

Ayrshire & Arran Tourism Leadership Group

**Minutes of meeting held on
Wednesday 19 February 2014
At
Lochgreen House Hotel, Troon**

Present

Moira Birtwistle (Chair)
Liz Drysdale
Bill Costley
David Mann
Karen Yeomans

Nat Edwards
Jordi Tarrida
Aileen Stevenson
Lesley Bloomer
Linda Johnston

Carolyn Elder
Ros Halley
Charlotte Rostek
Anniqne Armstrong
Laura Cree (Minutes)

1.	<p>Apologies –</p> <p>Sharon Hodgson & Guy Redford</p>	
2.	<p>Minutes of Previous Meeting – 16 December 2013</p> <p>MB welcomed everyone to Lochgreen and thanked BC for hosting the meeting.</p> <p>There were a few actions points noted on the previous minutes and these have been placed on the agenda for discussion.</p> <p>Confirmed as an accurate record. Proposed by DM, seconded by LB.</p>	<p align="center"><u>Minutes of the Last Meeting – 16 December 2013</u></p>
3.	<p>Blue Ocean Group</p> <p>NE updated the group on the most recent Blue Ocean Group meeting which took place in January.</p> <p>Discussion ensued and included</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pushing Ayrshire & Arran as a centre of innovation, given the worldwide reach of products created and developed in Ayrshire & Arran i.e. penicillin, tyres, Tar macadam, etc • Better coordination of events, and creating a benchmark for events. • Potential beach front development incorporating arts, music, conference facilities with space for artist etc • Relocation of Ayr Rugby Club to Alloway and the potential to improve the tourism offering in and around the area, • Strategy review, raise ambition and maybe a few tweaks to help raise the bar • Blue Ocean Group should be dissolved and all the TLG should now be involved in a review of the Tourism Strategy and how that should move forward and what should be included. <p>Actions: LC to circulate most up to date papers on Ayr Renaissance work in Ayr Town Centre</p>	<p align="center">LC</p>

<p>4.</p>	<p>Plans for 2014 Review</p> <p>LB advised preparations are underway for the 2014 review and RH has drafted an outline paper which includes the objectives of the review, areas for consideration, proposed methodology and milestones. The purpose of the review is to prepare a robust report for the three funding partners (East, North & South Ayrshire Council) for October 2014 with a view to securing future funding for the Ayrshire & Arran Tourism to continue beyond 2015.</p> <p>Discussion ensued and included</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review should include what has been done and what we want to do moving forward and review should not sound as if we are defending what has already been achieved. • Must evoke confidence for the 3 Local Authorities. • There should be a strong emphasis on raising the bar. <p>Actions: RH to redraft and take into consideration the points raised</p>	<p>RH</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Volunteer Co-ordinator Proposal – TLG Consideration</p> <p>Following the last TLG meeting in December RH was asked to revise the Volunteer Co-ordinator Proposal paper.</p> <p>RH advised since the meeting in December she had spoken to the third sector associations in East, North & South Ayrshire where they suggested it would be more beneficial for the co-ordinator to be full time as there is a large volume of work required to maintain and monitor volunteers, along with training and acquiring the necessary equipment. Inclusion of town centres was also suggested as a high-footfall location.</p> <p>RH advised the relevant changes were applied and the revised paper was circulated prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Discussion ensued.</p> <p>MB enquired if the TLG if all were in support of proposal – all in support and happy for RH to progress.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>Golf Phase 2 – TLG Update</p> <p>Golf Phase 2 was approved at previous meeting in December with a request for an updated paper to be circulated prior to February’s meeting.</p> <p>RH advised following on from the meeting in December she has revised the paper and has been able to secure funding for a full time Golf Tourism Manager. The additional funding required to make the p/t golf officer post into a full-time post has been secured from SAC (economic development). This is subject to domestic arrangements and confirmation of budgets. This news was welcomed by the TLG.</p> <p>The RGDG is reaching a critical stage, as the business plan is near completion and the setting up of a Co. Ltd By Guarantee will soon be ready. The next meeting of the group will take place on Thursday 27 February 2014.</p>	

7. Chairman's Up-date

Project Champions

Culture & Heritage - DM

- Phase 2 of the signage project will be rolled out over the coming months and there will be an opportunity for those who did not take part in the initial installation to be involved.
- An itinerary which is being produced with Scottish Natural Heritage is nearly complete and incorporates most cultural & heritage establishments.
- DM & CR met with Abigail a few weeks ago to discuss forming a new Culture & Heritage Attraction group. First meeting due to take place 18 March 2014.

Legacy Events – Burns & the Southwest – NE

- 40,000 itineraries are set to be distributed over the next few weeks and are currently available via the B2B website.
- There is also a website hosted by VisitScotland www.burns-southwest.com
- Some have already been distributed at a few events – Robert Burns Humanitarian Award and Celtic Connections. Itineraries are also available within Robert Burns Birthplace Museum.
- Two 4 page supplements will feature in the Herald and Scotland on Sunday.
- The programme of events is still open and could be anything with a link to Burns. Events can be sent to GM via email.

Watersports – CE

- Largs will host the World and National Sailing Championships this year. A lot of press activity surrounding both events.
- The week before the Commonwealth Games boats of all sizes will sail up the River Clyde for the RYA Scotland Commonwealth Flotilla. Largs will also act as a feeder station prior to boats heading up the Firth of Clyde towards Glasgow.
- GM has been invited to the Cross Party Group on Recreational Boating and Marine Tourism to discuss www.watersportscoast.com, giving a short presentation and overview.

Natural Environment – RH

- There were originally 30 to 40 routes identified by the communities, however this has now been shortlisted to between 8 and 10 routes to help move toward the next step of creating exemplar routes.
- Discussions have also been taking place, regarding ways to link walks up with Dumfries & Galloway, Biosphere and Dark Skies Observatory.

Community Engagement – RH

- Community Toolkit is moving along and need to get this published as soon as possible, in order for this to be tested prior to being rolled out.
- Learning Journeys will get underway next week, with the first group from Straiton visiting the Laggan Wolftrax.

Quality & Skills - LJ

- Flow Hospitality Limited have now been contracted and work is well under way to get the online course developed and available to the industry.
- The course will be free of charge and there will be networking opportunity for all those who complete the course.

Marketing (Expo) – JT

- Ayrshire & Arran stand is now fully booked with all 10 places filled. Companies on this year's stand are:
 - SimpsInns
 - Costley & Costley
 - Auchrannie Resort
 - VisitArran
 - The Park Hotel
 - Gailes Golf Experience
 - Blair Estate
 - Carrick Ayrshire
 - Claymore Projects Scotland Limited
 - Largs Matters
- Stand design has been chosen.

Discussion ensued regarding 2015 VisitScotland Expo.

Actions: AA to liaise with RH regarding venue and date for 2015 VisitScotland Expo.

AA, RH

Visitor Information Provision – DM

- LD has taken part in a trial of the Online Health Check which has been created by GM working with Plan B.
- LD advised that she was very impressed by the feedback received which included recommendations of where her website could be improved.
- Plan B will be emailing businesses from the B2B database starting next week, these businesses will be invited to participate in the free questionnaire regarding their website, they can then decide if they wish to take part in a workshop to improve their site for a small charge.

VisitScotland Update – AA

- New Brilliant Moments campaign was launched at the beginning of the year, highlighting events taking place this year. A national television campaign will run throughout 2014.
- Also launched was the Doorstep Campaign for Scots.
- There is also a Homecoming App
- Local spring/summer direct marketing campaign underway this week and includes 2 direct mail campaigns – national and A&A specific.
- 3 Sales promotions running in Northern Ireland to encourage them to visit Scotland in 2014, these will run via online, email and social media.

	<p><u>Itinerary for the next TLG – Familiarisation Trip, Isle of Arran</u></p> <p>The next TLG is due to take place on Wednesday 21 May 2014, the meeting will be taking place at Auchrannie Resort on the Isle of Arran.</p> <p>LJ drew up an itinerary to incorporate a familiarisation trip and have TLG members spend the day on Arran.</p> <p>MB proposed if members were unable to attend the whole day, they should try and make it for the meeting by catching the later ferry.</p> <p>Actions: LC to circulate itinerary and members to put date in their diaries and let LC know if they can attend.</p>	<p>LC, ALL</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Tourism Manager Up-date</p> <p>Gathering 2014</p> <p>RH gave a brief overview of the format for this year's Tourism Gathering taking place on Wednesday 26 March at The Marine Hotel, Troon. Guest speaker will be Prof John Lennon from the Moffat Centre and will also incorporate an optional mini research visit.</p> <p>Discussion ensued regarding TLG involvement and it was decided that members would facilitate a TLG area where there will be tea and coffee available with a chance for delegates to speak to TLG members.</p> <p>NE will do a brief introduction prior to the networking lunch beginning to explain what would be happening in the afternoon.</p> <p>Actions: NE & MB to organise and facilitate TLG portion of the afternoon.</p> <p>Budget update</p> <p>RH gave members an updated budget paper.</p> <p>NE stated the paper drawn up by RH was clear and easier to understand than the one provided by South Ayrshire finance at the last TLG meeting.</p> <p>RH confirmed that the intention is to also have the council version available.</p> <p>Mini Reports – Golf Phase 1 & B2B Website</p> <p>These reports were circulated prior to the meeting, no questions raised. Copies are available via the Tourism Team.</p> <p>Recruitment</p> <p>Interviews for the vacant Tourism Development Officer post took place last week and there is a preferred candidate. HR checks are currently being undertaken.</p> <p>Scottish Tourism Alliance</p> <p>RH advised she has recently become a council member with the Scottish Tourism Alliance and attended their most recent meeting in Stirling.</p>	<p>NE, MB</p>

	<p>Taste Ayrshire</p> <p>There has been discussion around Taste Ayrshire developing a food tourism website, highlighting suppliers, places to eat etc. The tourism team is working closely with Taste Ayrshire to improve visitor information and links.</p>	
<p>9.</p>	<p>AOB</p> <p>TLG Membership</p> <p>MB advised she will be stepping down as Chair in May, Moira proposed that NE takes over Chair - all in agreement. Nominations for a new Vice Chair now being sought to be agreed at the next meeting in May.</p> <p>There is also a vacancy in the TLG and one nomination has already been received.</p> <p>Discussion ensued regarding the nomination of a new member and it has been decided that delegates at the Gathering will be given a nomination card in their delegates packs and nominations will be discuss at the next meeting in May. The opportunity will also be added to B2B.</p> <p>There is also a vacancy in the TLG and one nomination has already been received.</p> <p>Discussion ensued regarding the nomination of a new member and it has been decided that delegates at the Gathering will be given a nomination card in their delegates packs and nominations will be discuss at the next meeting in May. The opportunity will also be added to B2B.</p> <p>Timings of Meetings</p> <p>JT enquired if the time of the meetings could be changed to 4pm.</p> <p>Discussion ensued and it has been agreed that every second meeting will be at 4pm.</p> <p>Date & Venue of the Next Meeting</p> <p>Wednesday 21 May 2014, 2:00pm – 4:00pm, Auchrannie Resort, Isle of Arran</p>	