.• RH confirmed that the tourism team is aware of how much has been spent under each project and overall budget. However, in terms of layout and format, RH reminded the TLG that the information provided by South Ayrshire Council was the information requested by the TLG.	
4.	Expo 2014 Commitment Prior to the meeting TLG members were forwarded a proposal for the Tourism Team's commitment to Expo 2014. MB asked the TLG if all were in support of proposal – all in support and happy for team to progress.	

5.	<p>DREAM Research Commitment</p> <p>Prior to the meeting TLG members were forwarded a proposal for the financial commitment to the DREAM Research.</p> <p>MB asked the TLG if all were in support of proposal – all in support and happy for team to progress.</p>	
6.	<p>Chairman's Update</p> <p><u>'Mid Summer Madness' and Blue Ocean Thinking</u></p> <p>Discussion notes were circulated following the meeting which took place in June.</p> <p>Good feedback from all, with members stating the more relaxed atmosphere allowed for more frank and informal conversation. Following on from Mid Summer Madness, a 'Blue Ocean Group' has been set up by TLG members JT, CR, LB, BC & MB who have met recently. Blue Ocean Group members will be attending a session at Entrepreneurial Spark on 26 November.</p> <p>A meeting has also been arranged with Scottish Enterprise to raise the profile of the region's tourism strategy and ambitions. RH & BC will be attending.</p> <p><u>Project Updates from Project Champions</u></p> <p>Golf – GR</p> <p>Regional Golf Development moving along nicely, recent workshop was well attended by most of the big clubs and hotels within Ayrshire & Arran. A working group has now been set up and the members are as follows:</p> <p>Ken Goodwin – Prestwick Golf Club Jerry Kessels – Western Gables Golf Club Guy Redford – Dundonald Links Stewart Watt – South Beach Hotel Angela Tremble – Enterkine Hotel James Browning - Brodick Golf Club Paul Wilson – South Ayrshire Golf Gillian McNeily – Marine Hotel Bryan Joyce – Golf Ayrshire Christine Cuthbertson – Rowallan Golf Club William Clark - Ayrshire Bed & Breakfast Association Mark Murray – VisitScotland Gordon Todd – Scottish Enterprise Ros Halley - Ayrshire & Arran Tourism</p> <p>BTS have been developing the Business & Marketing Plan to set the strategic direction for the group over the next three years, identifying the activities, membership benefits etc. The plan has now been completed and they are now in the process of identifying and clarifying some of the income, expenditure and funding sources.</p> <p>BTS' contractual work is due to end in December and RH will be making sure momentum is upheld until this process has been completed</p>	

Driving Forward Together Golf Tourism workshop is being held in Ayrshire at the Gales Hotel on Tuesday 26th November, this is free seminar for all sectors of the golf tourism industry and aims to demonstrate the potential benefits of the Scottish Golf Tourism Development Strategy and highlight the numerous opportunities and initiatives that are already in place to help Scotland achieve its golfing ambitions.

Watersports – CE

Watersports website now live, however mobile version still being developed. Work is being done behind the scenes to ensure Google spots it and once final tweaks made full PR and marketing of it can begin. Over the weekend of the 26 / 27 October, 2,500 promotional postcards were issued at Paddle 2013 – event held in Perth organised by Scottish Canoe Association primarily for paddle sport equipment retailers to sell to consumers. Everyone attending received a postcard on arrival.

Visitor Information Provision – DM

Following a recent tender process, GM has commissioned Plan B to provide this service.

GM will now arrange to meet with Plan B to discuss how they should move forward and what services will be offered to tourism businesses.

Culture & Heritage – DM

Sign installations due to start week beginning 4th November – with all signs installed by week beginning 11th November. Participating venues are in North and South Ayrshire including NTS sites, Maritime Museum, Rozelle, Dalgarven, and Kelburn.

Cultural itineraries produced and available to download from the Ayrshire and Arran Tourism website. Feedback to date has been good with members of the Ayrshire Bed and Breakfast Association using them to promote the range of cultural attractions in the region. 2 further itineraries developed for Prestwick Airport with a focus on visitor attractions and heritage in the region. 1,500 itineraries distributed by Prestwick Airport staff at the Port Rush Airshow in the Northern Ireland.

Cultural map leaflet produced and distributed by Direct Distribution to 300 venues across the region and in key entry sites to Ayrshire and Arran. Total of 18,000 leaflets distributed.

Initial discussions to establish a heritage group, led by the Scottish Maritime Museum, to take forward collaborative marketing projects for 2014.

Legacy Events – NE

Photo Competition

The on-air and social media presence via Clyde 1 and West FM is now complete. It ran at various points from May until Sept, and the category winners and overall winners are now shown on web pages on the radio stations' websites. All prizes provided by the industry partners have been issued. Public voted online for 2 weeks to select overall winner with an on-air call to action. Over 500 votes counted with the overall winner being Wildlife category – Starfish off the coast in Troon.

Strong category winners, however the small number of additional quality photos meant that a mobile exhibition would not be possible, and therefore the funds that were set aside for this will be re-allocated to another/future project.

Burns & the Southwest

Matthews Marketing developed 3 itineraries: Following Burns, Actively Burns and Naturally Burns and GM attend Burns Scotland meeting where he circulated itineraries to members in August. Currently 10 events have registered an interest for Ayrshire with others keen to participate and they will provide details once their events have been confirmed and more info known. D&G collating events for their area. Plan to do soft launch of Burns and the South West early January, with a full launch to coincide with events taking place on or around 25 Jan 2014.

Natural Environment – LB

Learning journeys

Thirteen groups have requested further details and information packs have been sent out. The groups are from South and East Ayrshire and as yet no enquiries from North Ayrshire, although KH is in discussion with Lesley Forsyth at the Council to identify some suitable community groups. Four 'applications' have been received from Barr, Tarbolton, Straiton and Ballantrae and meetings have been held to discuss appropriate destinations. RH advised that at least one TLG member per visit should participate.

Tourism Toolkit for Communities

Consultants have been appointed to pull together the information required for the toolkit which will be available via the Tourism Website. The toolkit will be complete at the end of November 2013.

Dates for 2014 TLG Meetings

MB advised of the dates for next year's TLG meetings and requested a venue from the private sector partners around the table.

Wednesday 19 February 2014, 2:00pm – 4:00pm, Lochgreen House Hotel, Troon
Wednesday 21 May 2014, 2:00pm – 4:00pm, Auchrannie Resort, Arran
Wednesday 20 August 2014, 2:00pm – 4:00pm, Scottish Maritime Museum, Irvine
Wednesday 19 November 2014, 2:00pm – 4:00pm, Robert Burns Birthplace Museum, Alloway

TLG members also proposed that the trip to Arran should incorporate a familiarisation trip and members would take the 9:45am ferry to Arran.

LC to forward dates to members.

LC

<p>7.</p>	<p>Managers Update</p> <p><u>Action Plan</u></p> <p>11 out of 12 projects are currently underway at the half way point. Sustainability is the only work stream not to have had a proposal go forward, however this is a consideration in all projects.</p> <p><u>Service Plan</u></p> <p>Approved by the 3 local authorities in September. Chief Execs also approved a review in Summer 2014, to make a decision re funding the Tourism Team beyond Summer 2015, the end of the initial 3 year funding provision.</p> <p><u>Staffing</u></p> <p>Tourism Development Officer post application currently open on My Jobs Scotland, with a closing date 3 November. Application is to find replacement for Daniel Steel and Kathryn Howell. Interviews taking place 12 November and still looking for a TLG member to join interview panel. Members to check diary commitments and advise LC if they can assist.</p> <p><u>National Tourism Development Framework</u></p> <p>RH recently met with Riddell Graham, VisitScotland regarding Scottish Tourism Framework and the input from the 3 Councils. Following this meeting, LB & AA met with Riddell in Edinburgh to discuss how to move forward. AA to coordinate future response / completion of framework from three Ayrshire Councils.</p> <p><u>Scottish Enterprise & Scottish Development International</u></p> <p>RH scheduled to attend a meeting on 1 November with BC in Glasgow. Feedback will follow.</p> <p><u>External Funding</u></p> <p>Successful bid to Think Local for two local food activities - £10,000 awarded. Additional larger bid expected early 2014.</p> <p>Under the Natural Environment project an application has been made to Creative Scotland and Leader for £10,000 to carry out a feasibility study in Dalmellington, Straiton and Kirkmichael. This will look into options for a wow factor on the walking routes.</p> <p><u>Partnerships</u></p> <p>RH continuing to meet with Prestwick Airport, recently worked in partnership at Port Rush Air Show and 1,500 itineraries were distributed alongside a competition with the prize submitted by the Marine Hotel, Troon.</p> <p>Currently discussing potential marketing at reciprocal airports, Bergamo, Carcassonne, Dublin & Derry, investigation work currently being undertaken to see what area of interest would be of most interest.</p> <p>Team still involved in content planning meetings with VisitScotland, attending meetings with VisitArran more frequently and meeting with Carrick every 8 weeks.</p>	<p>ALL</p>
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	<p>Recently RH met Voluntary Action South Ayrshire. Currently they have 50 people a month signing up to be a volunteer; however VASA do not have an enough opportunities. Untapped resource which could be utilised for events etc.</p>	
8.	<p>AOCB</p> <p>VisitScotland Update</p> <p>AA updated the group on VisitScotland recent activity.</p> <p>Scottish Tourism Alliance Membership Recommendation</p> <p>MB advised Ayrshire & Arran Tourism Team will be signing up for membership to the Scottish Tourism Alliance at the cost of £500.</p> <p>B2B</p> <p>Progressing well, just fewer than 300 members. There are still a few issues with head's of businesses being registered and nothing being fed out to employees. Team has been advising businesses that more than one employee can be registered as a stakeholder so they can also receive news, updates and be able to access the site. LC encouraged TLG members to encourage their employees sign up to B2B and for members to pass on any relevant news items to team, which can be pushed out via B2B. Not enough news is flowing through from the industry.</p> <p>TLG Membership</p> <p>Discussion ensued regarding membership of the TLG. The TLG were asked to feedback to MB if they felt that there needed to be representation from new industry sectors.</p> <p>Prestwick Airport</p> <p>LB advised South Ayrshire Council welcomed the recent news from the Scottish Government that they will be taking over the running of the airport. Date for handover is scheduled for 20 November, with no disruption to passenger services.</p>	ALL
9.	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>Monday 16 December 2013, 5:30pm – 7:00pm, Cook School Scotland, Kilmarnock.</p>	