

Public Document Pack



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5 February 2018

SUPPLEMENTARY PACK

MID ARGYLL, KINTYRE AND THE ISLANDS COMMUNITY PLANNING GROUP -COUNCIL CHAMBERS, KILMORY, LOCHGILPHEAD WITH VC LINKS TO THE BURNET BUILDING, CAMPBELTOWN AND THE CUSTOMER SERVICE POINT, BOWMORE, ISLAY on WEDNESDAY, 7 FEBRUARY 2018 at 10:00 AM.

I refer to the above meeting and enclose herewith agenda items 8(b) Tourism and 8(c) Highlands and Islands Enterprise which were marked on the original agenda pack as "to follow".

"TO FOLLOW" ITEMS

- 8. ARGYLL AND BUTE OUTCOME IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2013-2023 - OUTCOME 1 (THE ECONOMY IS DIVERSE AND THRIVING)**
 - (b) Tourism (Pages 3 - 4)
Update from Visit Scotland
 - (c) Highlands and Islands Enterprise (Pages 5 - 8)
Update from David Smart

MID ARGYLL, KINTYRE AND THE ISLANDS COMMUNITY PLANNING GROUP

Andy Buntin (Chair)
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VisitScotland Information Strategy Update

Background

In 2005 VisitScotland inherited 120 Tourist Information Centres from the Area Tourist Board network. Traditionally these centres offered free visitor information print, itinerary planning, ticket sales and on-arrival booking services for accommodation. By 2017 visitor numbers to the estate had dropped by 58%; and 66% of visitors now access information online. The strategy represents a radical approach to ensure customer needs continue to be met.

VisitScotland will continue to manage a smaller estate of manned centres in key locations. They will be high-impact regional hubs, supported by digital products and local businesses participating in the VisitScotland Information Partnership programme. There are 110 participants across Argyll & Bute and the number and diversity of outlets are increasing.

The strategy is focused on enhancing information provision in partnership with others to deliver the right information at the right time and through the right channels. The 2016 visitor survey showed that visitors value talking to locals and see this as an important way to access highlights and hidden gems – 46% prefer to get information from local people and 33% from directly from their accommodation provider. Online accommodation bookings are now made by 64% of visitors, and 20% of bookings are made directly with providers. Mobile phones are brought and used by 68% of visitors and 36% bring a tablet on holiday.

Argyll & Bute

Regional hubs will be created in Bowmore, Craginure, Oban and Rothesay. VisitScotland iCentres affected by the strategy are:

Campbeltown This centre will cease operating by the end of March 2019. In the period from 2006/07-2016/17 visitor numbers fell by 58% and accommodation bookings by 78%.

Interest in the property has been expressed by a commercial operator, with support from Argyll & the Isles Tourism Co-operative and Explore Kintyre. Discussions are ongoing.

Dunoon This centre ceased trading on 22 December 2017 owing to staff contract conditions. The building is still occupied by VisitScotland and Scottish Natural Heritage staff. In the period from 2006/07-2016/17 visitor numbers fell by 41% and accommodation bookings by 90%.

Discussions are underway with Argyll & Bute Council/Live Argyll on the creation of an enhanced VisitScotland Information Partnership outlet at the new Queen's Hall development.

Inveraray This centre will cease operating by the end of March 2019. In the period from 2006/07-2016/17 visitor numbers fell by 72% and accommodation bookings by 79%.

The property is leased from Argyll & Bute Council.

Tarbert This centre will cease trading by the end of March 2019. In the period from 2006/07-2016/17 visitor numbers fell by 17% and accommodation bookings by 81%.

Interest in the property has been expressed by Tarbert & Skipness Community Council, Tarbert & Skipness Community Trust; Tarbert Harbour Authority and Heart of Argyll Tourism Alliance. I have

offered to meet representatives of these organisations to look at options for the future use for the property.

Under current Scottish Government regulations, the properties must first be offered to other Scottish Government agencies. If there is no interest then the properties will be offered for sale on the open market. VisitScotland is not bound to accept the highest, or indeed any offer. Offers that demonstrate appropriate, sustainable use will be welcome.

David Adams McGilp

Regional Director

VisitScotland

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Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership, Outcome 1: The economy is diverse and thriving
 Progress to date – January 2018

Project	Leader	Partners	Objectives	
Finalise and agree a Rural Growth Deal for Argyll and Bute	Pippa Milne	ABC, HIE	<i>The Rural Growth Deal for Argyll and Bute looks to secure investment from the Scottish and UK Governments to tackle significant barriers to economic and population growth in Argyll and Bute.</i>	
	Activity		Comments	Milestone
Action 1	Develop single investment plan			Complete
Action 2	Agree governance model			Complete
Action 3	Steering group established and meets			Complete
Action 4	Secure Rural Growth Deal		Ongoing discussions with officers from both governments and working with Scottish Futures Trust to identify suitable projects.	March 2019
Project	Leader	Partners	Objectives	
Accelerate the growth of the Tourism sector in Argyll and Bute	David Smart	Argyll and the Isles Tourism Co-operative (AITC), HIE, ABC, VisitScotland, Forestry Commission, SNH, CalMac, DYW	<i>The Tourism sector in Argyll is thriving and growing year on year. Visitor spend in Argyll and Bute is projected to be over £300M in 2020. The most significant challenge to future success relates to availability of workforce.</i>	
	Activity		Comments	Milestones
Action 1	Appointment of new Development Team at AITC and agreement of project plan		The team will focus on development of three sub sectors – Adventure Tourism, Food and Drink and Events and Festivals	Complete
Action 2	Review of potential impacts of Brexit		Direct employment supported by Argyll and Bute's tourism industry in 2016 was 6,760 FTEs. The sector is projecting further growth - there will be a need for more staff. It is estimated that currently 20% to 25% of all staff are from outside of the UK – (1,200 and 1,500) individuals.	Ongoing
Action 3	Develop and implement plan to secure workforce for the coming five to seven years.		The objective of this work is to challenge perceptions and promote the Tourism industry as a career of choice. AITC are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • investigating the impact at a sub-regional level • determining specific skills needs VS and DYW are working to promote the industry to P6/7 and S2/3 as part of Year of Young people Chair of AITC has engaged with Scottish government to secure support	June 2018

Project	Leader	Partners	Objectives	
Create the conditions that allows private sector organisations involved in Food and Drink production to flourish and grow	Ishabel Bremner	ABC, Food from Argyll, Scotland Food and Drink, Argyll and the Islands Agricultural Forum, AITC	<p><i>The Food and Drink sector in Argyll and Bute is successful, diverse and dispersed. Opportunities include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Increasing the numbers of artisans and producers using local to differentiate their products.</i> • <i>Increasing the amount of value add activity undertaken in the region</i> • <i>Developing a recognised regional brand</i> • <i>Ensuring that physical infrastructure can support future growth</i> • <i>Quantifying future skills and workforce needs</i> 	
	Activity		Comments	Milestones
Action 1	Quantify the value of the sector to the territory		The sector employs circa 3,900 staff with turnover of £336M per annum (2016).	Complete
Action 2	Investigate the feasibility of establishing a Food Hub (development and production) and Food Assembly (logistics)		Report and potential business model	June 2018
Action 3	Promotion of Food and Drink produced in Argyll and Bute		Presence at BBC Good Food Show, House of Commons and year round attendance at major sporting and cultural events.	Ongoing
Action 4	Establish the skills and workforce requirements for the coming decade		Brexit is likely to lead to changes in the industry. Scenarios need to be developed to allow contingency plans to be developed	Dec 2018
Project	Leader	Partners	Objectives	
Establish clusters of technology led enterprises at the European Marine Science Park and Sandbank Industrial Estate	Morag Goodfellow	HIE, Scottish Association of Marine Sciences, Business Gateway, ABC	<p><i>To establish thriving, engaged, business communities focussed on exploiting opportunities identified through research and innovation and delivered using entrepreneurial skills from within the campus and the business park.</i></p>	
	Activity		Comments	Milestones
Action 1	Establish and implement a monthly schedule of events and engagement at EMSP to run to Dec 2018.		Commenced June 2017 - to include regular cluster meetings and networking	Complete
Action 2	Publishing of quarterly newsletter for EMSP cluster members		Commenced January 2018	Complete
Action 3	Development and delivery of #hellodigital business engagement events at Sandbank Business Park		Events launched in September 2017 and scheduled to continue to March 2018	Complete
Action 4	Enabling activities for future phases of the European Marine Science Park		Revised Masterplan Dec 2017. HIE & ABC working in partnership on road infrastructure improvements	March 2020

Project	Leader	Members	Objectives	
Develop and launch a customised marketing and promotion offer for Argyll and Bute as a place to live, work and invest.	Julie Millar/Alan Gibson	ABC, Police Scotland, TSI, ACHA, NHS, DWP, Fire Scotland, Scottish Ambulance	<i>To provide information and structured pathway to manage enquires from potential residents and investors. The offer should be relevant to 'remainers, returners and re-locators'.</i>	
	Activity		Comments	Milestones
Action 1	Agree key messages		Environment, outdoors and adventures, freedom and safety, breadth of opportunities, chance to make a difference	Complete
Action 2	Clarify policy of housing for key workers		ACHA to review policy	June 2018
Action 3	Create a library of images and videos that can be used by employers		30 second talking head videos to be published with individuals describing why Argyll is the right choice for them	Aug 2018
Action 4	Develop a database of content that can be accessed by employers to support their recruitment activities		To include images, video, key messaging, information on housing education, leisure, re-location services, business support and jobs. This should be available to both the public and private service	Dec 2018

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