

FIFE TOURISM PARTNERSHIP EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

23rd January 2019
The Byre Theatre, St Andrews

Note of Meeting

Attending:

Board Members:

Ian Greig	Newhill farm Cottages
Linn Williamson	Grill 48
Heather Stuart	Fife Cultural Trust
Cllr Ian Cameron	Fife Council
Will Docker	Balgove & Chair of Fife Food Network
Chris Broome	Fife Coast & Countryside Trust
Findlay Withers	Scottish Deer Centre
Moira Henderson	The Rings
John Kirkaldy	Cairnsmill Caravan park
Caroline Warburton	VisitScotland
Sandra Montador-Stewart	Fife Council

In attendance:

Ann Camus	Fife Council
John Murray	Fife Council

Apologies:

Chris Foote	Dunfermline Delivers & Chair of Fife Events Group
Joa Bell	Kingswood Hotel
Bryan McCabe-Bell	Fife College
Morag Peattie	The Old Manor Hotel

1	Welcome, Minutes and Matters Arising a) Welcome & Apologies Sandra Montador-Stewart chaired the meeting. Findlay Withers, General Manager of The Scottish Deer Centre was welcomed to the board by all. b) Minutes Minutes were agreed as a true record. Minutes were amended to correct. Heather Stuart's surname and the fact that both Heather & Caroline appeared in attending & apologies.	Action
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2 Strategy Discussion

(a) Fife Tourism Strategy Action Plan – Ann Camus

Ann advised that the Council’s design team are working on the strategy and plan to launch at next meeting on 25th April subject to approval by Fife Council’s Economy, Tourism, Strategic Planning and Transportation Committee at its meeting on 14th March.

Ann

Ann provided an overview of the draft Fife Tourism Strategy Action Plan and it was agreed that a working group would be established to help to fully develop the action plan. Heather Stuart and Ian Greig volunteered to be part of the working group, any others who wish to be involved to let Ann know.

Caroline noted that Fife Council was indicated as lead & delivery on the majority of the actions in the draft action plan and suggested that partners could be identified for these. Ann explained that this would be taken forward as the action plan was fully developed.

The Action Plan will show short, medium & long term goals. A lead person can be identified for each goal and would bring updates to the board.

(b) Fair Hospitality Campaign – Ann Camus

Following a request from Dr Claire Baker MSP, Fife Council’s Economy, Tourism, Strategic Planning and Transportation Committee considered a report by the Head of Economy, Planning and Employability Services seeking endorsement in Fife for the Fair Hospitality campaign, promoted by the Union, Unite, and proposing that the introduction of the Voluntary Hospitality Charter be supported, as part of the national Fair Hospitality campaign.

Fife Council’s Economy, Tourism, Strategic Planning and Transportation Committee are asking that Fife Tourism Partnership consider endorsing the aims of the Fair Hospitality campaign.

Members of the Board felt that implementing the charter would cause businesses a lot of difficulties and most businesses work in an ethical manor already. It was felt that many businesses would close if they were forced to pay the living wage

Some members of the board also felt that there should be a greater focus on businesses who are operating immorally and that these businesses would be easier to target.

Ann/John

Some staff of board members are happier on a zero hour contract.

The Board agreed that they could simply promote good practice examples to the business community and that this could be built into the action plan. Good practice examples and assistance from businesses would be welcomed.

(c) Transient Visitor Tax – Sandra Montador-Stewart

Sandra led a discussion regarding the Scottish Government’s consultation regarding Transient Visitor tax, to gather views from the Board to inform Fife Council’s response to the consultation. .

The views of members of the Board were as follows:

- Ten years of austerity had impacted on public services, particularly those that interface with visitors; path networks, beaches, theatres, toilet provision, road repairs etc.
- A new tax on visitors to Scotland could impact on Scotland’s reputation as a leading global destination.
- The standard rate of tax at 20% was high enough to provide a budget for tourism and the Scottish Government should lobby the UK Government for a proportion of this revenue, specifically the element that has been gained from tourism businesses and that this is then given to the appropriate local authority area for tourism management and investment.
- “Over tourism” is only happening in some parts of Scotland and case study models which look specifically at visitor management to overcome the impact of this issue could be examined. There was thought to be no evidence to suggest that any other model has been investigated to mitigate “over tourism” in places such as Edinburgh and Skye where this type of visitor impact is evident.

In conclusion, the board agreed that the Scottish Government, along with VisitScotland and Scottish Enterprise, should consider other ways of mitigating issues that are essentially about visitor management and the quality of the tourism offer across Scotland.

Other recommendations included:

1. Lobbying the UK Government and the Treasury to ring fence tourism VAT revenues to be spent on tourism infrastructure, local authority provision and destination management
2. Looking at Case Studies from across Europe and beyond – demonstrating how other areas, like Barcelona have dealt with such issues
3. Consideration given to a Scotland Tourism BID – gathering funds from tourism businesses across Scotland that can then be invested in tourism (could be supported through an infrastructure fund)

	<p>4. Developing a Scotland-wide destination benchmarking study – this would enable every local authority in Scotland to understand its destination weaknesses and strengths which in turn will enable weak areas to become a focus for investment; this would also enable the Scottish Government to understand its destination more fully and to set minimum standards for provision (could be supported through an infrastructure fund)</p> <p>5. Tourism begins at home principle - all of these public services are there to enhance the life of local people and given that the majority of visitors to Scotland are from the UK, then it should be about getting the experience right for local people, linked to wellness and sense of place, this would then ensure visitors are given a good experience too. “Over tourism” is a problem for local people not just visitors.</p>	
<p>3</p>	<p>PERFORMANCE</p> <p>(a) Annual activity review – Ann Camus</p> <p>This has been postponed to the next meeting so that more time was allocated to the Tourism Tax Discussion.</p>	

<p>4</p>	<p>UPDATES</p> <p>(a) Caravan & Camping – John Kirkaldy</p> <p>John Kirkaldy explained that although 2018 was a cold and slow start to the year, the summer season was successful with high bookings.</p> <p>John mentioned that planning was given in North East Fife for 170 pitches and there are plans within the Tayport Community Hub for camping.</p> <p>West Sands was previously a problem for wild campers but this has now become a problem in areas of the East Neuk.</p> <p>Ann suggested supermarkets could be encouraged to look at providing provisions for motorhomes. During high season, many turn up in St Andrews with nowhere able to cater for them.</p> <p>Chris Broome expressed that sales in motorhomes have increased 24% recently and the Fife Coast & Countryside Trust have concerns over hot spots such as Ruby Bay in Elie where many park overnight.</p> <p>Moira Henderson felt that there was perhaps an opportunity for farmers with land to look at how they can capitalise on this market.</p> <p>John also felt that camping in Fife has become non-existent.</p> <p>Fife Council have a lot of underused facilities which could be an opportunity.</p>	
<p>5</p>	<p>OPERATIONAL ISSUES</p> <p>(a) Position of Chair</p> <p>Sandra Montador-Stewart asked the board if there were any nominations for Chair of the Fife Tourism Partnership.</p> <p>Ian Greig nominated Moira Henderson. This was seconded by John Kirkaldy. No other nominations were received and the board congratulated Moira Henderson on becoming the new chair.</p>	

<p>6</p>	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>John Murray mentioned the Fife Tourism Barometer which is open until 25th February. Survey can be taken at https://www.snapsurveys.com/wh/s.asp?k=154719946835</p> <p>John Kirkaldy mentioned that John Cameron who was planning to create a Railway Visitor Centre and Open Farm has been rejected. John Cameron can seek letters of support from the Fife Tourism Partnership board.</p> <p>Linn Williamson has been selected for a learning journey which will take her to Iceland. The Sense of Place Icelandic Culinary Experience takes a group of food tourism & hospitality professionals from the UK will travel to South Iceland for a learning journey focused on the cultural heritage, flavours, and sense of place which contribute to the area's overall visitor experience</p> <p>Ann Camus stated that the intention is to launch the Tourism Strategy at the next Board Meeting.</p> <p>Findlay Withers thanked the board for an interesting meeting and is looking forward to communicating more with the tourism sectors.</p> <p>Chris Broome mentioned that the group could get a Fife Pilgrim Way update at the next meeting.</p> <p>Caroline Warburton explained a Solheim Cup Ready event would take place on 6th February at Murrayshall in Scone.</p>	
	<p>Future Meeting Dates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25th April 2019, venue to be confirmed 	