

**Perthshire Tourism Partnership  
Minutes of Meeting held on 25 January 2007  
Green Hotel, Kinross**

**In Attendance**

Vicki Miller, Jennifer Moran, Gayle Wilson, and Catherine Dunkerley (VisitScotland), James Kennedy (VisitScotland.com), Joanne DePonio (P&K Council), Ian Reynolds (SET), Cllrs Hulbert and Hayton (P&KC), David Smythe (ASSC), Scott Edwards (Parklands Hotel), Jane Grimley (Dewars World of Whisky), Tim Waters and Ian Brown (Pitlochry Partnership), Su Cox (Dunkeld & Birnam Tourism Assoc), Kirstie Crerar (Blair Atholl & District Tourism Assoc). Geraldine Balfour and Sara Wood (Perth College), Ewan Cathcart (Kinross Partnership), Carolyn Baird (Springboard Scotland)

**Item 1 - Chairman's Welcome and Apologies**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Simpson & McEwen. Scott Edwards, the Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting and round the table introductions were conducted.

**Item 2 - Matters Arising**

Quality Assurance

Scott advised that he has received notification from the Chair of the Hotel Overseeing Committee that the rule that states that all hotels, including small hotels must have 24 hour room service will be reviewed at the next committee meeting. The intention would be to make a proposal to the joint Technical Review Group that these mandatory criteria be dropped. Tim added that until this agreement was in place and the criteria updated, a process of dispensation would need to be followed by the grading officers. Vicki reminded everyone that all aspects of the Hotels service and standards are taken into account during a grading visit and if a hotel is consistently performing to a three star or four star standard, then it would be very unlikely that their grading would be reduced as a result of not providing 24 hour room service.

Information & Sales

The Chairman raised the issue of reduced council funding to VisitScotland, as reported in the local press. Cllr Hulbert addressed the meeting and explained that PKC had cut VisitScotland's 2006/7 budget to make a £5000 donation to the Southern Perthshire Tourism Association. After much debate Scott Edwards as Chair advised that he would write to Alan Livingstone, Convenor of the Enterprise & Infrastructure Committee on behalf of the Partnership highlighting the concerns of the partnership on this matter. There was a general concern that any reduction in funding would result in a reduction in local marketing and that this would not help Perthshire realise its growth ambitions.

**Item 3 – Springboard Scotland**

Carolyn Baird from Springboard Scotland joined the meeting and her presentation and contact details are attached for information.

Springboard is undertaking a number of tourism related projects that are of interest to the Partnership and would assist with the delivery of key actions in the area strategy. These included – Discovery Trails; Future Chef; Scottish Progression Award in Tourism (providing children between 14-16 a qualification of a similar standard to a Scottish Standard Grade); St Andrew's World Class Internship – introducing school children to tourism employers in a planned way so that on leaving School they can secure permanent employment. The meeting agreed that through the Targeting Tourism Employers Forum managed by Perth College a number of these initiatives could be developed for the benefit of tourism in Perthshire. Perth College to progress with Springboard.

In addition, Springboard in partnership with Scottish Enterprise and Careers Scotland has been tasked with developing local recruitment and retention action plans. To assist with this project the Partnership agreed to assist Springboard with the co-ordination of local employer focus groups. VM to co-ordinate via Local Tourist Associations.

#### **Item 4 – visitscotland.com**

James Kennedy from visitscotland.com gave a presentation on E Business Developments which included an update on the new shareholding of visitscotland.com; technology changes introduced by Tiscover the new private sector technology provider; consumer trends; Perthshire bookings statistics including issues around supply v demand of online bookable accommodation.

A copy of his presentation is attached with these minutes.

The main points arising from the presentation and discussion were:-

- industry dissatisfaction with some of the changes that have been made following the role out of the new Tiscover platform; in particular access to the Extranet for self-catering operators; a lack of flexibility with daily pricing for serviced accommodation providers. Re-assurances were sought that these issues would be fixed quickly
- a recognition that the Partnership needed to reinforce the consumer trend information and ensure that more businesses across Perthshire were moving to provide availability and ideally allocation – consumer demand is currently outstripping supply
- support the role out of “web in a box” once this is released as this will provide a complete web site and online booking package for small businesses.

#### **Item 5 – Update on Events Strategy**

Joanne DePonio gave a presentation which covered :

Aims of the strategy and progress to date  
Overview of 2006 events  
Attracting new events (2007 – 2014)  
Maximising the benefit of events

A full economic impact study is currently underway to establish the value of current events.

It was noted that a number of new high profile events are planned for 2007 and beyond and these present significant opportunities for tourism businesses and the local tourist associations, these include:

- 2007, A Truly Scottish Evening, Dunkeld Hilton (1 & 2 September)
- 2007, Mass participation Cycle event in Highland Perthshire (24 June)
- 2008, Scottish Wildlife Festival, Atholl Estate
- 2009, Year of the Homecoming
- 2010, 800 Anniversary of Perth
- 2014, Ryder Cup, Gleneagles
- 2012, Common Wealth Games

#### **Item 6 – Update on Perthshire Tourism Conference**

Jennifer Moran gave the group an update from the recent conference sub-group meeting. An outline agenda was circulated and agreed. It was also agreed to offer exhibition space at the event to Targeting Tourism. Other exhibition space would be offered to local food producers. It was also agreed that Murrayshall House Hotel should be encouraged to use

local suppliers, and highlight who they are, on the menu for the day if possible. It was also suggested that Malcolm Roughead be encouraged to stay for the duration of the event and to be available to network with businesses on the day. Vicki to invite Malcolm to the full day event and identify a suitable PR opportunity, e.g. visit with Malcolm and Chair of ATP to a local business. As last year all members of the Tourism Partnership should promote this event to colleagues and businesses.

On the 16<sup>th</sup> March as part of Scottish Tourism Week it was also noted that MSPs, Councillors and MPs were to be invited by the Scottish Tourism Forum to visit tourism businesses. The meeting decided that while this was a good idea and could be taken forward by the Partnership locally that the timing was not right. However, it was agreed that an invitation should be extended to all MSPs and MPs to attend the Tourism Conference. Councillor Hayton suggested that once the elections are over the Partnership should consider a presentation to the Parliamentary Forum hosted by Perth & Kinross Council. The Parliamentary Forum is attended by MSPs and MPs from all parties. The Partnership agreed that this would be a useful opportunity and should be an item on the agenda for the next Partnership meeting in April.

#### **Item 7 – Monitoring the Area Tourism Action Plan**

Catherine Dunkerley talked to the group about how we will record progress on the various actions within the ATP Plan. At a national level there are currently 5 sub groups set up by the Scottish Executive to look at progress against the key themes within the Tourism Framework for Change document. Area Tourism Partnerships will need to provide a report of progress twice a year.

Catherine advised that a template will be created which will allow local ATP's to record and monitor progress. These documents would then be looked at on a Scotland wide basis and growth indicators monitored on a yearly basis.

Following discussion it was agreed that Vicki, Joanne and Ian take the lead in completing the monitoring template and that this be tabled at the April meeting. The meeting will review progress and identify any potential issues where actions have not been met.

#### **Item 8 – Update from Kinross-shire Partnership**

Ewan Cathcart gave a brief and humorous introduction to the work of the above group. Topics covered were:

- Geography
- History
- Events
- Partnerships
- Current Tourism Survey
- Current Developments

Their new logo, which carries the strapline, 'Kinross-shire – The Friendly County, was unveiled.

#### **Items 9 & 10 – deferred until next meeting**

#### **Item 11 – AOB**

Joanne advised that the Economic Development conference will take place on 26 February at the Birnam Institute. The theme for the conference was the Metropolitan Agenda, a copy of the agenda is available by telephoning the Economic Development Unit on 01738 477949. Key speakers included Nicol Stevens.

Catherine advised that all finished local Tourism Strategies will soon be available on [www.visitscotland.org](http://www.visitscotland.org) and that plans are in the pipeline to create pages for all local ATP's. these pages will include contact details and minutes.

The next meeting will be at Crieff Hydro on Thursday, 26 April. 12 noon for lunch, meeting to start at 1pm.