

**Moray Economic Strategy
Tourism and Culture Group Meeting
8th of January 2014, Board Room (HIE Moray, Forres)**

MEETING NOTE

ATTENDEES	Andrew Anderson (AA) and Nicole Green (NG) – Highlands and Islands Enterprise; Margery McLennan (MC) and Laura Cruickshank (LC) – Moray Chamber of Commerce; Cllr Gary Coull (GC) – Moray Council; Tina McGeever (TM) – Out of the Darkness Theatre Company; Gill Neill (GN) – Elgin BID; Scott Armstrong (SA) and Rona Wallace (RW) – Visit Scotland.
APOLOGIES	Anna McPherson (AM) – Creative Moray; Gordon Paul (GP) – Wm Grant; Kim Paterson (KP) – Moray Council.

1) Review of previous meeting note.

Accepted as written.

2) Feedback on actions from previous meeting.

All actions complete to date.

3) Visit Scotland (Scott Armstrong – Regional Director, Rona Wallace – Regional Brand Manager).

Presentation from SA and RW of Visit Scotland. SA is based in Inverness and RW in Edinburgh.

SA gave an overview of Visit Scotland and recent changes to their service.

Visit Scotland are a Non-Departmental Government Organisation, with head office in Edinburgh. They have a budget of around £55 million each year, the majority of which comes from the Scottish Government. Funding also comes from around 32 Local Authorities through a Service Level Agreement. This money will fund the network of Tourism Visitor Centres through an informal agreement with the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities. There are three categories of Visitor Centre: 1 – Provides a service to the whole of Scotland, receives 100% funding; 2 – Provides a service to the region, receives 50% funding from Visit Scotland and 50% from the Local Authority; 3 – Provides a local service, 100% funded from the Local Authority. Local Authorities are also supported with marketing. Visit Scotland also receive funds from the commercial sector, through the grading scheme and marketing service.

Changes to Visit Scotland – All accommodation businesses can now work with Visit Scotland without being Quality Assured, although this is still recommended. Any business can now register on the Visit Scotland website for free.

Event Scotland are part of Visit Scotland but have their own Chief Executive.

Visit Scotland are not responsible for any product development or training.

90% of visitors to Scotland are from the UK, with the highest spend levels coming from International visitors who tend to visit more in the summer months.

MM attended the Visit Scotland Digital Marketing Event in Edinburgh last year, from which it was found that around 65-7% of bookings are now made online, a large proportion of which are from Smartphones. The internet plays a large part in the decision making process before booking also, where people will spend a lot of time looking for offers etc.

This is the last year of the printed accommodation guides, after which this will be online. There will still be printed 'What to See and Do' guides. Printed guides can be expensive to distribute and store and an online version will be much more flexible and easily edited.

RW gave an overview of the marketing campaigns which Visit Scotland run and the work involved.

A segmentation profile for the UK is being updated with 6 new segments. This will be available to view on the website at the end of March.

The marketing campaign is multi touch point covering online, newspapers and television.

A monthly E-Zine is sent out, edited for each segment.

The importance of Trip Advisor was discussed and is recommended to all in the sector.

Television adverts are still useful as they provide an emotional attachment to the area, raising awareness and creating a brand. The 'Brilliant Moments' campaign will use local knowledge and visitors' experiences. RW is creating a bank of these and any submissions should include an image and three lines.

Businesses who have placed information on the website can log in and edit or add new offers and information at any time. Businesses should be encouraged to work together on offers and promotions. This could be the difference in choosing one area over another.

Year Round Events Calendar – RW to circulate a bulk upload spreadsheet for this.

Visit Scotland also offer a Marketing Growth Fund which provides funding towards a three year marketing plan. 50% of funding must be private to be eligible. They are also happy to help with marketing through workshops and provision of advice.

Each area has an assigned Quality and Tourism advisor, Moray's being Lynette Reid.

4) Best of Moray.

This is a website being run independently by Andy Loveday.

5) Tourist and Community Signing Reports.

These will be circulated for comment.

6) Buckie Drifter Proposal.

An early expression of interest has been placed for a Community Asset Transfer of the Buckie Drifter. AA to meet with the interested group this week to discuss next stages of a more complete application and business plan.

7) 2013 STEAM reports.

Highlands and Islands Enterprise commission these every year. The report for 2013 gave some interesting statistics which show Moray to have a total direct revenue increase of 6% from January to June 2013.

AA to send a copy of report to GN.

8) AOB.

Morayvia will be holding a naming ceremony for the Nimrod on Monday 13th of January.

MM and LC attended a Tourism Development Event hosted by the Aberdeenshire Council in Aboyne in November. This was based around the German format of tourism with various levels being represented.

Wild Bird, an arts company based in Moray, who work in various forms including image projection, are looking to apply for creative industry funding. They currently have letters of support from Elgin BID and the Moray Chamber of Commerce. MM asked the group if this should be supported in kind by the MEP to which the group agreed. They are looking to hold an event in Elgin this year.

9) Date of next meeting.

TBC – late February.

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ACTIONS FROM MEETING

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APOLOGIES	Anna McPherson (AM) – Creative Moray; Gordon Paul (GP) – Wm Grant; Kim Paterson (KP) – Moray Council.

AGENDA ITEM	DECISION	ACTION BY
3	Circulate Year Round Events Calendar bulk upload spreadsheet.	RW
7	Send a copy of STEAM 2013 report to GN.	AA

Key:

INITIALS	NAME OF PERSON
RW	Rona Wallace
GN	Gill Neill
AA	Andrew Anderson