

**Minutes Area Tourism Partnership Meeting held
Tuesday 14 August 2007
Venue: Largs Sailing Club, Largs Yacht Haven**

Present:

Bob Leitch, Ayrshire Chamber of Commerce & Industry (Chair)
John Spooner, East Ayrshire Council
Stuart Gibson, North Ayrshire Council
Cllr Elisabeth Marshall, North Ayrshire Council
Michael Wright, Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire
Carolyn Elder, Largs Yacht Haven
Stewart Selbie, Turnberry Hotel
Provost Winifred Sloan, South Ayrshire Council
Malcolm Simpson, Gales Restaurant & Hotel
Martin Hunter, Federation of Small Businesses
Alastair Dobson, Taste of Arran
Sandi Hellowell, VisitScotland
Catriona Mackie, VisitScotland
Elaine Sykes, VisitScotland

Apologies:

Apologies received from: Nick Larkin, South Ayrshire Council; Mark Rodwell, Prestwick International Airport; Cllr Jim Buchanan, East Ayrshire Council, Howard Wilkinson, ACTF.

1. Previous Minutes and Actions

The Minutes of 12 June 2007 were taken as an accurate account of events and approved.

Information and Sales Strategy – C Mackie held meeting with public sector partners to discuss initial ideas. The next step will be to have meeting with sub-group next month and will feedback to group at next meeting.

Action:

Information & Sales Strategy to be item on next agenda.

Responsible – C Mackie

2. Vice Chair Appointment

Chair advised that a nomination was received from North Ayrshire Council to propose Provost Winifred Sloan as Vice Chairman, this was seconded by South Ayrshire Council. The rest of the group agreed to this appointment, which will run until April 2008.

3. Local Industry Liaison

Surf your Way into History – Dave Killicoat updated the group on a project he is developing which helps people trace their own family history. He has produced a leaflet which shows the local facilities and how to find your Scottish Ancestry. He outlined other parts of the product including a Scotland's people voucher. He advised that this is an important part of Scottish Tourism, there are no firm figures but he advised that of the 4.5 million people that visit Scotland, 2 million had Scottish ancestry. The group thanked Dave for his interesting presentation.

Action:

Dave Killicoat to pass leaflets to VisitScotland, which will then be circulated round group.

Responsible –C Mackie

4. Expo

S Gibson advised he was concerned that Ayrshire and Arran did not have strong representation at Expo. He asked the group for their opinion on it and if they felt there was an appetite to attend in a more cohesive manner and if it is something they should consider for 2009. He also asked the public agencies whether subsidising attendance at the event was a consideration.

The group discussed the topic and felt that it was something that should be explored, and that a subgroup should be set up. This would be to look at Expo but also other exhibition opportunities that are available and how the industry could work together.

In the short term it was agreed to look at what is possible for Expo 2008 and to take forward as soon as possible.

Action:

- S Gibson and C Mackie to have meeting to discuss possibility of attending 2008 Expo.

Responsible – C Mackie/S Gibson

- Sub Group to be set up to investigate Expo and other exhibition potential

Responsible – S Gibson/ A Dobson

5. 2008 Tourism Conference

B Leitch advised that he would like to establish a sub group again to help put together next year's conference. Conference will take place on Tuesday 26th February 2008. Sponsorship will not be the Clydesdale Bank this year. B Leitch is in discussion with another bank and will advise outcome at next meeting.

Action:

Tourism Conference sub-group to be set up. Interested volunteers to advise B Leitch at end of meeting

Responsible – B Leitch

6. High Priority Actions Update

Updates were given on the above documents, which had already been circulated.

Area Visitor Survey- C Mackie updated group that funding is in place and that Paul Buchanan of VisitScotland has agreed to act as an advisor. The draft tender document will be circulated to the group before next meeting and sub-group to be set up to take forward.

Action:

- Tender document to be circulated round group before next meeting
- AIE to be contacted and asked if they would like to contribute to funding of survey
- Sub-group to be put together to take forward

Responsible – C Mackie

Prestwick Airport TIC – C Mackie advised that negotiations are nearly complete and that the airport has been as supportive as possible. Slight delay due to events that happened at Glasgow Airport. Proposal will need agreement from Infratil Board and VisitScotland Chief Executive.

Golf Tourism – M Wright advised that the Golf Day that had been held in June had been very successful and that the main point that came up from the industry was the setting up of a local group. SEA to hold a meeting with Golf Tourism Scotland at the end of this month. M Simpson advised that a pre-meeting with GTS had taken place and that they seem to be very pro-active to set up this group.

Sailing – M Wright gave update and advised the sailing group would be holding meeting at the end of this month to discuss strategic issues. Behind the scenes activities have been happening and investigations are still ongoing. S Gibson advised that NAC had concerns re some of the issues and that a meeting was to be held with SEA to discuss.

Food & Drink – A Dobson updated the group on the recommendation that local produce should be part of most events. He also suggested a once a year industry day. Partners can work with the AFN and IOA. Also need to look at education and institutional catering, and not just tourism.

Events Strategy – commissioned workshop for end October.

Priority updates will be required for every alternate meeting on new activity undertaken, not a history of progress to date.

7. Date and Venue of next meeting

Next ATP Meeting - Tuesday 09 October 2007, Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire Offices, Hill Street, Kilmarnock

Responsible – E Sykes/L Boyle

8. AOB

J Spooner – advised that Cllr Jim Buchanan would like to have tourism in East Ayrshire assume a higher standing than before as they are looking to contribute in a greater way to Ayrshire in things like walking, sailing etc. A new member of staff will

be appointed to help develop these activities. Cllr Buchanan will discuss this in greater detail at the next meeting.

Wish List Group with Private Sector – initial meeting with B Leitch and M Simpson to be arranged to discuss.

Responsible – B Leitch/M Simpson

European Funding – B Leitch asked S Gibson re the position of this. S Gibson advised that still not in position to do anything at moment but should hopefully have more clarity by next meeting.

Action : S Gibson to feedback re European funding situation at next meeting.

Responsible – S Gibson

Future of ATP's – B Leitch advised that he had been invited to sit on the steering group to discuss the role of the ATP's and their future. As part of that he took part in a conference call which discussed the role of the ATP, the different views across the country, common issues that can be worked on collectively. To assist him, B Leitch asked all members of the group to send him their views on the ATP within the next seven days.

Action:

- 2 paragraphs on opinion of role of ATP to be emailed to B Leitch by 20 Aug 07

Responsible – All

Homecoming 2009 – Linda McClure has resigned from her position at the Burns Festival. Her post will be advertised and as an interim measure Lynne Pringle, SEA will step in.

Feedback on Burns Festival - draft evaluation report complete but adjustments required. Once final report is complete it will be made available.

Responsible – C Mackie

Accommodation Audits – A Dobson asked if there was any information on this. M Wright advised SEA had carried out an audit in 2005 and would forward to A Dobson

Responsible – M Wright

VisitArran – A Dobson advised that things are going well and focusing on real actions and people throwing own money on table to invest in actions. Challenge is the investment in time required.

Viking Festival – Cllr Marshall advised she had a supply of leaflets if anyone would like any to distribute.