

Ayrshire & Arran Tourism Leadership Group

**Minutes of meeting held on
Monday 16 December 2013
At
Cook School Scotland, Kilmarnock**

Present

Moira Birtwistle (Chair)
Liz Drysdale
Bill Costley
David Mann
Laura Cree (Minutes)

Nat Edwards
Guy Redford
Aileen Stevenston
Lesley Bloomer
Abigail Coia

Carolyn Elder
Ros Halley
Sharon Hodgson

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| 1. | <p>Apologies –</p> <p>Charlotte Rostek, Jordi Tarrida, Annique Armstrong, Linda Johnston & Karen Yeomans</p> | |
| 2. | <p>Minutes of Previous Meeting – 31 October 2013</p> <p>MB welcomed Abigail Coia, Ayrshire & Arran’s newest Tourism Development Officer to the meeting and thanked AS for hosting the meeting at the Cook School.</p> <p>MB confirmed TLG are now members of the Scottish Tourism Alliance.</p> <p>Reminder to all members to keep spreading the word about B2B and that they should encourage their own members of staff to sign up.</p> <p>Members were asked to advise MB of suggestions of new members to the TLG; no suggestions have been put forward so far. Members reminded to forward suggestions to MB prior to next TLG meeting.</p> <p>Members highlighted the desire to ensure that North Ayrshire Council attend the TLG meetings.</p> <p>Action: LC to advise MB & LB of attendance figures for all members.</p> <p>Watersports website now live and a good model for future website development and talks in place to create an interactive food map in partnership with taste Ayrshire and others involved with the Think Local group.</p> <p>Confirmed as an accurate record. Proposed by LB, seconded by BC.</p> | <p>ALL</p> <p>ALL</p> <p>LC</p> |
| 3. | <p>Golf Paper / Proposal</p> <p>Prior to the meeting TLG members were forwarded a proposal for the second phase of Golf development.</p> <p>Discussion ensued and included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong consensus golf tourism manager should not be a part time position, but rather a full time position to make sure the full potential of the RGDG can be achieved. • Need to be more ambitious than previous golf projects that have failed in the past. • Draft business plan needs to be polished – RH advised is a working document and feedback is appreciated. | |

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| | <p>MB asked the TLG if all were in support of proposal – all in support and happy for team to progress with some actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RH to look at budget for full time golf tourism manager and feedback to the TLG electronically. | RH |
| 4. | <p>Volunteer Co-ordinator Proposal</p> <p>Prior to the meeting TLG members were forwarded a proposal for the implementation of a Volunteers Project.</p> <p>Discussion ensued and included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More work is required around current volunteer opportunities • Questions regarding low salary scale. • EAC would like to see more background information prior to giving the go ahead • Need to identify events which volunteers would attend • Questions regarding possibility of existing team doing volunteer coordination. • A strong emphasis that volunteers should be in place before the start of summer 2014 • The post could be advertised internally, in line with Local Authority redeployment policy if required. <p>MB asked the TLG if all were in support of proposal – majority in support, few action points to be undertaken, and decision will be given electronically after action points are completed and EAC is satisfied with response.</p> <p>Actions: RH to provide SH with background information List of events and key locations to be pulled together</p> | RH LC |
| 5. | <p>Chairman's Update</p> <p><u>Project Champions</u></p> <p>Culture & Heritage – DM</p> <p>16 visitor attractions have had new Ayrshire & Arran Tourism signposting installed. No further forward setting up a new heritage group. LD advised ABBA finding itineraries and cultural map very useful.</p> <p>Golf – GR</p> <p>A brand development session is taking place later on this week and it is anticipated that the new Regional Golf Development Group will be in place early 2014.</p> <p>Dundonald Links have just appointment a new Business Development Officer, Gillian Forbes.</p> <p>Natural Environment – LB</p> <p>Countryside management consultant Vyv Wood-Gee has been contracted to audit the walking routes identified by the communities of Dalmellington, Straiton and Kirkmichael. Exploratory work anticipated to be completed by January 2014.</p> | |

Community Engagement - LB

The "Ayrshire Tourism Community Toolkit" is nearing completion, with many more case studies being added than initially intended. The Guide will now be produced and distributed before the end of February 2014.

Learning Journeys progressing well, with community groups identifying the areas they wish to visit. It is expected that the first journeys will take place in January 2014.

Watersports – CE

New website www.watersportscoast.com is now live and CE has been assisting GM with press releases for RYA Scotland and Sail Scotland for 2014 publications.

Next year, Largs Marina will play host to World and National Sailing Championships, with Event Scotland support.

Visitor Information Provision - DM

Plan B have been commissioned to deliver the visitor information provision programme, which will begin in January 2014 with businesses being offered a free health check and then the option to progress to a second stage where a small fee would be charged for the IT support service.

Legacy Events – NE

Decided not to finance individual website and instead VisitScotland will be providing a micro site, which will be accessible from the Ayrshire & Arran page on the VisitScotland website.

Approximately 50,000 copies of the 3 itineraries will go into distribution throughout Ayrshire & Arran, Dumfries & Galloway and regions within a 2 hour drive including the North of England. Promotion will also appear in national newspapers with a competition with prizes including Brig a' Doon House Hotel and Robert Burns Birthplace Museum.

Ayrshire Smiles – MB

Delay following the launch event in October. Team have been working with Glasgow with Style and have been hoping to adapt their online training programme for Ayrshire & Arran, however there have been delays at Glasgow end and they are hoping to have the product in the next few weeks. Looking to be either January / February 2014 before the product can roll out.

Blue Ocean Group

MB asked LB to give the group feedback from the facilitate meeting at Entrepreneurial Spark.

LB advised the session gave the group some food for thought, i.e. do we need a large project to showcase the area, right leadership etc.

In relation to tourism 5 issues were highlighted which should be addressed: Project Development, Brand Development, Leadership, PR & Communications Relationship & Who does what (dovetailing).

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| | <p>It has been agreed to move forward and BOG has set aside a whole day in January to discuss further. Was originally thought an external consultant would be brought in, but the costs involved were too high and group will facilitate the meeting themselves.</p> <p>Discussion ensued.</p> | |
| 6. | <p>Tourism Manager</p> <p><u>Budget Update</u></p> <p>Still some work to be done in updating the format of the budget provided by SAC finance department. Will have a fully updated budget for the next TLG meeting in February.</p> <p>Action: Update budget</p> <p><u>Staffing</u></p> <p>Ros warmly welcomed new Tourism Development Officer - Abigail Coia. Abigail will initially be responsible for Cultural & Heritage, Natural Environment, EXPO and Community Engagement.</p> <p>Still waiting on confirmation from SAC HR on re-advertising the remaining vacant Tourism Development Officer position. Keen for an advert to run over the Christmas period.</p> <p>LB advised LC if there are any issues with HR to forward details.</p> <p><u>Community Toolkit</u></p> <p>Slight delay on toolkit, looking into ideal format and layout, expected early 2014.</p> <p><u>External Funding</u></p> <p>Natural Environment project applications to Creative Scotland and LEADER for £10,000 to carry out a feasibility study have been unsuccessful. Creative Scotland stated the application was too community focused and Leader stated there was not enough community focus. Feedback will be sought from both organisations in the New Year.</p> <p>Scottish Rural Development Programme is funding individuals, groups and businesses to help deliver the Government's strategic objectives in rural Scotland. The next stage of funding is due to run from 2014-2020 with significant financial investment available across rural areas. The final consultation is now open for comments and it would be useful if tourism is highlighted as of critical importance to the rural economy.</p> <p>RH will collate response on behalf of the TLG.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <p>Comments and responses for SRDP consultation to be sent to RH by 25/01/14 LC to forward members link to SRDP website</p> | <p>RH</p> <p>LC</p> <p>ALL LC</p> |

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| <p>7.</p> | <p>AOCB</p> <p><u>EXPO</u></p> <p>BC enquired what format the Ayrshire & Arran stand will take at next year's VisitScotland EXPO. RH advised the stand is the same size as last year, however there may be some changes and Abigail is currently looking at how the stand will be presented and which businesses will be represented.</p> <p><u>Tourism Strategy Review 2014 (review of first 18 months)</u></p> <p>LB advised looking to have the review undertaken as soon as possible in 2014.</p> <p><u>Commonwealth Games</u></p> <p>NE advised there is potential for Ayrshire & Arran to be promoted during the Commonwealth Games in the Tourism Information Centre being set up. RH also advised the team are currently working with VisitScotland to provide information for a Broadcast Guide.</p> <p>MB thanked everyone for attending and AS and the Cook School for providing a lovely venue and refreshments and wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.</p> | |
| <p>8.</p> | <p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>Wednesday 19 February 2014, 2:00pm – 4:00pm, Lochgreen House Hotel, Troon</p> | |