

MARKETING ARGYLL AND BUTE

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The main purpose of this report is to provide committee with a proposal for a marketing strategy which works alongside other economic development measures to encourage individuals and businesses to live, work and invest in Argyll and Bute, with a view to reversing the decline in population.
- 1.2 The objective of the marketing strategy is to establish Argyll and Bute as a destination for families, individuals and businesses to relocate, live, work and grow together with their local communities. To do that we will have to demonstrate that Argyll and Bute can meet the needs of our target audiences by offering what it is they value.
- 1.3 This will involve creating compelling messages about Argyll and Bute, aimed at our target audiences, and delivered through a variety of media, including digital, print, face-to-face and PR. The strategy will be to highlight the plus points about the area and tackle the challenges by demonstrating the measures being taken to address them.
- 1.5 The new Promotions and Marketing Officer took up post on 18 January 2016 and has since been working to meet meeting key colleagues, partners and undertaking desk research to put together a draft marketing plan
- 1.6 This paper recommends that the Committee notes the contents of the report.
- 1.7 That the Committee provides amendments if required and then approves, in principle, the draft marketing plan so work can begin on apportioning timescales and budget to the key tasks, which are outlined in **Appendix 2**.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Argyll and Bute is one of only four local authority areas in the 2011 census to show a decrease in population. Of those four, it is the only area currently excluded from investment through the national three island or City Deal support initiatives. Future population projections suggest a reduction in total population of 7.2% from 2010 to 2035.
- 2.2 In addition, the demographic balance is changing with the number of residents under 65 in decline or static, but the number aged over 65 on the increase. These changes create a number of challenges to service delivery requirements for CPP partners, the availability of people to join the overall workforce in Argyll and Bute, a smaller pool of people creating wealth and how to enhance the economic or community contribution made by people.
- 2.3 Argyll and Bute Council recognized the need to halt and reverse the depopulation of the area and undertook a number of proactive measures to securing employment and prosperity for the area by attracting more people to Argyll and Bute.
- 2.4 The *Compelling Argyll and Bute and its Administrative Areas* study was commissioned in 2015 to engage with a range of stakeholders to understand the issues facing them in living, working and, in some cases causing them to leave, Argyll and Bute.
- 2.5 An Argyll and Bute Economic Forum was established following the economic summit in Dunoon, that brought together members of the area's key business sectors, leading agencies, as well as local and national government representatives. The chairman of this forum reported on key opportunities, from a business perspective, in early 2016.
- 2.6 The Council has implemented and commissioned a multi-million pound investment in economic development initiatives to encourage people to live, work, visit and invest in Argyll and Bute.

- 2.7 In 2015, the Council invested in new posts within economic development, including a promotions and marketing officer to promote Argyll and Bute as a place to live, work and invest. The officer took up post on 18 January 2016 and has since been working to develop a marketing plan that can take move forward with the desired outcomes.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That the Committee notes the contents of the report.
- 3.2 That the Committee provides amendments if required and then approves in principle the draft marketing plan so work can begin on apportioning timescales and budget to the key tasks, which are outlined in the **Appendix 2**.

4.0 DETAIL

- 4.1 Marketing should help deliver the over-arching goals of the organisation. It is about developing the strategy which encourages the customer to like or be inspired by the brand eg: 'Don't sell me insurance. Sell me peace of mind and a great future for my family and me. Don't sell me a house. Sell me comfort, contentment, a good investment, and pride of ownership (and a piece of the American Dream).' Michael LeBoeuf.
- 4.2 The goal of the marketing strategy is to establish Argyll and Bute as a destination for families, working age individuals and businesses to relocate, live, work and grow together with their local communities. To do that we will have to demonstrate that Argyll and Bute can meet the needs of our target audiences by offering what it is they value. Messages for target audiences can be found in **Appendix 1**.
- 4.3 A range of communication channels will be used to get these messages across including, but not limited to:
- 4.4 **Web/social media** – currently Argyll and Bute has low-level recognition with search engines, compared with 'Highlands', 'Scotland', 'Loch Lomond' or 'Hebrides'/. We must work with partners to increase its relevance and profile.
- 4.5 **Film and photography** – develop a library of photography from existing (partner) and newly commissioned work that reflects life and work in Argyll and Bute. These can be used in print and digital communications.
- 4.6 **Print/advertising** – this should be kept to a minimum but should be of high-quality for use with high-level pitches and inward investment opportunities.

- 4.7 **Press and PR** – this will continue to be delivered through the Council's communication's team, with the Marketing and Promotions Officer providing leads for good news stories that can be pitched to the media.
- 4.8 **Events and face to face** – appropriate events and expos will be identified.
- 4.9 **Endorsements/Case studies** – these will come from private sector, other agencies, individuals etc. for use in a variety of media including news releases, website, social media etc. This will also include working with partners to ensure a collaborative approach and sharing of good practice.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 With the amount of financial investment being taken forward by the Council and its partners past and future, its abundant heritage and culture coupled with its natural resources, Argyll and Bute has much to offer. There are also good schools and strong, safe communities. There is a clear programme of action to deliver improved connectivity, improve transport infrastructure and deliver increasing numbers of affordable homes. What is required is a narrative and mechanism to share this story. In creating this compelling story for Argyll and Bute, the strategy will be to highlight the plus points and tackle the challenges by clearly demonstrating the measures being taken to address them.
- 5.2 This work cannot be done solely by Argyll and Bute Council, as is there is not the resource available to do so. We will need to tap into delivery mechanisms as set out in the Single Outcome Agreement and Economic Development Action Plan. However, the function of the Promotions and Marketing Officer will be to work closely with representatives from partner organisations to promote a collegiate approach to strategy development, ensuring best use of resources and allowing everyone to speak with one voice in praise of Argyll and Bute, avoiding duplication and ensuring a wider spread of a shared brand and vision. It should also be remembered that the Marketing and Promotions officer will also need to respond to emerging opportunities.
- 5.2 It will therefore be important to establish some principles. That the role of Promotions and Marketing Officer focuses on promoting council investment and initiatives. That there is fit with others - the role of the Promotions and Marketing Officer can support and sign-post to other agencies with an interest in encouraging others to locate or invest in Argyll and Bute e.g. University of Highlands and Islands,, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Scottish Enterprise, private sector, Argyll and the Isles Tourism Co-operative Ltd etc.
- 5.3 Finally, that the role can enable others, by helping to produce tool kits, provide advice and support for groups to get them involved or enhance their skill sets.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

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| 6.1 | Policy | None |
| 6.2 | Financial | Marketing will be provided from within the budget agreed when new team established. |
| 6.3 | Legal | None |
| 6.4 | HR | None |
| 6.5 | Equalities | None |
| 6.6 | Risk | The key risk is that there will be a high expectation of a limited resource. This can be mitigated by ensuring that the action plan is agreed and followed. Any other opportunities will be evaluated on a 'value added' basis. |
| 6.7 | Customer Service | None |

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Audiences and key messages

Appendix 2 Marketing action plan

Appendix 1 – Audiences and key messages

In developing a compelling story for Argyll and Bute there will be multiple messages to tap into the values of the variety of audiences we need to address. The table below gives an example of how it might look:

Target audiences		Key messaging
Internal	Local community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • families • young people • workers • community groups • Third sector • Council staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Argyll and Bute has a lot to offer • There are jobs, houses and educational opportunities on your doorstep • This is a lifestyle worth valuing • We can work together to make things even better
	Local business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is room to grow and develop your business • We have a workforce with the skills and motivation looking to join your business • We have support in place to advise you on how to grow your business • Infrastructure is improving all the time
	Stakeholders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government • Enterprise agencies • Funding agencies – Europe, public and private 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is an area with vision and commitment • We want to be noticed • Our communities are fighting back to prosperity • We will not rest until Argyll and Bute gets the recognition it deserves
External	Potential residents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families • Young people • Workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent quality of life – good schools, it's safe, able to Ski in winter and surf in summer • Employers need people with good qualifications • Housing is relatively cheap. The average house price in Argyll, according to Right Move is £149,933. In Highlands and Islands it is £158,147 and in South Ayrshire it is £155,000 • Infrastructure is getting better all the time • Our town centres are improving • There are more and more educational and entrepreneurial

		opportunities for young people
	<p>Potential new businesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start ups • Micro-businesses • Inward investment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is huge potential for new business starts in Argyll and Bute • We are investing in the future of our communities – you can be part of that • We have a committed and enthusiastic workforce • We specialise in a number of areas – marine sciences, renewable energy, tourism and food and drink • We are investing in infrastructure solutions – a chance to be in at the beginning
	<p>Visitors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Returning visitors • New visitors • All ages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plenty to see and do – land and sea • Rich in culture and heritage • Able to Ski in winter and surf in summer • Family friendly activities, developing cycle paths and off-road cycling activities • Wide range of quality accommodation offers • Lots of ways to travel – road, train, cycle, plane, ferry etc

Appendix 2 – Marketing action plan

Marketing action plan 2016-17

Task	Evidence of need	Outputs	Outcomes	Evaluation
1. One voice: work with partners from organisations with an interest in ensuring Argyll and Bute has a consistent message to attract people to visit, live, work and invest in the area.	Compelling Argyll and Bute Study Theme 7 Compelling Argyll & Bute –EDAP SOA	Core group of partners working to promote Argyll and Bute Key messages agreed Joint promotional activity	Increase profile of area by having a more consistent marketing message and shared vision.	Higher recognition on internet searches More traffic to websites More enquiries to council and partners
2. Imagery: Develop digital picture library for use with promotional activity both online and in print. The pictures should be dynamic and active, covering business and day-to-day living.	Compelling Argyll and Bute Study Theme 7 Compelling Argyll & Bute –EDAP SOA	Project team to agree list of required photos Investigate availability of photos from other sources: within council, HIE etc Photographers commissioned Subjects identified Shoot planned and delivered Photos catalogued	Better quality photography for use by ABC and partner agencies More vibrant pictures in digital and print to appeal audiences. Short promotional videos and podcasts	More click through to website from social media More follow-up from business enquiries More use of ABC photos in partner and external print and digital media
3. Promotion: promote success of Major Capital Regeneration Projects,	Compelling Argyll and Bute Study	Produce information on key selling points of	Better quality	Inward investment

<p>including resources to assist in levering in additional resources/investment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing Lorn Arc (TIF), including raising profile of Oban Airport and supporting bid for air links to the Central belt. • Opportunities presented through Year of Architecture – Rothesay Pavilion • Campbeltown THI and CARs success • Dunoon Pier and Queens Hall – venue marketing 	<p>Theme 7/8</p> <p>Compelling Argyll & Bute –EDAP</p> <p>Connected A&B – EDAP</p> <p>SOA</p>	<p>each of the key towns including: investments made; social benefits; business opportunities; support available;</p> <p>Develop print versions for each locality, including templates for additional updatable local information;</p> <p>Plan and deliver at least one marketing campaign per town.</p>	<p>marketing materials.</p> <p>More effective tools for encouraging private businesses to invest.</p> <p>Clear information on the local area and levels of investment.</p>	<p>opportunity secured</p> <p>Better local awareness of levels of investments</p>
<p>4. Awareness: Develop/support high-level awareness raising campaigns for two key projects e.g. supporting MACC with Spaceport initiative, promote Oban as university town.</p>	<p>Compelling Argyll and Bute Study Theme 7</p> <p>Connected A&B - EDAP</p> <p>Compelling Argyll & Bute –EDAP</p> <p>SOA</p>	<p>Plans in place for campaign delivery.</p>	<p>Better local awareness of activity around bid.</p> <p>Better elected member awareness of activity.</p> <p>Better decision-maker awareness of potential of site.</p>	<p>Recognition/success of bid.</p>
<p>5. Recruitment: promote Argyll as a place to stay or relocate for education, entrepreneurship or employment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop case studies of young business people • Market to graduates of key 	<p>Compelling Argyll and Bute Study Theme 7</p> <p>Connected A&B - EDAP</p>	<p>Identify suitable case studies and write up or video.</p> <p>Identify suitable courses/universities/graduate fairs and find</p>	<p>Have suite of case studies for use in print and web</p> <p>Attend one event to promote Argyll and Bute to graduates</p>	<p>Database of people interested in working in</p>

<p>industries – renewables, marine, forestry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners on recruitment strategy for key workers 	<p>Compelling Argyll & Bute –EDAP</p> <p>SOA</p>	<p>partners who may wish to share attendance</p> <p>Develop advertising campaigns with key partners</p>	<p>looking for work.</p> <p>Pilot two advertising campaigns with partner agencies.</p>	<p>A&B</p> <p>Evaluation of campaigns shows increase of applicants</p>
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