

**Moray Economic Strategy  
World Host Meeting  
Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> of July 2013, HIE Moray (Forres)**

**MEETING NOTE**

<b>ATTENDEES</b>	Andrew Anderson (AA) and Nicole Green (NG) – Highlands and Islands Enterprise; David Allen (DA) and Kate Tetley (KT) – People1st; Craig Robertson (CR) – Business Gateway; Frances Powell (FP) – Forres Area Community Trust; Gill Neill (GN) – Elgin BID; Cllr Gary Coull (GC) – Moray Council; Frances Webster (FW) – Skills Development Scotland; Peter Fitch (PF) – Federation of Small Businesses.
<b>APOLOGIES</b>	Cameron Taylor (CT) – Forres Area Community Trust; Tom McGarry (TM) – Moray College; Margery McLennan (MM) – Moray Chamber of Commerce; Anthony Standing (AS) – Skills Development Scotland; Pearl Hamilton (PH) – Federation of Small Businesses.

The meeting began with an overview from AA of the background to the proposal. The purpose of this meeting is to form a steering group who will then take this proposal forward with the aim of Moray achieving World Host Destination accreditation. Everyone then introduced themselves and AA handed over to DA.

**1) Confirm Steering Group Coordination of Initiative.**

Need to allocate responsibilities within initiative.

Membership of group was discussed. GC raised the point that there needs to be representation from each geographical area. The areas have been allocated by secondary school catchment area and are: Keith, Buckie, Lossiemouth, Milnes, Speyside, Forres and Elgin. Although Elgin has two catchment areas it will be moving forward as one area.

There was discussion on whether adding more members to the group would make the group too large. GN suggested a core steering group of those round the table and a secondary consultation group which could be opened up to others. DA advised that the group will not need to meet as regularly once the initial phase is complete and responsibilities have been allocated. He suggested thereafter quarterly meetings for reporting. It was then decided that additional members from areas which are not currently represented are definitely required. This will encourage involvement in the initiative. Lines of communication will need to be defined.

Action taken by GC to find contact details through the Moray Towns Partnership.

The frequency of meetings was then discussed and it was decided that in this initial phase the group should meet every three weeks at the HIE Moray Office. This will be reviewed at the end of the summer period.

A destination commitment will need to be signed which confirms the membership of the steering group and the geographical coverage. AA happy to arrange this subject to sight of the document.

## **2) Define Geographical Coverage.**

Each area must achieve participation of 25% of relevant businesses for Moray to pass as a whole. For this to be measured, it is required to have an estimate of the number of relevant businesses in each area. DA advised the group that this will be the most difficult task at this initial stage but it is critical. The group must also be careful of overestimation as this would then make reaching the 25% mark difficult.

Although there will be statistics through memberships such as Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) and Moray Chamber of Commerce (MCC) etc, using these would prove difficult to prevent double counting due to data protection issues. Forres Area Community Trust (FACT) currently have an intern who is collating statistics like this for Forres and this information should be available in August. It was agreed that the final estimate of the number of relevant businesses would be made using a combination of extrapolation from the statistics gathered for the Forres area and estimates to be sought from Moray Towns Partnerships in each area.

The types of businesses which will be counted include any retail, hospitality, tourism related businesses. This could include visitor attractions, bus operators, taxi operators, caravan parks, hotels etc.

How to collate this data was then discussed and KT suggested the Scores on the Doors website as a place to start. She also suggested looking at information on Council business rates, however GN pointed out that smaller businesses will be relieved from these and not appear in these statistics. It was then suggested that each local group eg Rural Environmental Action Project (REAP) in Keith be contacted for this information when they are invited to join the steering group. The reason for this data being collated should be explained, to help prevent overestimation.

AA, GN, FW and FP or another FACT representative to help coordinate this data when received.

Any programme can contribute to the 25% mark other than the Ambassador Workshop as this programme has no formal assessment. For retail the preferred programme is Sales Powered by Service which is a half day course. For tourism and hospitality the preferred course is Principles of Supervising Customer Service Performance course which is more intensive. DA explained that this is appropriate because in a retail environment your time with the customer is a lot shorter whereas in a tourism/hospitality setting more time is spent with more opportunities.

Action taken by DA to circulate a descriptor of what is required for this and a logo which can be used following signing of the Commitment.

## **3) Marketing Campaign/Strategy.**

It was decided this should be discussed when steering group membership is fully formed.

DA is looking at case studies for smaller businesses which the group agreed would be very helpful. These case studies combined with local knowledge will then be used to form a plan.

#### **4) Delivery Infrastructure.**

DA advised that involvement from Moray College will be required. The number of additional trainers required will need to be calculated. GN reminded the group that the Highland Retail Academy covers the Moray area. A potential problem was indicated as Aberdeen covers Banffshire which will have an overlap into Moray.

World Host training could potentially be incorporated into the curriculum at Moray College. Any student who passes the qualification and then enters employment in these sectors will contribute towards the 25% mark. There was also discussion on introducing this into the school curriculum or Skills for Work programme from Skills Development Scotland (SDS). Part of the World Host training will include a workshop on appreciation of the local area and the opportunities within it which would be great to include in the school curriculum. These students would then have a globally recognised qualification to take into the workplace.

Action taken by DA and KT to talk to TM regarding the possibility of incorporating World Host into Moray College curriculum.

#### **5) Programme Contextualisation.**

This will be a one day process where tourism information and key messages that the group would like emphasised through the programme will be discussed. Also any additional materials which may be required eg fliers, booklets etc.

There was then a discussion on the possibility of the Chief Executive, Malcolm Routhead, of Visit Scotland launching the Tourism Strategy. This could be an opportunity to feedback that Moray is not listed as a location on their website. DA has been in discussions with Visit Scotland regarding including World Host in their Quality Assurance assessments.

#### **6) Delivery Timeframe.**

This item will be discussed at the next meeting.

DA advised that an average timeframe would be 12-18 months.

#### **7) Local and National Funding.**

Could some funding come from local partnerships?

Tourism Skills Investment Plan (SDS) may be available.

DA explained that People 1st is seeking funding for a programme which will subsidise the cost of training in one of ten pilot areas for destination development. Moray could be one of the pilots. This is not confirmed but would be looking at September for this.

#### **8) Return on Investment Evaluation Model.**

DA advised the group this will cost approximately £10,000 - £15,000.

The purpose of this model is to demonstrate that these programmes do benefit the local area. The model must be developed at the beginning of the process.

Business benchmarks will need to be developed to see what customer service aspects have improved.

At this point reaccreditation was discussed. After 2 years the training will need to be taken again with costs remaining the same. However costs of materials could be reduced.

When creating the model it is important to be aware of any events happening in the area as the model is required to be developed from an average period of time with no additional activity.

Businesses should have input into this model to align with their individual priorities.

There will be no charge to the businesses for the evaluation and rates for them will be as low as possible. Rates must be consistent across all areas.

It was then decided that when the businesses are invited to undertake the World Host training, they should be asked to be part of the evaluation at the same time.

Action taken by DA to circulate Return on Investment information.

#### **9) World Host Centres of Customer Excellence.**

Before allocating businesses for these a standard will need to be developed first.

This item will be discussed when new members of group appointed.

#### **10) World Host Business Masterclass Events.**

This item will be discussed when new members of group appointed.

These can be used to make people aware of the World Host training. They do not have to be physical meetings as they can be run via webinar or from pre-recorded footage.

Popular topics include sales opportunities, merchandising, layout and understanding social media.

There would be a small cost for these.

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**ACTIONS FROM MEETING**

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<b>AGENDA ITEM</b>	<b>DECISION</b>	<b>ACTION BY</b>
1	Find contact details for potential new members to steering group through Moray Towns Partnership.	GC
2	Circulate descriptor of what is required with relation to business data and logo.	DA
6	Talk to TM regarding the possibility of incorporating World Host into Moray College curriculum.	DA; KT
10	Circulate Return on Investment information.	DA

Key:

<b>INITIALS</b>	<b>NAME OF PERSON</b>
GC	Cllr Gary Coull
DA	David Allen
TM	Tom McGarry
KT	Kate Tetley