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**Report To: Environment & Regeneration  
Committee**

**Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2015**

**Report By: Corporate Director – Environment,  
Regeneration & Resources**

**Report No: E+R/15/09/08/SJ/RG**

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**Subject: Inverclyde Tourism Strategy 2009-2016 Review**

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## **1.0 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to apprise Members of the Inverclyde Tourism Strategy 2009-2016 and the requirement for a refreshed strategy for 2016-2020.

## **2.0 SUMMARY**

- 2.1 The Inverclyde Tourism Strategy 2009-16 was produced in consultation with tourism related businesses and services. This collaborative document was approved by the Regeneration Committee in 2009 with the accompanying Action Plan approved at Committee on 3 September 2009 and an update in January 2013.
- 2.2 The strategy outlined the key objectives required to maximise the potential of tourism in Inverclyde and the Action Plan identified specific actions.
- 2.3 Following a request from the Committee Officers have carried out an internal review of the action plan and Appendix 1 contains the annotated progress report for information.
- 2.4 The progress report on the Tourism Action Plan at Appendix 1 provides a summary of what has been achieved to date, however, it is worth highlighting the following:
- The attraction of the Powerboat P1 event in June 2016
  - The increased number of Visit Scotland accredited Visitor Attractions, Arts Venues, Accommodation providers and Taste our Best recognised restaurants /cafes in Inverclyde
  - Although visitor numbers to Inverclyde have remained relatively stable at around 540,000, the economic impact from tourism activities has increased from £42.23M in 2009 to £57.04 in 2014 with FTE employment rising slightly over the period from 918 to 959.
- 2.5 The 2009-2016 Strategy is nearing the end of its lifespan and the Local Area Tourism Partnership (LATP), together with Discover Inverclyde (DI) and other partners have agreed that a consultative evaluation of the current strategy needs to be carried out to find out how much has been achieved in terms of tourism development in Inverclyde over the last 7 years.
- 2.6 At the same time as the Strategy review, it was agreed that a refresh of the strategy should also be undertaken for the 2016-2020 period to align with the National Strategy: Tourism Scotland 2020 The National Strategy: Tourism Scotland 2020.
- 2.7 An external agency (Coigach Consulting) has been engaged to consult with all stakeholders over the next few months to deliver the evaluation and the strategy refresh by March 2016.

### **3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 That Committee note the activities that have been carried out to date and that the completed review will be presented to Committee in March/April 2016.
- 3.2 That Committee receive for consideration and approval, a refresh of the Tourism Strategy for 2016-2020 in March/April 2016.

**Stuart Jamieson**  
**Head of Regeneration and Planning**

## 4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Economic Development Service produced a Tourism Strategy for 2009-2016 in consultation with tourism related businesses and services. It was approved by the Regeneration Committee in 2009 with the Action Plan approved at Committee on 3 September 2009 and an update in January 2013.
- 4.2 The strategy outlined the key objectives required to maximise the potential of tourism in Inverclyde.
- 4.3 The tourism sector in Inverclyde is heavily reliant on the day visitor market and is very diverse including leisure, arts, accommodation, hospitality, attractions and extensive areas of public realm.
- 4.4 The development of tourism in Inverclyde continues to be seen as a major opportunity to change perceptions of the area and create a more positive profile and image.
- 4.5 The aim of the refreshed tourism strategy will be to provide the framework, direction and focus for all Inverclyde tourism activity over the next 4 years to allow the local tourism sector to maximise opportunities through joint working and seek to significantly increase the impact of tourism in Inverclyde by 2020.

## 5.0 PROPOSALS

- 5.1 To consider an independent evaluation of the current Inverclyde Tourism Strategy 2009-2016 and provide a refreshed strategy/action plan for 2016-2020.

## 6.0 IMPLICATIONS

### Finance

6.1

#### Financial Implications:

#### One off Costs

| Cost Centre          | Budget Heading | Budget Years | Proposed Spend this Report £000 | Virement From | Other Comments   |
|----------------------|----------------|--------------|---------------------------------|---------------|--|
| Economic Development | Tourism        | 2015/16      | 5                               | N/A           | Allocation for tourism expenditure included within existing Economic Development budget. |

#### Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

| Cost Centre | Budget Heading | With Effect from | Annual Net Impact £000 | Virement From (If Applicable) | Other Comments |
|-------------|----------------|------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|
| N/A         |                |                  |                        |                               |                |

### Legal

6.2 N/A

### Human Resources

6.3 None. Activity will be monitored by existing staff.

## **Equalities**

- 6.4 Full consideration is given to equality and diversity processes within employability and business support programmes delivered by the Regeneration and Planning Service which are non-discriminatory on the grounds of gender, ethnicity, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

## **Repopulation**

- 6.5 No implications.

## **7.0 CONSULTATIONS**

- 7.1 Consultations will take place with external stakeholders and interested parties during the evaluation and refresh process.

## **8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 8.1 Appendix 1 – Tourism Action Plan Review.

# Appendix 1

## Progress Report on Tourism Action Plan

|     | ACTIONS & TASKS   | UPDATE NOTES   | Partners   | Direction of trend |
|-----|---|--|--|--------------------|
| 1.1 | Develop a comprehensive monitoring and feedback mechanism for tourist visitors to Inverclyde  | Have commissioned an Inverclyde local barometer of tourism activity with first report due early 2016. DREAM project has not delivered any meaningful data but have continued to receive STEAM reports which show positive year on year economic growth (9.6% 2013-14)                            | External reports (STEAM), software + time. ITG feedback from Cruise passengers | ↑                  |
| 1.2 | Establish a comprehensive database of all Inverclyde tourism products and operators   | LATP now formed and comprehensive list of accommodation providers, visitor attractions, food & drink an visitor services now exists  | Encourage promotion on Discover Inverclyde website                             | ↑                  |
| 1.3 | Investigate and research new and evolving niche markets particularly recreational marine related tourism                              | Mountain biking, walking, sailing ideas being progressed and golf & stay packages underway. Training events attended by LATP and DI members  | Including land and water based activities                                      | ↑                  |
| 1.4 | Conduct research to ascertain the training needs and requirements of businesses and then create suitable local training opportunities | This has been done and in 2012 now offering a series of training workshops – sailing, food & drink, social media. DI members have been attending mountain biking, whisky appreciation workshops to develop new products. Exploring Glasgow with Style training as an alternative to Welcome host | Customer care with tourism focus   | ↑                  |



|            | <b>ACTIONS &amp; TASKS</b>   | <b>UPDATE NOTES</b>  | <b>Partners</b>  | <b>Direction of Trend</b> |
|------------|--|--|--|---------------------------|
| <b>2.1</b> | Invest in the development of skills and training for staff to ensure that customer expectations are exceeded           | Social media training workshops organised in conjunction with SE.  | Relates to 1.4   | ↑                         |
| <b>2.2</b> | Encourage and promote participation in Visit Scotland quality schemes by all tourism businesses                        | Offer of accreditation scheme membership – good uptake of enquiries (3 new Taste our Best food providers, 4 new accommodation accreditations)  | Time to develop projects and see results   | ↑                         |
| <b>2.3</b> | Encourage the development of local inspirational managers and leaders in tourism businesses through local ambassadors  | Limited success  | DI   | ↔                         |
| <b>2.4</b> | Improve access and transport links to bring more visitors to Inverclyde  | Development of coastal path/Heritage Inverclyde project/ DI walking trail/new cycling trails. Half hourly fast trains from Gourrock. Promotion of public transport links.                        | Time to develop / prioritise ideas of interested parties                                       | ↑                         |
| <b>2.5</b> | Improve public realm areas – signage, streetscapes   | Improvements across the area to paths, railings, clean up of monuments, new signage  | Planning, Roads, Econ Dev  | ↑                         |
| <b>2.6</b> | Improve built environments (remediation of derelict land and decaying infrastructure)                                  | RI and IC working together - James Watt dock/sculptures/town centre improvements   | Partnerships   | ↑                         |
| <b>2.7</b> | Evaluate the effectiveness of tourist signage in the area and work with stakeholders to carry forward signage projects | Heritage Trail delivered with a variety of additional signage. Audit of brown tourist signs delivered soon to provide action plan. New brown signs to be installed in Port Glasgow and Inverkip. | Time to develop / prioritise ideas of interested parties and utilise available partner budgets | ↑                         |
| <b>2.8</b> | Continue to work on improved visitor facilities and experience at the Ocean Terminal                                   | IC working through ITG to improve visitors experience – new Greenock town centre map, upgrade ITG facilities, development of new famous people leaflets and new trails                           | Incremental improvements each year with available budgets                                      | ↑                         |
| <b>2.9</b> | Recognise the assets of the natural environment and promote effectively  | Further heritage interpretation will be delivered via Heritage Inverclyde in Phase 2 across Inverclyde.  | Prioritise ideas of interested parties and utilise available budgets                           | ↑                         |

|             |  |   |  |   |
|-------------|--|---|--|---|
| <b>2.10</b> | Encourage and promote participation in the Green Tourism Business scheme by tourism businesses   | Being encouraged through Visit Scotland accreditation scheme membership   | Officer time promote / support                                   | ↔ |
| <b>2.11</b> | Encourage all tourism development projects to adhere to sustainable principles   | LATP is growing in cohesiveness and new partnerships have formed eg golf & stay   | Partners time to develop projects                                | ↔ |
| <b>2.12</b> | Work in partnership to develop and promote a clean and green Inverclyde  | Limited progress  | Time   | ↔ |
| <b>2.13</b> | Encourage a sense of "Pride in Inverclyde" for local people to become ambassadors and informal promoters of the area   | Living Inverclyde is addressing this.   | Officer Time   | ↑ |
| <b>2.14</b> | Co-ordinate and distribute up to date tourist information to all tourism outlets   | An Inverclyde distribution network has been set up and 24 locations now have DI branded information leaflet stands with information of interest to visitors and locals.   | Officer time to co-ordinate activity                             | ↑ |
| <b>2.15</b> | Support and develop The Inverclyde Tourist Group who potentially will form the support/outreach for the Inverclyde ambassadors   | Continue to provide financial support to ITG and work jointly with LATP members   | Volunteer and Officer Time + Financial support (Tourism budgets) | ↑ |
| <b>2.16</b> | Develop a consistently high standard of customer service excellence through the delivery of a programme of local "Welcome Host" type awareness courses for all involved in tourism. Seek to lobby for a national replacement to Welcome Host, 100k Welcomes. | No clear replacement for Welcome Host but "with Style" highlights best practice examples and is being adopted by Lanarkshires, Ayrshires and Clackmannan. Will develop a proposal for an online version for Inverclyde to roll out to businesses. | Officer time to develop a proposal for consideration             | ↔ |



| ACTIONS & TASKS   | UPDATE NOTES  | Partners  | Direction of Trend |
|---|---|---|--------------------|
| 3.1<br>Develop membership of the local area tourism partnership from Discover Inverclyde and seek participation by local politicians  | This has been done and the average attendance at LAMP meetings is around 15 active members.   | IC and DI to discuss mechanism                            | ↑                  |
| 3.2<br>Explore options for joint Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire & Inverclyde initiatives and projects  | Potential Leader bid with Ren/East Ren/Inverclyde in 2015. Needs political support to develop other partnerships.   | IC is represented on the LAG                              | ↑                  |
| 3.3<br>Gather and disseminate to all businesses and communities, a comprehensive set of information about tourism products and operators in the area  | DI has established a database of all visitor/tourism providers and this will be put on the new website  | DI and Econ Dev to work together                          | ↑                  |
| 3.4<br>Identify, develop and work with the third sector and local communities to create more information providers and tourism ambassadors  | Projects have been identified and linkages established between ITG + projects from 71/2 JWS + local community projects  | Volunteer / Officer Time                                  | ↑                  |
| 3.5<br>Ensure that tourism is recognised by all Alliance partners and included in all relevant strategies and plans including the Events and Arts Strategy  | Events now sits with Corp Comms so cannot comment on progress   | Sector should be included over time as strategies updated | ↑                  |
| 3.6<br>Work with schools (principally P4 – S1) to encourage the development of tomorrow's ambassadors. Develop close partnerships between tourism industry and education to encourage young people to consider careers in tourism | No progress – ITG do some work with schools but with changes to personnel and the courses offered at JWC, mean that the development of local tourism focussed young people is not as prominent. | Schools partnership                                       | ↔                  |
| 3.7<br>Work to Develop and work in partnership with Discover Inverclyde to promote Inverclyde   | Opportunities created to encourage businesses to participate in events outwith the area to promote the area eg Expo and Tourist Week conference, briefing to tourism MSP                        | Working toward DMO status                                 | ↑                  |
| 3.8<br>Develop opportunities for businesses to cross sell and promote each others products/services through the LAMP / Discover Inverclyde  | Develop partnership events eg Powerboat P1, Galoshans events  | LAMP/R/I/C  | ↑                  |



|            | <b>ACTIONS &amp; TASKS</b>   | <b>UPDATE NOTES</b>   | <b>Partners</b>  | <b>Direction of Trend</b> |
|------------|--|---|--|---------------------------|
| <b>4.1</b> | Recognise and build on existing assets through feasibility studies, business development, identifying funding sources and investing in future sustainability   | Heritage Inverclyde now moving forward with Phase 2   | Prioritise ideas of interested parties and utilise available budgets | ↔                         |
| <b>4.2</b> | Develop new products and services by encouraging innovative ideas  | Out of brainstorming sessions has come – cruise ship visitor activities, Taste of Inverclyde, Golf & Stay, Mountain Biking and Sailing potential identified, coastal path development | Brainstorming Session  | ↑                         |
| <b>4.3</b> | Gather, disseminate and share customer feedback  | The new Inverclyde barometer will give some information but there is a need to commission regular market research activities each year  | Time to collect analyse and disseminate information                  | ↔                         |
| <b>4.4</b> | Assist and encourage tourism businesses to start up and grow, developing working relationships and facilitating meetings.  | Stable. No significant increase in the overall numbers of tourism businesses  | Encourage more start ups, IC BusDev funds                            | ↔                         |
| <b>4.5</b> | Developing leadership & management skills amongst tourism businesses   | Limited success but have run some training workshops and encouraged attendance at external events such as Tourism Week Conference and Expo  | Inspiring future business leaders                                    | ↑                         |
| <b>4.6</b> | Develop and promote a range of quality events and festivals through improved collaboration and partnership   | There is now an Events focus group through LAMP that reviews and forms partnerships for new events  | Events budget / time to promote                                      | ↔                         |
| <b>4.7</b> | Encourage participation by all tourism providers in the Visit Scotland quality assurance schemes. Maintain & improve VS star grading and develop existing visitor attractions and Taste our Best food establishments | An additional 7 new businesses have achieved VS accreditation with a further 4 enquiries being followed up.   | Star grading scheme available for all tourism businesses             | ↑                         |
| <b>4.8</b> | Actively promote tourism as a long term career choice and develop placement opportunities  | Discussions have taken place with WCS and a rep now attends LAMP meetings   | Time   | ↔                         |
| <b>4.9</b> | Work in partnership to develop quality of town centres and retail facilities experience for visitors   | Greenock/Gourock/Port Glasgow town centre improvement projects in partnership with RI   | Partnership approach to lever funding.                               | ↑                         |

|             |   |   |  |   |
|-------------|---|---|--|---|
| <b>4.10</b> | Develop and promote quality open space / greenspace provision in Inverclyde, linked and supported by a network of safe cycle, walking and horse-riding routes                           | Heritage Inverclyde phase 1 now complete/enviro improvements at Overton, Kelburn, Lyle Hill. Discussions underway re development of Rankin Park & Clyde Muirshiel mountain bike linkages  | Officer time to prioritise ideas of interested parties and utilise available budgets | ↑ |
| <b>4.11</b> | Encourage the development of a range of water and land based activities   | No long term projects have been developed but partnerships have emerged with the hope that they will develop products in the future. Wordpress website created <a href="http://www.discoverinverclydedewaters.com">www.discoverinverclydedewaters.com</a> | Financial, advice on applications + time to develop collaborative projects           | ↔ |
| <b>4.12</b> | Develop local sports and recreation facilities  | Pursuing through Inverclyde Leisure/LATP  | "  | ↑ |
| <b>4.13</b> | Encourage the development of a minimum E-business capability for all tourism operators to increase the number of businesses that regularly use email/internet as part of their business | Offering workshops in conjunction with SE in September  | Officer time to co-ordinate  | ↑ |
| <b>4.14</b> | Develop a plan to maximise sources of funding to support tourism development in the area and increase the take up of business development grants  | Good uptake of IC grants for tourism businesses   | Time to develop local capacity to apply to external funds                            | ↑ |
| <b>4.15</b> | Work in partnership to increase the number of cruise ships coming to Ocean Terminal Greenock and make Greenock the preferred Scottish port of choice for cruise ships                   | Increasing year on year.  | Visits increasing over time financial support to ITG                                 | ↑ |
| <b>4.16</b> | Work in partnership to improve public transport options and increase awareness  | Half hourly trains from Gourock have now been introduced. Opportunity for posters at stations to highlight events/things to do in the area  | Officer Time   | ↑ |



| ACTIONS & TASKS  | UPDATE NOTES  | Partners                                  | Direction of Trend |
|--|---|---|--------------------|
| <p><b>5.1</b></p> <p>Develop and implement a brand strategy to position and differentiate Inverclyde from surrounding areas</p>  | <p>The Inverclyde Living campaign has been promoted at events and through advertising in a variety of places to encourage people to come to the area to experience all that is on offer</p> | <p>DI /officer time + Tourism Budgets</p> | <p>↔</p>           |
| <p><b>5.2</b></p> <p>Create targeted marketing campaigns to focus on niche market opportunities such as watersports, cruise liners</p>   | <p>Limited activity in 2015. Focus continues to be on events where there are specific target interest groups eg Food &amp; Drink/Sailing/Mountain Biking/Walking</p>                        | <p>DI /officer time + Tourism Budgets</p> | <p>↔</p>           |
| <p><b>5.3</b></p> <p>Identify and actively promote the unique selling points for Inverclyde to appropriate segments of the market</p>  | <p>Some potential USP's have been identified giving rise to the following opportunities - Food &amp; Drink/Sailing/Mountain Biking/Walking</p>  | <p>DI /officer time + Tourism Budgets</p> | <p>↑</p>           |
| <p><b>5.4</b></p> <p>Proactively market both water and land based leisure activities</p>   | <p>This will largely be led, driven and delivered by the private sector under the banner of DI/LATP</p>   | <p>Officer time + Tourism Budgets</p>     | <p>↔</p>           |
| <p><b>5.5</b></p> <p>Proactively market all Inverclyde events and festivals</p>  | <p>Corp Comms and DI working more closely together through LATP to coordinate and develop promotion of events</p>   | <p>DI /officer time + Tourism Budgets</p> | <p>↔</p>           |
| <p><b>5.6</b></p> <p>Identify a key officer and team within Council to act as a single point of contact for tourism, leading and implementing the strategy and promoting the tourism Inverclyde product</p>                | <p>SLA Agreement with RI now in place</p>   | <p>RI</p>                                 | <p>↑</p>           |
| <p><b>5.7</b></p> <p>Identify a media personality (who has connections with Inverclyde) to act as a product champion for the area and promote a positive image of what's available here to change negative perceptions</p> | <p>No progress but a new series of leaflets with historical famous people of Inverclyde are being developed (John Gault, George Wylie, James Watt, Highland Mary, )</p>                     | <p>DI /officer time + Tourism Budgets</p> | <p>↔</p>           |
| <p><b>5.8</b></p> <p>Further develop and promote the Discover Inverclyde website</p>   | <p>New DI website has been developed and is currently being populated with content.</p>   | <p>DI /officer time + Tourism Budgets</p> | <p>↔</p>           |

|      |   |  |                                    |   |
|------|---|--|------------------------------------|---|
| 5.9  | Facilitate joint promotional activity eg special VS campaigns   | Entries in Visit Scotland GGCV Visitor Guide. Attendance at Tourism Week Conference, stand at Expo 2012, distribution of 20000 Discover and Walkabout leaflets | DI /officer time + Tourism Budgets | ↑ |
| 5.10 | Investigate need and current provision of information facilities for visitors and appraise opportunities and the way forward for tourism information points and provision | Gourock VIP, leaflet information points at 24 locations (including visitor attractions and the Oakmall) containing Inverclyde things to see and do             | DI /officer time + Tourism Budgets | ↑ |



|            | <b>ACTIONS &amp; TASKS</b>  |  | <b>Partners</b>  | <b>Direction of Trend</b> |
|------------|---|--|------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>6.1</b> | Organise a brainstorming session across the tourism sector in Inverclyde to identify potential projects for the next 7 years                                | RI organised a session to maximize economic benefit from cruise ship visitors in March 15. Actions identified and to be followed up. | RI//LATP/DI      | ↑                         |
| <b>6.2</b> | Identify potential funding sources and make appropriate applications as joint partnership bids  | Successful applications made to Event Scotland for funding for Winning Years event eg Gourock Highland Games, Scotland's Boat Show   | DI//LATP Time    | ↔                         |
| <b>6.3</b> | Investigate the need/market for increased bed spaces and seek to attract an additional hotel to Inverclyde if required through contact with hotel operators | No interest received and several b&b's have recently retired. However a few new self-catering establishments have set up             | Officer Time     | ↔                         |
| <b>6.4</b> | Increase capacity and the opportunity for a dedicated terminal at the Ocean Terminal for cruise ships through a feasibility study                           | City Deal project will address this.   | Time + financial | ↔                         |
| <b>6.5</b> | Develop the Inverclyde sailing product for visitors   | Water Access Study complete and recommendations made to develop new access facilities which will create business opportunities       | DI//LATP Time    | ↑                         |
| <b>6.6</b> | Develop ideas for major new innovative events that will be attractive to day visitors   | The Powerboat P1 event with an option for a further 2 years will create opportunities  | DI//LATP Time    | ↑                         |
| <b>6.7</b> | Support Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park into becoming a National Park   | No progress currently and Park is currently under review.  | Officer Time     | ↔                         |
| <b>6.8</b> | Explore the development of improved public transport options across the area  | Inverclyde is well served by public transport although the weather is always a factor out of season                                  | Time + financial | ↑                         |
| <b>6.9</b> | Consider legacy projects following the Commonwealth Games   | Some projects such as the development of mountain biking at Rankin Park have emerged.  | Time + financial | ↔                         |

## Summary of significant successful objectives from the action plan since last update:-

- 1.1 & 4.3 Develop a comprehensive monitoring and feedback mechanism for tourist visitors to Inverclyde
- 2.2 & 4.7 Increased membership of Visit Scotland quality schemes
- 2.5 Improved public realm areas – signage and streetscapes
- 2.7 Signage audit carried out
- 2.8 Improved visitor facilities and experience at the Ocean Terminal
- 3.1 Develop membership of the local area tourism partnership
- 3.2 Explore options for joint Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire & Inverclyde initiatives and projects through LEADER
- 3.8 Develop opportunities for businesses to cross sell and promote their products/services through the LAMP / Discover Inverclyde
- 4.1 Feasibility studies and economic impact studies carried out
- 4.2 Develop new products and services by encouraging innovative ideas
- 4.6 Develop and promote a range of quality events and festivals
- 5.10 & 2.14 Introduction of improved information facilities for visitors through organized distribution points
- 6.1 Brainstorming session to maximize cruise visitor economic impact has taken place
- 6.6 Powerboat P1 championships will come to Inverclyde June 2016