

Ayrshire & Arran Tourism Leadership Group

**Minutes of meeting held on
Wednesday 21 May 2014
At
Auchrannie Resort, Isle of Arran**

Present

Moira Birtwistle (Chair)
Liz Drysdale
Linda Leckie
Karen Yeomans
Graeme Maciver

Carolyn Elder
Sharon Hodgson
Lesley Bloomer
Linda Johnston
Julie Sloan

Ros Halley
Annique Armstrong
Laura Cree (Minutes)
Abigail Coia
Colin Burns (Taste Ayrshire)

<p>1.</p>	<p>Apologies –</p> <p>Aileen Stevenson, David Mann, Nat Edwards, Jordi Tarrida, Charlotte Rostek & Guy Redford</p>	
<p>2.</p>	<p>Minutes of Previous Meeting – 19 February 2014</p> <p>MB welcomed everyone to Auchrannie and thanked LJ for hosting the TLG on Arran.</p> <p>MB also welcomed Julie Sloan, Tourism Development Officer, Colin Burns (guest from Taste Ayrshire) and Linda Leckie deputising for Bill Costley.</p> <p>AA submitted an amendment to the previous minutes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new marketing campaign was launched in January by Fergus Ewing. This campaign is part of the Brilliant Moments campaign launched in November which promotes Homecoming, the Commonwealth Games and the Ryder Cup but focuses on encouraging visitors to attend Homecoming Scotland events on their doorsteps. It's a £500,000 campaign which includes a dedicated TV advert as well as additional press, radio, digital and promotional activity. The advert is being shown across Scotland, the north of England and Northern Ireland. As well as the TV advert; a promotional campaign has been launched on radio and in print and a special Homecoming App allows users to search events, bookmark favourites etc. • The Ayrshire & Arran spring/summer campaign is now underway. Two direct mail campaigns have gone out - one an insert in the national campaign going out to 58,000 households and the other an Ayrshire & Arran specific pack went out to 30,000 households. A number of press adverts and supplements will feature in regional and national titles - the schedule is still being finalised. In addition to this VS is running sales promotions with 3 different partners - one of them specifically in Northern Ireland. The activity will include online, email and social media. • VS partnered with Real Radio in February on a series of radio programmes showcasing Scotland and what we have on our doorstep. There are a number of one hour shows and one of them will focus on Ayrshire & Arran. Cat and Ewan have been on a trip to Ayrshire recording (including the Cook School, Culzean and Vikingar!) and the programme is due to go out on 22nd February. There is accompanying web activity. • Insights department at VisitScotland has produced an annual trends review as part of a study of the consumer environment, highlighting key trends. The review is available for download. 	<p align="center"><u>Minutes of Previous Meeting – 19 February 2014</u></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With all the events happening this year, VS have been working hard to encourage more businesses to take advantage of free web listings on visitscotland.com. Particularly important for accommodation providers to ensure their availability is up to date as well as pricing etc. • VisitScotland is working in partnership with Glasgow City Marketing Bureau and VisitBritain to operate a Destination Media Hub at the Teacher Building in St Enoch Square. This will be a home from home facility for visiting UK and international press and broadcasters who will be in Glasgow during the Commonwealth Games. It will operate from 20 July to 4 August and will offer the estimated 1000 consumers and news media access to a working press area as well as destination information on Scotland. There will also be a daily events and news conference programme. We are compiling a list of exclusive discounts/offers/experiences for journalists to take advantage of when visiting Scotland. These offers will be promoted on the digital destination media hub and social media channels as well as within the hub. VS are keen to hear about any new events, openings, products etc. • Announcement of Scottish Tourism Week and the Signature Programme <p>Update on Ayr Town Centre as the Kyle Centre has been bought with plans for a cinema and food & drink establishments.</p> <p>Ayrshire & Arran Gathering 2014 received excellent feedback, few issues regarding original speaker pulling out at the last minute and replacement Prof Goldblatt also received positive feedback. Thanks to the tourism team for all their hard work.</p> <p>Confirmed as an accurate record. Proposed by LD, seconded by CE.</p>	
<p>3.</p>	<p>Chairman Update</p> <p>MB advised this would be the last meeting she will chair and stated that she had enjoyed the past two years immensely, contributing to the steering group in the delivery of a pan Ayrshire Tourism Strategy and overseeing the establishment of the Ayrshire & Arran Tourism Team and formation of initial projects.</p> <p>LB thanked MB on behalf the TLG for being the first chairperson and being instrumental in the setting up of the group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trump purchase of Turnberry Following the recent acquisition of Turnberry Resort by Donald Trump, the TLG were asked to think about the positive benefits that can be gained. Starwood will still retain the management of the resort and JT advised LB that the investment is good and Mr Trump will be marketing Doonbeg, Menie and Turnberry as a golfing triangle. <p>Discussion ensued and included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What measure can be undertaken to ensure the people visiting Turnberry, visit other establishments i.e. Food & Drink venues, cultural attractions. ○ Benefits to Prestwick Airport, if golfers & businessmen/women coming in more frequently etc. <p>Once the new Golf Officer is in place, this will be something for them to look into.</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Altered basis for pricing for ferry travel It was recently announced that a pilot of a Road Equivalent Tariff (RET) fares will commence on the Arran ferry crossing. The fares will come into operation as a pilot from 27th October 2014. A single passenger on Brodick-Ardrossan route will be £3.65, and single car £14.85. The pilot terminology refers to the process and how it develops, e.g. prices will be for the Winter timetable period only, and will be reviewed for the Summer timetable. <p>LJ stated it is brilliant and will allow Arran to compete better as at the moment; the price is £80 for a car return. Calmac have advised they have projected a 30 to 40% increase in traffic using the ferry service. With cheaper fares comes issues of wild camping and businesses already providing a camp site may look at ways to increase or improve the offering they currently have (i.e. access to water, electricity etc) to prevent wild camping from occurring. There is a worry of travellers not being able to secure space on busier ferries and businesses may need to look at encouraging visitors to book earlier or later ferries to avoid this.</p> <p>LJ also advised there are still major road issues with the String Road being closed, which means tourist cannot get around the island as quickly and have to go all the way round the island to visit places on the West Coast and businesses are losing money.</p> <p>KY advised North Ayrshire Council is being as proactive as possible to stop this occurring.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prestwick Airport change of ownership Transport Scotland still in control at the moment, however a recent consultation was undertaken to look at the business model for the airport and the report is due in the coming weeks. Once it has been made public this can be circulated. <p>Actions: LB to circulate plans for Prestwick Airport, once public</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rail link to Edinburgh On Monday 19 May, First Scotrail introduced a new service from Ayr to Edinburgh departing 5 times daily for Ayr the service will call at Glasgow Central before heading on to Edinburgh. <p>Discussion ensued and included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What can be done to encourage people from Edinburgh / Lothian's Region to visit Ayrshire & Arran If advertising on certain routes may be beneficial <p>Actions: LC to circulate train times and cost for Ayr to Edinburgh service</p>	<p>LB</p> <p>LC</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>EXPO 2014 Review Paper / EXPO 2015 Proposal Paper</p> <p>Review paper for EXPO 2014 was circulated around the table which included feedback from stand holders.</p> <p>Prior to the TLG meeting a proposal paper for EXPO 2015 in Aberdeen was circulated and outlined the requirements and budget for attending.</p>	

	<p>Discussion ensued and included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would it be more beneficial for Ayrshire & Arran to have a street and individual business can have a pod branding with Ayrshire & Arran and their own logos etc. • The cost implication of the street approach would mean businesses spending more than the current subsisted rate. • The impact of having one main stand is more than having the street feel and negotiation will take place once spaces are on sale for Ayrshire & Arran to have a more prominent space in the hall. <p>MB enquired if the TLG if all were in support of proposal – all in support and happy for AC to progress.</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p>TLG Membership Paper</p> <p>Nominations for new members to join the TLG were collected from the Ayrshire & Arran Tourism Gathering in March, along with an invitation via B2B.</p> <p>Following the nominations a paper was written by MB to establish the process for a new member to join the group.</p> <p>Discussion ensued and included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many new members are required? • That the nominees do not match the gaps in representation list on the paper. • No sure a good idea to ask a new member to join till after the Tourism Review. <p>Actions: LC to inform nominees that process is currently on hold till later on in the year and will contact again to see if they are still interested on becoming a member of the TLG following the review.</p>	<p>LC</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Tourism Review</p> <p>A brief has been drawn up, for the Tourism Review and RH is awaiting feedback from 3 Local Authorities before this can be sent out to consultants to tender. The successful candidate will be asked to attend a meeting to speak to steering group members (SH, KY, LB, NE, AA and Mark Hastings) to advise how the review will be carried out.</p> <p>The review will take place over the summer. The leadership group, tourism team, 3 councils and industry reps will be contacted by the consultants to have their say about current and future actions.</p> <p>RH is also in the process of updating the Service Plan for the Shared Services Committee.</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p>Projects Update</p> <p>Golf – RH</p> <p>There are still 2 interviews to be undertaken for the Golf Tourism Officer, these are due to take place on 28 May 2014. There will also be presentations from 3 web design companies to tender for the Regional Golf Development website.</p> <p>Ayrshire & Arran Tourism will be heading to Royal Birkdale for the Women’s Open in July, the main focus will be marketing Ayrshire & Arran ahead of next year’s</p>	

Women's Open at Turnberry, hoping new Golf Tourism Officer will be in post and will be able to attend.

Watersports – CE

Graeme will be attending Silver Marine Scottish Series in Tarbet on 24 May 2014.

2 Championship events over the summer, July sees the Flying Dutchman Worlds and the Commonwealth Flotilla and August sees UKLA Laser Open and National Championships all at Largs.

Legacy Events – GM

Burns and the South West, continues throughout the year and recently a large 6 panelled piece of artwork was installed above the check in desk at Prestwick Airport for promotion of Burns and the South West.

Culture & Heritage – AC

Phase 2 of the signage project is underway with 41 attractions contacted to ask if they wish to participate in the scheme. 14 already interested some of these are based on Arran.

Natural Environment – AC / JS

Currently undertaking a survey of cycling routes by businesses surrounding these routes to see if they are registered under the Cyclist Welcome Scheme. Also speaking to businesses not included to join the scheme to talk to them about barriers etc that cyclists face when cycling through a region. Plan then to promote various routes and hopefully gain some investment opportunities.

With regards to walking routes in and around Straiton and Dalmellington, currently 6 routes have been identified and work will begin to look at current infrastructure to ascertain what work may be required to bring route up to safe standard for visitors.

Community Engagement – JS

Looking to complete more learning journeys in Sept/Oct with communities from Ayrshire & Arran visiting similar communities and volunteer groups who have set up best practice initiatives, heritage trails etc, discuss what challenges they found and how to apply for funding etc.

Quality & Skills – GM

So far, since Ayrshire Smiles launched, 20 people have completed the training module, with another 200 registering an interest to take part.

Ayrshire College are looking to develop the course so it can be added to their qualification.

South Ayrshire Leisure, Arts and Customer Service are scheduled to take part and Hunterston Power Station Visitor Centre and Fouters Hospitality and Training are using the training course.

Volunteer Co-ordinator – RH

The new Volunteer Co-ordinator will be joining the team on Monday 16 June.

<p>8.</p>	<p>VisitScotland Update</p> <p>AA provided the group with an update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brilliant Island Moments campaign featured on TV, radio and a Arran Competition in April Adventures saw the Clyde Islands in high demand with over 9,000 requests for information on Brodick which beat Lerwick received under 9,000 requests. • Golf in Ayrshire & Arran is being highlighted with over 450,000 potential golfing visitors through latest regional golf campaign. • VisitScotland website listings improvement programme is currently being undertaken by Quality & Tourism Advisor, Kyle Lockhart who is offering one-to-one appointments with businesses who have web listing on VisitScotland.com. These sessions allow Kyle to give businesses some practical one-to-one advice and support on how to update and manage their business listing. • RH highlighted that members should not forget GM is currently implementing the Visitor Information Provision project and businesses should also be encouraged to take part in the free online 'Healthcheck' • SH advised if local authority assistance for web development is requested in East Ayrshire one of the conditions is they speak to GM first. • Scottish Thistle Awards deadline is fast approaching – 13 June 2014. For the first time, people across the country, as well as those in the industry can put forward tourism businesses or suppliers they believe have gone the extra mile to offer a great visitor experience. Regional ceremonies will take place in November. 	
<p>9.</p>	<p>Budget</p> <p>Prior to the meeting the latest Ayrshire & Arran Tourism Team budget was circulated to the TLG.</p> <p>MB enquired if there were any questions. No questions were raised regarding the budget.</p>	
<p>10.</p>	<p>AOCB</p> <p>Update on DREAM Still not receiving any information, this was topic of conversation at the last SLEAD meeting and VS who coordinated the contract are looking into why authorities are not receiving any information and what can be done to keep everyone informed.</p> <p>South Ayrshire Council – Public Conveniences SAC have just received a £1.3 million investment for public conveniences.</p> <p>Mauchline Holy Fair Takes place this weekend – Saturday 24 May</p> <p>Burns an' a' That Festival Also takes place this weekend at Belleisle Park, Ayr starting Friday 23 May – Monday 26 May.</p>	
<p>11.</p>	<p>Handover to Nat Edwards, new chairman Tourism Leadership Group</p> <p>MB indicated that the handover of the TLG Chair to Nat Edwards would be confirmed by the meeting in Nat's absence. Although stepping down as Chair, Moira will remain a member of the Tourism Leadership Group and continue to be the key contact for skills and education through her role as Director of Hospitality & Tourism at Ayrshire College.</p>	

	<p>NE has put forward Guy Redford's name for the position of Vice Chair.</p> <p>MB thanked LJ again and also Sheila Gilmore for a fantastic familiarisation trip to Arran.</p>	
12.	DATE OF NEXT MEETING Next meeting will take place on Wednesday 20 August 2014, 2:00pm – 4:00pm at the Scottish Maritime Museum, Irvine	