

DUNOON AND COWAL BUSINESS ASSOCIATION.

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report gives Members updated information on a request from the Dunoon and Cowal Business Association to enter into a partnership agreement with the Council.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to note and consider this request to form a Partnership, and to consider if appropriate how many, and which, Members of the Area Committee should attend Partnership meetings.

3.0 DETAIL

- 3.1 Members will be aware of the recent formation of the Dunoon and Cowal Business Association, which has come together thanks to the leadership and interest shown by members of the local business community. Members will also recall that the development of a vibrant, effective Business Association for the Dunoon and Cowal area was one of the key aims of the Land Use Consultant's report into developing Dunoon and Cowal as the Marine Gateway to Scotland's First National Park.
- 3.2 It has been a long term aim of the elected Members, and all of the partners working together in the Destination Dunoon and Cowal initiative, to have an effective, forward thinking Business Association working cohesively with all those involved in developing the area, in order that the commercial interests of both local businesses, and of the customers who use them, can be fully represented in taking the area forward and regenerating the local economy.
- 3.3 The formation of the Dunoon and Cowal Business Association is a significant step forward in achieving those aims.

- 3.4 The Business Association has for some months been participating effectively in the Destination Dunoon and Cowal Steering Group, and in the sub groups working on developing Dunoon, and on Tourism, Assets, Marketing and Events. They have already proved that they have a valuable role to play in these partnership forums.
- 3.5 Following consideration of this request at the June Area Committee, a meeting was held with the Business Association's Manager, who has outlined the benefits which the Association see in forming and developing a direct Partnership with the Council. They feel that being able to work directly in a structured way with the local elected Members, and with officers of the Council, will enable them to progress many of their aims and objectives in the most efficient way. Their aims and objectives, which include working for the development of the local economy, are very much in line with Councils' key priority of Creating an Attractive, Well Connected, Modern Economy. The Association also noted that direct partnership with the Council could help them in regard to potential funding applications which they may wish to make, which could in turn help them develop their sustainability ,and also aid them lever in funding for local initiatives which they may wish to progress.
- 3.6 From the Council's perspective, a direct Partnership with the Business Association could help the authority make real and meaningful links with the local business community via one representative organisation, improving our engagement with that sector and gaining better understanding of the existing and future commercial environment.
- 3.7 It is suggested that if agreement is reached to formulate a partnership, meetings would be held three times a year with the Association. It will be for the Area Committee to decide how many, and which, Members of the Area Committee should attend Partnership meetings.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 Members are asked to note the content of the submitted information and consider the request to form a Partnership with the Dunoon and Cowal Business Association.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

Policy: In line with Council policy to develop an attractive, well connected, modern economy
Financial: None
Personnel: None
Equal Opportunities: None

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