

Argyll and Bute Council
Comhairle Earra Ghaidheal agus Bhoid

Corporate Services
Director: Nigel Stewart



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19 August 2009

NOTICE OF MEETING

A meeting of the **ECONOMY POLICY AND PERFORMANCE GROUP** will be held in the **MEMBERS ROOM, KILMORY, LOCHGILPHEAD** on **WEDNESDAY, 26 AUGUST 2009** at **2:00 PM**, which you are requested to attend.

Nigel Stewart
Director of Corporate Services

BUSINESS

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (IF ANY)**
3. **MINUTES**
Economy Policy and Performance Group – 29 April 2009 (Pages 1 - 4)
4. **TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY**
Report by Head of Economic Development and Strategic Transportation (Pages 5 - 8)
5. **ARGYLL AND BUTE ECONOMIC ACTION PLAN**
Report by Head of Economic Development and Strategic Transportation (to follow)
6. **BRANDING ARGYLL AND BUTE - FOOD FROM ARGYLL**
Report by Director of Development Services (Pages 9 - 12)
7. **LANDSLIDE SITE AT A83**
Report by Head of Roads and Amenity Services (Pages 13 - 14)
8. **REVIEW OF EVENTS & FESTIVALS AND HOMECOMING 2009 FUNDING PROGRAMMES**
Report by Head of Planning and Performance (Pages 15 - 20)

9. IDENTIFICATION OF 3 PRIORITY AREAS

ECONOMY POLICY AND PERFORMANCE GROUP

Councillor Robin Currie
Councillor Alister McAlister
Councillor Ellen Morton
Councillor Elaine Robertson
Donald Brown
Robert Pollock
Donald MacVicar

Councillor Donald MacMillan
Councillor Alex McNaughton
Councillor Gary Mulvaney
Councillor Ron Simon
Shirley MacLeod
Stewart Turner

Contact: Fiona McCallum Tel: 01546 604406

**MINUTES of MEETING of ECONOMY POLICY AND PERFORMANCE GROUP held in the
MCCAIG SUITE, CORRAN HALLS, OBAN
on WEDNESDAY, 29 APRIL 2009**

Present: Councillor Ron Simon (Chair)

Councillor Robin Currie	Councillor Donald MacMillan
Councillor Alister McAlister	Councillor Ellen Morton
Councillor Elaine Robertson	

Also Present: Councillor Donald MacDonald Councillor Neil Mackay

Attending: Shirley MacLeod, Area Corporate Services Manager
George Harper, Director of Development Services
Scott Armstrong, Regional Director, Visit Scotland
Pamela McMan, Visit Scotland
Rowena Ferguson, Deputising for Provost Petrie
Samantha Coope, Social Inclusion Division, Scottish Government
Chris Carr, Research & Information Officer
Jim McCrossan, Community Learning & Regeneration Manager
Jeannie Hollies, Acting Area Manager, Community Learning & Regeneration
Jane Fowler, European Manager

Prior to the commencement of business the Chairman expressed his appreciation of both the Craftwork Project and Visit Scotland for their hospitality prior to this meeting. He added that the Craftwork Project is very successful and agreed to write to the Chief Executive promoting that the Council, and other large employers, be more proactive in employing those taking part in the Project.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor MacNaughton

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (IF ANY)

There were no declarations of interest

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Economy Policy and Performance Group of 28th January 2009 were approved as a correct record.

4. VISIT SCOTLAND

The PPG heard a presentation from Scott Armstrong, Regional Director of Visit Scotland, assisted by Pamela McMahon, who provided an outline of Visit Scotland's remit and statistics on tourism throughout Argyll and Bute. They then answered questions put by the Group and agreed to forward a copy of their presentation to Shirley MacLeod for circulation to the PPG.

5. SIMD AND INDICATORS OF RURAL DEPRIVATION

(a) PRESENTATION BY EQUALITIES, SOCIAL INCLUSION AND SPORT DIRECTORATE/SOCIAL INCLUSION DIVISION, SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

The PPG heard from Samantha Coope, Social Inclusion Division of the Scottish Government, on tackling poverty and income inequality in Scotland.

(b) PRESENTATION BY CHRIS CARR, RESEARCH AND INFORMATION OFFICER, ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

The PPG heard a presentation from Chris Carr, Research and Information Officer with Argyll and Bute Council, who provided examples of many of the statistics showing areas of deprivation throughout Argyll and Bute. Chris agreed to copy her presentation to Shirley MacLeod for circulation to the Group.

6. RURAL DEPRIVATION: REPORT ON POSSIBILITY OF A NATIONAL NETWORK OF AUTHORITIES TO TAKE FORWARD THE RURAL AGENDA: PROPOSAL FOR A SUB-GROUP OF THE COSLA 'TACKLING POVERTY' OFFICERS GROUP

The PPG considered a report on the progress made by the Community Learning and Regeneration (CLR) Service with scoping interest in a Scotland-wide network that could support work on shared rural issues of deprivation and disadvantage.

Decision

1. That the sub-group work through a COSLA Officers sub-group to minimise financial implications for participants
2. That the Council influence the remit of the sub-group
3. That the sub-group promote positive outcomes using statistics in a positive manner to identify potential areas of deprivation which the current statistics fail to identify, in order that targeting of resources and strategies can be more effective in targeting hidden rural deprivation and disadvantage
4. That the sub-group to report to the Economy PPG at six monthly intervals

(Reference: Report by Director of Community Services dated 20th April 2009, submitted)

7. REPORT ON COSLA 'TACKLING POVERTY' OFFICERS GROUP MEETING OF 26TH FEBRUARY 2009.

A report on COSLA "Tackling Poverty" Officers Group Meeting held on 26th February 2009 was considered

Decision

1. To note the contents of the report

2. Notes on future meetings to be brought to the PPG by Jeannie Holles, in the absence of minutes produced by the Group

(Reference: Report by Director of Community Services dated 20th April 2009, submitted)

8. BUSINESS GATEWAY

The PPG considered a report updating on progress in developing Business Gateway in Argyll and Bute.

Decision

1. To note the progress made in the development of a new service to business by the Council
2. To agree to a presentation by the new Business Gateway Team on the core service and development options being made to the November meeting of the Economy PPG

(Ref: Report by European Manager, submitted)

9. UPDATE ON MARKETING FOR ARGYLL FOOD PRODUCERS

A report advising on progress by the Argyll Food Producers group branding pilot and presenting an option for launching and rolling out the generic Argyll and Bute Brand website was considered.

Decision

1. To note the positive development of the Food from Argyll branding pilot and in particular the opportunity presented by the IRB Rugby Sevens in May 2009.
2. To recommend the activation of the brand website to coincide with the IRB event.
3. To request the European Manager to compile a list of suggested names for the brand website and circulate to the PPG for consideration.

(Ref: Report by European Manager, submitted)

10. DEVELOPMENT OF THEMATIC GROUPS

The PPG considered a report on the draft proposals for the establishment of three new "Thematic Groups" which will link to the Community Planning Partnership.

Decision

1. To note the report by the Director of Corporate Services.
2. To recommend to the Council that the PPG support, in principle, the establishment of three new "Thematic Groups"

Ref: Report by Director of Corporate Services dated 17th April 2009, submitted)

11. PROPOSED FUTURE ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

The Chairman circulated Area Strategy and National Economic Strategy documents for future discussion.

The next meeting of the Economy PPG will be held on Wednesday 26th August 2009.

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL**ECONOMY PPG****Economic Development and
Strategic Transport****26 August 2009**

Local Transport Strategy Update

1. SUMMARY

A new Local Transport Strategy (LTS) for Argyll and Bute was endorsed by both the Council and the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) in the spring of 2007, following extensive community consultation.

Following is an update of Moving Forward's progress to date.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following paper is an update for noting.

3. BACKGROUND

The strategy, Moving Forward, set out plans and policies for transport in Argyll and Bute from 2007 - 2010, and also gave an indication as to our future aspirations.

The vision for the LTS was to enable a vibrant Argyll and Bute and our objectives were to:

- Encourage a growing and sustainable economy in Argyll and Bute.
- Improve people's transport experience.
- Manage the effect of transport on Argyll and Bute's rich natural environment.
- Improve accessibility for all our communities.
- Improve journey safety and personal security for everyone in Argyll and Bute.

The action plan to achieve these objectives was developed through an analysis of the current situation in the area, an understanding of the challenges and opportunities present and current transport policy. The action plan has been broken down into a number of themes – Infrastructure, Passenger Transport, Freight Transport, Sea Transport, Active Travel and Safety.

The following gives an initial outline of progress to date against each of these themes:

Infrastructure (I01 – I05):

Regular liaison / lobbying with Transport Scotland and Scotland TranServ in connection with improvements to our trunk roads – in particular the A83 landslip at Glen Ogle and the A82.

Road improvements to the 'A' and 'B' class road network including the areas of Lomond, Cowal and Mid Argyll for the benefit of the communities and primary industries.

Maintaining the roads network in accordance with Roads Maintenance and Asset Management Plan.

Progressing the design of major infrastructure projects, e.g. -

A816 Oban – Lochgilphead at various locations, A848 Salen – Tobermory, A85 Oban Development Road. (STAG appraisals for these projects have also been completed), A849 Pennyghael Bridge design work.

Passenger Transport (PT01 – PT11)

Continuing development of the public transport network, e.g. -

- expansion of bus services to Hunters Quay holiday village
- enhanced summer coach services, Oban – Glasgow
- air services to Coll, Colonsay and Tiree
- bus connections for Jura fast ferry

Improvements to public transport information and infrastructure, e.g. -

- additional bus stops/boarding areas and shelters
- information columns/panels
- expansion of Real Time Information
- provision of parking at Arrochar and Tarbet rail station

Freight Transport (FT01 – 05)

Continuing to work with local industries, primarily the timber industry, to develop the strategic timber transport network and encourage the shipment of timber by sustainable modes, e.g. Furnace Pier Feasibility Study.

Sea Transport (ST01 – ST06)

Improvements to infrastructure such as Port Askaig, Rothesay and new waiting / toilet facilities at Gigha.

STAG appraisals complete for Luing, Easdale and Campbeltown – Ballycastle. The appraisal for Lismore is nearing completion.

Pursuing improved marine access to the National Park through progression of a pier facility at Arrochar

Major involvement in the Scottish Governments comprehensive review of ferry services in Scotland.

Active Travel (AT01 – AT04)

Improvements to infrastructure for active travel such as Kilmartin to B840 cycleway, Taynuilt footbridge and continuation of the Oban – Fort William cycleway.

Continue to encourage sustainable travel, e.g. –

- working with other Council departments to ensure the needs of pedestrians and cyclists are considered at the planning stage of developments to maximise opportunities for cycling and walking.
- implementation of travel plans, both for the Council and private companies
- continuation of the school travel plan programme.
- promotion of car sharing website
- working with Council initiatives including Process for Change and the Local Authority Carbon Management Plan to achieve a reduction in business and commuter travel.

Safety (S01 – 04)

Continuing to raise road safety awareness across the area through:

- current local educational involvement including the development of an interactive whiteboard resource for use in all our Primary Schools and the introduction of a new S1-2 Secondary resource.
- involvement in a new national project to develop a replacement for the 'Children's traffic Club in Scotland'
- involvement in the development and promotion of West of Scotland Road Safety Forum cross boundary publicity campaigns, e.g. 'Hero to Zero' and '20mph Zones'
- monitoring crash and casualty trends and developing a new annual statistical reporting format

4. CONCLUSION

The LTS Action Plan is progressing to schedule and is being carried forward by the Strategic Transportation Manager.

5. IMPLICATIONS

POLICY	The LTS is one of a suite of Council policy documents. It continues to set a direction for future investment in transport.
FINANCIAL	There are no immediate financial consequences to the production of this update. It is important that the LTS Action Plan continues to be seen as the basis for directing funding for future public transport and infrastructure projects.
PERSONNEL	Secondment of Transportation staff to the CHORD project has meant a reduction in the level of staff resources available. This is currently being reviewed.
EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES	Improvements to public transport services will increase opportunities for the disabled, the elderly and those without access to a car.

LEGAL	Whilst there is no statutory basis for the strategy or the Action Plan, it will continue to inform both regional and national transport policy, and has been widely recognised as an example of good practice.
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For further information please contact Moya Ingram, Strategic Transportation Manager tel: 01546 604190.

Robert Pollock
Head of Economic Development and Strategic Transport.

**ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

**ECONOMY PPG
26 AUGUST 2009**

BRANDING ARGYLL AND BUTE – FOOD FROM ARGYLL

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1** This report updates members on progress of the Argyll Food Producers - Food From Argyll initiative and highlights the potential for further useful partnerships in marketing Argyll and Bute, the role of the website and a current market research project.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1**
1. To note the success of the partnership approach in the Food from Argyll initiative and the potential for other sectors to follow a similar approach to a joined up marketing of Argyll and Bute.
 2. To note the potential role of the website to provide a portal service for key sectors in Argyll and Bute.
 3. To note the market research work currently being undertaken by the Argyll Food Producers and the further development of the Argyll and the Isles website.

3. DETAIL

- 3.1** The Council's previous Corporate Plan identified branding the area as a key action for Argyll. The Council has supported successful pilot work with the Argyll Food Producers (AFP) – Food From Argyll initiative. The Branding theme was removed as an action from the Corporate Plan in 2009 due to budget constraints, but remains as a Campaigning topic.
- 3.2** Work has been taken forward by the European Manager and the Agricultural Forum Development Manager. The Brand identity was presented to the Community Planning Partnership Management Committee and the Area Tourism Partnership, and received a positive response. Other sectors within Argyll have shown interest in the partnership approach demonstrated by the AFP in marketing Argyll. The Agricultural Forum is in

contact with a number of food groups, Chambers of Commerce and renewable energy groups who are keen to pursue a joined up marketing approach. This is dependent on resource availability.

- 3.3 The AFP (under an Argyll and the Isles umbrella identity) attended 6 events in 2008 with the Food from Argyll initiative, taking high quality catered food from Argyll producers. This has expanded in 2009 to 8 events including music festivals, sporting events, Highland Games and the BBC Proms in the Park. The producers have attended these events on a commercial basis and continue to promote the Argyll brand. The Argyll and Bute Agricultural forum continues to work with the group on a 3 year business plan and have applied for Scottish Government Marketing Development Scheme Funding for a Marketing Development Role to support this.
- 3.4 The project received a Gold Excellence Award from the Council and has won a "Food Oscar" with a national Scottish Food and Drink Excellence Award for partnership working. The project continues to receive significant press and publicity, e.g. featured on Sky Sports and Radio Scotland. The project has been utilised as a best practice case study by, Cooperative Development Scotland, Scottish Agricultural Organisation Society and the Scottish Agricultural College.
- 3.5 The launch of the Argyll and the Isles branded website www.argyllandtheisles.com (at the International Rugby Sevens event in May) and the Food from Argyll Group sub-page, has enabled the group to promote a central reference point that they can manage through their market development officer role. The Council retains the control and management of the main site and this will be developed in terms of content and profile in the coming months.
- 3.6 The success of the Food From Argyll initiative as a commercial opportunity and in promoting the profile of Argyll has led to a number of new businesses participating at events and others wishing to utilise the brand. The route for the wider use of the Food from Argyll brand with other business is an opportunity that requires further consideration.
- 3.7 Anecdotal evidence has suggested that the recognition of Argyll has increased due to the activities of the Food From Argyll initiative and that the producers now have a following. The Council is assisting the Argyll Food Producers in undertaking market research at the remaining events during 2009. Together with researching the potential for expanding the demand for a Food from Argyll retail offering the research will assess the recognition of Argyll among the customer base.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1** The Food from Argyll initiative continues to be successful in promoting the Argyll Brand and demonstrating a successful partnership approach. Further consideration of the opportunity to facilitate sectoral partnerships that can widen the Argyll Brand is required. However, further roll out of the brand strategy is dependent on resource availability. Finally, the new website will be further developed in terms of content and profile in the coming months.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Policy: This service delivers on the Corporate Plan objective of developing an attractive, well connected and modern economy. The projects delivers on the campaigning theme of Branding Argyll and Bute

Financial: None

Personnel: None

Equal Opportunity: None

For further information contact: Fergus Younger, Argyll and Bute
Agricultural Forum

Telephone 01586552502

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS:

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ARGYLL & BUTE COUNCIL
OPERATIONAL SERVICES

ECONOMY POLICY AND PERFORMANCE
GROUP
26 AUGUST 2009

A83 REST AND BE THANKFUL

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Report is to advise the Policy and Performance Group of the timetable for the roadworks to remove the traffic lights at the Rest and Be Thankful

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Policy and Performance Group note the contents of this Report.

3. DETAILS

The road was closed as result of a landslide on 28 October 2007. It was estimated that the quantity of material was around 400 tonnes. Works were put in place to remove this material and the road was partially re-opened on Monday 10 November. As the travelling public will have noted there have been vehicle activated traffic signals on site since that time and the reason why some drivers have noticed fixed time traffic time is due to the fact that other drivers have driven through red lights thus creating difficulties for the signals and putting them back to a default position of fixed time. If all drivers observe the signals then the lights would remain on vehicle activated.

Since the landslip there has been much discussion between Transport Scotland as the Client and their Contractor Scotland TranServ who manage and maintain the trunk road network on their behalf. A geotechnical ground investigation has been completed and I understand that the design works and contract documentation are at an advanced stage which will allow the works to commence on site in February 2010. From the information available it is anticipated that a large culvert will be located below the A83 trunk road to allow flood water to move from one side of the hillside without affecting the road. There will be some delays, as can be expected for any road reconstruction works but we are advised that this will be kept to a minimum. At present it is anticipated that the works will be completed by the summer 2010. Once further information is provided by Transport Scotland/Scotland TranServ this information will be forwarded to the appropriate Members. A press release will then be issued to allow the travelling public to be fully aware of these planned works.

4. IMPLICATIONS

4.1	Policy	None
4.2	Financial	None
4.3	Personnel	None
4.4	Equalities Impact Assessment	None
4.5	Legal	None

For further information, please contact Stewart Turner, Head of Roads & Amenity Services (01546 604611).

Stewart Turner
Head of Roads & Amenity Services
17 August 2009

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

ECONOMY POLICY AND
PERFORMANCE GROUP

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY
SERVICES

26TH AUGUST 2009

REVIEW OF EVENTS & FESTIVALS AND HOMECOMING 2009 FUNDING PROGRAMMES

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report was requested by members of the PPG to provide background information on Events and Festivals funding in Argyll and Bute over the last 5 years and the impact this has had on developing community events across the whole area. There is no Events and Festivals funding identified in the Council's revenue budget from 2010/11 onwards and this paper will allow members to consider the potential consequences of this on cultural tourism within the area.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1. Members are asked to note the expenditure and activity levels over the last few years and to consider future policy implications for Events and Festivals and cultural tourism.

3. DETAIL

- 3.1. The government has identified that Scotland's culture and heritage is a strong differentiating factor that can be used to attract major events. This includes a rich history, world famous food and drink, a reputation as a leading nation in the fields of education and innovation, iconic poets, artists, writers and musicians and the vibrant contemporary scene in today's Scotland. It also includes the diversity of language in Scotland, including Gaelic and Scots. EventScotland markets and promotes Scotland on an international stage and a key element of this is the promotion of the country's natural environment. Argyll and Bute has a major part to play in this with a rich array of beautiful and dramatic landscapes ranging from mountains to lochs to beaches and magnificent islands. The landscapes in this area are both diverse and unique and are a key asset in attracting events and people to the area. The development and promotion of events also fits very clearly with the Scottish Government's economic strategy in a number of ways:-

Wealthier & fairer: the economic impact of events supports growth in the Argyll and Bute economy and helps to promote the area as a place to invest in and visit.

Smarter: as an area with a large number of people involved in tourism, events can assist with skills improvement and greater training of a wide range of individuals.

Healthier: as a contribution by promoting sporting events to encourage people to become more active.

Greener: there is a contribution through sustainable events to protect Scotland's landscape and natural heritage.

- 3.2. It has been identified at a national level that partnership working is essential to delivering an effective events strategy. The last few years in Argyll and Bute have demonstrated that this is the case and the council has worked effectively with our key public partners to successfully develop events programmes. Local authorities play a key role in engaging the support of and for the communities in which events take place. The buy in of local communities is essential for the success of delivering events of all sizes. Events can benefit communities by building confidence, belief and pride in an area and the council is a key enabler in this.
- 3.3. Legacy is a vitally important aspect of events which is well understood in the events industry. Bringing back repeat visitors to the area and continuing to stimulate the local economy is a key factor in the use of events funding. While one-off events can be very successful in their own right, they tend to have limited long term economic impact. A truly successful event not only delivers an immediate impact but also leaves a footprint of benefit for years to come.
- 3.4. In recognition of the important financial impact of cultural, sporting and heritage events to the economy of the area, Argyll and Bute Council established a £300k major Events and Festivals Fund in February 2005. The fund was identified from the Council's general reserves and not from the ongoing revenue budget. The £300k was earmarked for a three year period up to March 2008 and was intended to stimulate cultural tourism and cultural activity within the area. It was intended that the fund would place the emphasis on major festivals to maximise the economic benefit to the area. It was recognised that there were a large number of small community events which had been running for many years and were significant events within the calendars of many local communities. However, at that time it was felt that most of these would continue to survive, albeit at a relatively small scale, and that the Council's funding should be targeted towards larger events which would make a bigger economic impact in the area.

- 3.5. As a consequence, the qualification criteria for Events and Festivals aimed at creating greater economic benefit to the area and organisers were asked to provide a post economic event impact assessment to demonstrate the added spend as a result of their event. It was also determined that if events were to be considered as major they should incur an expenditure of at least £30k with a minimal Council contribution of £7.5k. During 2005 the Council allocated £100k of Events funding to a range of festivals across the area. However, in the autumn of 2005 the Highland Year of Culture (HYOC) 2007 Organising Committee approached all Councils and Local Enterprise Companies within the HIE area with an opportunity to develop event's programmes to form part of the celebrations in the HYOC 2007. Argyll and Bute was awarded a £200k commissioning budget from HYOC 2007 on the basis that the Council would provide match funding from the major Events and Festivals budget for the year. This achieved a budget of £400k for major cultural events in Argyll and Bute in 2007.
- 3.6. The opportunity to secure £200k of additional external funding to compliment and build upon the existing Events and Festival programme represented a significant economic opportunity for Argyll and Bute. It enhanced the existing cultural infrastructure of the area, increased the potential to attract visitors and media interest and maximised the opportunity to benefit from participation in Scotland's Year of Highland culture and its wider marketing programmes in the UK and abroad. Eighteen major events were awarded a grant for the HYOC 2007 and over £800k of other project costs were raised by the organisers. The impact of Events and Festivals spend during the HYOC was measured mainly in terms of overnight stays and visitors to the area. The vast majority of events passed the targets that had been set. The impact surveys from the events showed that from sixteen events there had been around 24,000 overnight stays and in excess of 78,000 visitors to the area. Events contributed to increased tourist spend in relation to accommodation, food and drink, shopping and attractions. In addition to tourists being attracted from all over the world, there was widespread coverage in a range of media from newspapers to radio and television of events. Partnership with local communities and schools was a strong element of the whole programme. The key strength of the programme was highlighting the uniqueness of Argyll and Bute with quality events.
- 3.7. Following on from the success of the major Events and Festivals funding, members approved the establishment of an Events Fund to support the development of the national Homecoming 2009 Initiative. At the Council's budget meeting in February 2008 it was agreed that a £200k fund be established to achieve a meaningful programme of events in Argyll and Bute for Homecoming 2009

and also as a means of leveraging in additional resources. Application forms and criteria were made available from May 2008 with a deadline for submission by the end of September 2008. As a result of the Council's financial commitment to the Homecoming programme further funding from the Leader Programme of £80k was also attracted for the area. A total of thirty three events received grant funding from the Argyll and Bute Homecoming Programme and only three of the smaller events have had to be cancelled.

- 3.8. The programme to-date has been a significant success with a range of high quality events taking place across the area. The marketing links with the national Homecoming programme have successfully attracted a wide range of international visitors to the area with many of the Scots diaspora returning home in 2009. Economic impact assessments are being carried out on all the events and a report will be provided in early 2010 of the full impact of the year long programme. However, feedback from organisers and participants to date has demonstrated that the Argyll and Bute programme has been a clear success. Cultural tourism has benefited significantly from the international marketing campaign and, in a year where the global economy has resulted in more visitors staying at home, there has been an increase in the number of people coming to visit events within the Argyll and Bute area. The Events programme has played a part in this and has also allowed a large number of local people to participate in valuable cultural events. The Scottish Government have confirmed that the economic impact of cultural tourism is significant and has a leverage ratio of around 4:1 in terms of public sector spend generating additional economic growth within an area for a successful event.
- 3.9. Recent government statistics show that expenditure on tourism related activities is worth around £4.2 billion per year to the Scottish economy and around 16 million tourists annually took overnight trips to Scotland. Annual occupancy rates for hotels and self catering units both rose by 5%, up to 65% and 54% respectively, over the most recent 5 year period available and visitor attraction visits showed a similar increase. With regard to local participation in arts and cultural activities in Scotland, the most recent Scottish Household survey (2007) indicates that 73% of adults stated that they had participated in or attended events. This highlights a considerable local demand and interest in cultural activities.
- 3.10. With the national Enterprise companies having to review their support of events and festivals, HIE have advised that they will not support events and festivals per se, but rather will support businesses and community groups for whom an event or festival is a product or service. This will result in a reduction in the

amount of money the Enterprise company can contribute to cultural tourism within the area but they are still willing to work with the Council on the development of a number of projects. Community driven events and festivals will be treated as community growth projects required to show that they will make a quantifiable impact on the local economy to a level at least in excess of HIE investment. In addition, they will look for a community project to demonstrate growth plans for a three year period to demonstrate sustainability without repeated HIE subsidy. Should HIE support be made available to such events it is likely to focus on supporting capital investment, capacity building and training as opposed to subsidising the running costs of an event or festival. However, major sporting events and the Royal National Mod are recognised as not easily fitting in with other categories and these will be considered through specific discussions with the Enterprise company.

4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1. Over the last four years the Council has made a major contribution to the development of major events and festivals and this has provided a successful economic stimulus within the area. It has also enhanced cultural and sporting activity. The Scottish Government have confirmed that culture is a helpful route to support the delivery of national and local outcomes. In addition to the organisations which make provision for culture and creativity, many of those responsible for delivering wider public services have discovered the benefits of working with, and through, creative and cultural activity and local and national well-being can be enhanced in this way. The Council has been one of the lowest spenders in Scotland in cultural activities from the revenue budget over the last decade, but the recent significant contributions to major events and festivals has made a very positive impact on the cultural community in the area and this report is provided to enable members of the PPG to give consideration to the issues surrounding any future resourcing of events and festivals by the Council.

Douglas Hendry
Director of Community Services
11th August 2009

For further information contact: Donald MacVicar, Head of Planning and Performance tel 01546 604364

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