

Ayrshire & Arran Tourism Leadership Group

**Minutes of meeting held on
Wednesday 26 November 2014**

At

Robert Burns Birthplace Museum, Red Room, Burns Cottage, Alloway

Present

Nat Edwards (Chair)
Liz Drysdale
Ros Halley
Audrey Sutton
Anniqne Armstrong

Guy Redford
Sharon Hodgson
David Mann
Moira Birtwistle
Jill Cronin

Linda Johnston
Laura Cree (Minutes)

<p>1.</p>	<p>Apologies –</p> <p>Carolyn Elder & Bill Costley</p> <p>NE advised since the last meeting he has received two resignations from Aileen Stevenson & Charlotte Rostek due to their own endeavours taking up the majority of their time.</p> <p>NE noted the group’s appreciation for their time and wished them well in the future projects.</p>	
<p>2.</p>	<p>Minutes of Previous Meeting – 26 August 2014</p> <p>No issues regarding previous minutes.</p>	<p><u>TLG Meeting Minutes - 26 August 2014</u></p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>Review 2014</p> <p>Following on from the Tourism Review 2014 which was carried out by Tourism Resources Company during the summer an executive summary was forward to the group prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Discussion ensued and included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some members raised concerns about creating “sub groups”, as past experience shows that these often never work or disband after a few meetings. Feel that better utilisation and communication amongst groups who are already working effectively together i.e. ABBA, Ayrshire Golf Scotland would be more beneficial. • Groups would need to be focused and have a clear beginning and end if groups are created. • Would not be too much effort to link work already taking place with the National Strategy. • 3 Ayrshire Council’s working together to pull together an action plan which will include all the tourism projects carried out by each of them individually. Once completed will be able to look and see which projects (if any) overlap. Also where the gaps are and what needs to be taken forward by pan-Ayrshire Team. • 3 Ayrshire Council’s are carrying out tourism assets mapping exercise, which should be completed in summer 2015. • There should be more ‘noise’ about what is happening in Ayrshire & Arran, need to attend big trade shows i.e. VisitScotland Expo, International Golf Trade Market. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Also to be encouraging more journalists to come along. The process of hosting them needs to become a bit more seamless through a more collaborative process with hotels, restaurants etc. • 3 Ayrshire Council's need to be clear about what they want to get out of the TLG and clarify TLG role and engagement level required. • Some of the TLG members felt that the proposed action planning process being undertaken by the councils was a step backwards and that all eyes should be on moving forward from the current successes of the pan Ayrshire team and joined-up approach. • Following confirmation from the councils that VisitScotland will continue to deliver the regional marketing in 2015, it was agreed that a marketing interest group be brought together and include members of the industry to discuss and help shape the marketing message being provided by VisitScotland. • Members of the TLG expressed some concern that it looks like the pan-Ayrshire team views/thoughts are not being heard enough during this review / action planning process. • Members sought clarification of input of pan-Ayrshire team and requested that the report feedback from the team should be circulated, so that the TLG members could become better informed about options going forward. <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing Interest Group meeting to take place in January, suggestions of industry representatives to be sent to directly to Annique Armstrong at VisitScotland • 3 Council's to carry out tourism asset mapping exercise • Team feedback regarding review to be sent to all TLG members 	
4.	<p>Future of Tourism Strategy and Tourism Team</p> <p>JC advised the group following an Ayrshire Shared Services meeting on Tuesday 25 November. Jill reported that it has been agreed to continue with the pan Ayrshire team until March 2016. There was some debate regarding the level of detail to be contained in the 2015-16 service plan and there will require an updated service plan to be submitted in February. The funding to March 2016 will remain the same as current level and VisitScotland responsibility for marketing will also continue during this period.</p> <p>Following the February 2015 meeting of the Ayrshire Shared Services Joint Committee, there will be work required to bring the 3 Council asset mapping reports together, with clarification on pan-Ayrshire Team role and resources going forward 2016-2019. The TLG are expected to have input to this plan during Summer 2015, with a view to a plan being submitted to the Ayrshire Shared Services Joint Committee during October 2015.</p>	
5.	<p>Project Progress (Resubmitted from August TLG)</p> <p>Project Progress Report was resubmitted to the TLG following the August meeting.</p> <p>No queries were raised.</p>	

6.	<p>Budget Position</p> <p>RH advised the group that budget is on track. Detailed breakdown was submitted to members prior to the meeting; couple of projects now completed and under spend has been returned to be used on new projects. Some projects in early stage so may appear to be under spending.</p> <p>Staff & admin costs remain on budget.</p>	
7.	<p>Proposal Papers</p> <p>NE advised 3 proposal papers were submitted prior to meeting and RH gave a brief outline of each.</p> <p>Community Engagement – Phase 2</p> <p>Following on from phase 1 of the project which was extremely well received by community groups, additional funding is requested to carry out a ‘Meet the Funders’ event in February 2015 along with an additional 3 Learning Journeys in the Spring.</p> <p>NE asked the TLG if all were in support of proposal – all in support and happy for team to progress.</p> <p>Year of Food & Drink 2015 – Phase 1</p> <p>The proposal is to commission a bespoke promotional brochure focusing on Ayrshire & Arran’s unique food and drink offering. The practical, informative and inspiring guide will be a tool aimed at attracting more visitors to discover and enjoy local produce when visiting and to spend more.</p> <p>SH enquired if the proposal reflects the Ayrshire Food Strategy and connects with Taste Ayrshire which is funded by the 3 local authorities.</p> <p>RH advised that the project would reflect the Ayrshire Food Strategy.</p> <p>LD advised that Taste Ayrshire is not receiving core funding from the 3 local authorities.</p> <p>NE asked the TLG if all were in support of proposal – all in support and happy for team to progress.</p> <p>Promotional Stands</p> <p>There has been interest in producing branded promotional stands for Ayrshire & Arran since the early days of the TLG. This has again been explored with accommodation providers to include ABBA (Ayrshire Bed and Breakfast Association) by way of a focus group and it has been met with enthusiasm.</p> <p>It is anticipated that if this was provided to hotels and guest houses that it would contain a series of small brochures i.e. cycling, walking, shopping, food and drink, golf, visitor attractions and music. Further relevant leaflets would be developed to enhance visitor information.</p> <p>It is anticipated that there would be collaboration on leaflets with e.g. Visit Arrant as appropriate.</p>	

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<p>8.</p>	<p>Industry Marketing Group</p> <p>This section was covered during the discussion regarding the Tourism Review 2014.</p> <p>It has been agreed for VisitScotland to move forward with the group.</p>	
<p>9.</p>	<p>Industry Horizon Scan</p> <p>NE advised the group that instead of an update from the team regarding projects it would be an opportunity for members to advise what is happening in the coming weeks/months with their own business.</p> <p>DM Thursday 27 November, sees the launch of the Scottish Maritime Museum's new exhibition which will be running till the end of March 2015. The exhibition celebrates shipbuilding and maritime history from around the British Commonwealth and Empire.</p> <p>The museum has also just received funding of £500k to buy maritime art.</p> <p>LJ Glenisle Hotel presents their Santa Sparkle event on Saturday 29 November, featuring fireworks display and Christmas market.</p> <p>Weekend of 5th, 6th & 7th December in conjunction with shop local day, Arran will be hosting Shop Arran Weekend with lots of fabulous offers will be available from all the shops including mince pies & mulled wine.</p> <p>Also RET (Road Equivalent Tariff) began at the end of October, which means it now costs less than £30 to bring a car to the island. Already seeing benefits as there are lots more cars on the island, along with businesses that would normally be closed during the winter remaining open.</p> <p>MB Ayrshire College held their open day last week at Lochgreen House Hotel, Troon.</p> <p>College have begun working with Diageo to create a Bar Tendering Course and will be working closely with Costley, SimpsInns and Buzzworks to help develop student's skills.</p> <p>Over the past few months students have also been involved with the tourism team Community Learning Journeys, Volunteering and also taking part in Ayrshire Smiles, which is currently being developed to form part of the curriculum.</p> <p>AS December sees the consultation process for the new Largs education campus come to a close. Good news as SportScotland facility will be included in the new school campus and be the first fully accessible sports facility in the UK. The plan is for the new facility to be a centre of excellence for sport/Para sports. The campus will be situated on the Inverclyde Sports Centre site.</p>	

AA

VisitScotland currently working on assisting businesses with accessibility information, as not all businesses advise customers on facilities for disabled guests. VS have produced an online manual full of advice and information regarding accessibility statements etc. and they are hoping to run a few workshops to assist businesses.

SH

Kilmarnock Christmas lights are being switched on, Sunday 30 November.

Planning application has been submitted for Loudoun Castle Estate, estimated that there will be at least £450k investment for holiday lodges, golf course, residential homes, leisure complex and brewery.

Chinese Culture Centre will be opening in Cumnock.

LD

ABBA in are in the process of producing a promotional video to help show the quality of their establishments.

Also driving better relationships with businesses and have just produced a restaurant guide for Ayrshire & Arran.

VisitArran have just joined ABBA as an associate member.

NE

Planning underway for new family attraction at Brodick Castle, in the form of a children's play park.

Currently looking at improvements to Culzean Castle and to potentially bring external businesses into the estate.

JC

Weekend of 6th, 7th December sees the Coca Cola truck roll into Ayr between 12noon & 8pm.

Discussion now underway for Scottish Air Show 2015.

RH

Image/Text bank is due to go live on B2B site, where businesses will be able to download free images for their websites and also text information around key Ayrshire & Arran assets, which can be edited and adapted for their own use.

Recently attended a meeting with Ayrshire country estates and this is now moving forward to create a new Ayrshire Country Sports partnership, which would be capable of pulling together resources and marketing the area to this niche market.

Volunteers have been out and about at various different events/venues and will be at Culzean Castle in December for some of their Christmas events.

10.	<p>Dates of 2015 TLG Meetings</p> <p>2015's TLG meeting will take place on Wednesday:</p> <p>11 February 2015 13 May 2015 12 Aug 2015 11 Nov 2015</p> <p>DM offered the Scottish Maritime Museum as meeting venue and LJ offered Auchrannie also.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members to advise LC if they are able to host any future meetings 	
11.	AOCB	
12.	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>The next meeting will be Wednesday 11 February 2015</p>	