

Draft Midlothian Tourism Action Plan (2013/15)

Report by John Blair, Director Corporate Resources

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet of progress with the National Tourism Strategy (NTS) and to seek approval of the draft Midlothian Tourism Action Plan (MTAP) covering the period 2013/15. Copies of the NTS and the MTAP have been placed in the Members' library.

2 Background

- 2.1** In October 2007, the Council and key partners including Scottish Enterprise (SE) launched the Midlothian Economic Development Framework (MEDF). The MEDF contains action plans for the following key economic sectors:
- Tourism;
 - Education;
 - Public Sector;
 - Construction;
 - Life Sciences;
 - Earth Sciences; and
 - Animal Biosciences.
- 2.2** At its meeting on 6 November 2012, Midlothian Council approved the content of a report entitled 'Midlothian Economic Recovery Plan.' The report set out the first stage in the preparation of a framework for an Economic Recovery Plan (ERP) and sought approval to prepare a full Plan in partnership with other Council Divisions, key Community Planning Partnership (CPP) contacts and involving wide communication with the business community and other interested groups including social enterprises. The clear intent is to ensure that the ERP is a relevant, up to date working document which can drive forward sustainable economic development in Midlothian, which is alive to fast changing economic conditions and able to maximise external funding opportunities. A progress update report on the ERP is the subject of a separate report to this Cabinet meeting.
- 2.3** The priorities and actions contained in the economic sector action plans referred to in section 2.1 are in the process of being reviewed and updated as part of the ongoing ERP work. Most, if not all, of these plans remain relevant and whilst it is recognised that they do not currently cover every economic sector in Midlothian, it is expected, particularly in the case of tourism, that they will form a key part of the ERP.

3 Midlothian Tourism Action Plan 2013/15

- 3.1** In 2011, the Scottish Government (SG) published its Economic Strategy which identifies priorities to accelerate recovery, drive sustainable economic growth and develop a more resilient and adaptable economy.
- 3.2** From a tourism perspective, in June 2012 the Scottish Tourism Alliance (STA) launched “Tourism Scotland 2020”, and its content was fully endorsed by the SG. The strategy has served as the framework for consultation on, and development of, the refreshed MTAP covering the period 2013 to 2015
- 3.3** At the local level, tourism development and promotion in Midlothian is driven forward by the undernoted key partners:
- Midlothian Council (MC);
 - Midlothian Tourism Forum (MTF); and
 - VisitScotland (VS).
- 3.4** The Council and VS work closely with the local tourism trade (through the MTF) in respect of tourism promotion and development in Midlothian. Growth in visitor expenditure in Midlothian in the past three years (2009-11) has totalled some 11%, and an estimated increase in employment of about 100. A consultation workshop, involving key stakeholders in respect of the development of the MTAP was held at the National Mining Museum Scotland on 25 September 2012. VS and all other agencies working in the tourism sector have been consulted in the identification of the actions to be carried out during 2013/15.
- 3.5** Like “Tourism Scotland 2020” this is a locally based action plan for the industry, by the industry and is the product of extensive consultation led by the MTF in close co-operation with MC officials. The recommended actions to be implemented during the period of the MTAP are attached at Appendix 1 to this report.

4 Report Implications

4.1 Resource

There are no additional Financial Resource implications for the Council as all those actions identified where the Council is the lead organization can be addressed from within approved budgets. Where funding is not available within existing Council budgets for actions contained within the MTAP external funding opportunities will be maximized and secured to allow further actions to be progressed.

In terms of Human Resource implications, any work undertaken in respect of the MTAP is carried out by Economic Development Section (EDS) staff in close liaison with Divisional colleagues and appropriate CPP partners.

4.2 Risk

There is a risk that failure to implement and drive forward the MTAP could result in the growth in the tourism sector not being achieved.

The ongoing economic downturn also presents a clear risk that the growth and job targets will not be met. This issue will be kept under review. Negative growth is expected for 2012 due to the impact of the adverse weather, viewing of the Olympic Games and the reduction of consumer spend due to lack of confidence during a time of recession. A return to growth is expected, and will be encouraged through the implementation of the actions contained in the new plan.

Failure to support the MTAP would result in a failure to maximise external funding support and have a potentially negative effect on a vibrant sector with considerable stakeholder activity.

As well as direct benefit with regard to economic impact there are recognised social benefits affecting the quality of life of the area that would be adversely impacted upon, including support for business tourism.

4.3 Policy

Strategy

The subject of this report supports Corporate Objective 2: Maximising business opportunities as defined in the Council's Corporate Strategy 2012/13.

The MTAP aims to develop an integrated and vibrant tourism sector offering a unique quality package of visitor experiences.

There are also close ties with the following strategic documents:

- Scottish Government Economic Strategy, (November 2011);
- VisitScotland Corporate Plan 2011/14, (24 March 2011);
- Tourism Scotland 2020, (August 2012); and
- MEDF.

Consultation

As part of the MTAP refresh process, a consultation workshop was held involving key stakeholders in the National Mining Museum of Scotland. The report of consultation was presented to the December 2012 meeting of the MTF and a further meeting held with the MTF Chair and Vice Chair to determine the content of the final version.

With regard to the refreshed MTAP, detailed consultation has been undertaken with key internal and external stakeholders. In particular, this has involved members of the Maximising Business Opportunities (MBO) Sub Group. The MTAP will be continuously reviewed and new opportunities and partnerships formed as the need arises. An annual

update will be presented at the MTF annual general meeting held in October of each year.

Equalities

An Equality Impact Assessment is attached to this report at Appendix 2. Equalities outcomes will be reported in the MTAP annual reports.

Sustainability

Sustainable development is central to the aims of the MTAP and it is a marketing and promotional action plan. It is not a development plan as spatial issues are addressed in the preparation of the Midlothian Local Development Plan. A determination under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 will be prepared and advertised, confirming that a Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Strategy is considered by MC (as responsible authority) not to be required.

5 Recommendations

5.1 Cabinet is recommended to:

- i. note the collaborative work undertaken with key partners to prepare the Midlothian Tourism Action Plan for 2013/15;
- ii. subject to formal completion of strategic environmental assessment, endorse the content of the Midlothian Tourism Action Plan;
- iii. consider the equalities impact assessment attached to this report; and
- iv. agree that further progress reports on delivery of the action contained in the Midlothian Tourism Action Plan be prepared in due course.

12 February 2013

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File Ref: SM/Midlothian Tourism Strategy 7851

Finalised Draft Midlothian Tourism Action Plan 2013 - 2015

TABLE OF ACTIONS (The numbering sequence relates to the section of the MTAP in which the action is highlighted.)

2.1 ACTION: A VisitScotland Surprise Yourself Spring/Summer direct mail campaign will highlight the natural offering that Midlothian has to offer. VS; MC; MTF. Spring/Summer 2013.

2.2 ACTION: Contact will be made with interested parties to develop and promote a Year of Natural programme of activity. MTF; MC; VS. Early 2013.

2.3 ACTION: Include information on heritage and archaeological sites highlighting the stories and history associated with the locations on www.visitmidlothian.org.uk .. MC; MTF; VS. 2013/15.

2.4 ACTION: Heritage promoted via town trails and interpretation of historic sites. MC; MTF; VS. 2013/15.

2.5 ACTION: Develop a Local Heritage Centre in Penicuik. Penicuik Community Development Trust; MC. 2013/15.

2.6 ACTION: Increased promotion of the Library Service with particular attention to Local and Family History as an attraction for ancestral tourists. MC; MTF; VS. 2013/15.

2.7 ACTION: Include a new Cycling section in the refreshed MTF website and examine the potential to develop a cycling app. SEStrans; Midlothian Access Forum; MC. 2013.

2.8 ACTION: Tourism initiatives will be developed and supported that will drive visitors to the town centres with Penicuik serving as a pilot BID. MC; Business Community; Community Groups. 2013/14.

2.9 ACTION: Promotion of Town Centres and villages and implementation of tourism initiatives contained in Neighbourhood Plans. Voluntary sector; Community Groups; MC; MTF; VS. 2013/15.

2.10 ACTION: The potential to set up a Penicuik THI and/or CARS scheme will be examined. MC. 2014/15.

2.11 ACTION: Potential to deliver Golf passport or packages or other initiatives examined. Golf Courses; MTF; MC; VS. 2013/15.

2.12 ACTION: Develop Events Audit, Strategy and Programme. MC; MTF; Local Event Organisers; Community Groups. 2013/15

2.13 ACTION: Expand Midlothian Science Festival. University of Edinburgh; MC Library Services; VS. 2013/15.

2.14 ACTION: Initiatives developed at Vogrie Country Park to optimize economic return and sustainability. MC. 2013/15.

2.15 ACTION: Develop event at Snowsports Centre. MC; VS/EventScotland. 2014/15.

2.16 ACTION: Develop a programme to fit with the SG themed years Natural 2013 and Homecoming. MC; MTF; VS/EventScotland. 2013/14.

2.17 ACTION: Update and expand Meet in Midlothian Business Section of website. MTF; MC. 2013/15.

3.1 ACTION: Develop and promote the best of our food and drink product through the actions of the steering group formed in 2011. Build on the success of the brand "Savour the Difference", working to turn the competition, first held in 2012, into an annual event during February to May. This and the potential to develop other initiatives will be examined and implemented in the plan period. MC; MTF; Food and Drink Sector. 2013/15.

3.2 ACTION: Organise Border's Railway Line (Waverley Line) Tourism Workshop. MC; NMMS. Summer 2013.

3.3 ACTION: Investigate possibility of supplying Tourism Information Points with public transport carousel. MCTT; VS. 2013.

3.4 ACTION: Provide tourism focused information on travel leaflets. MCTT; Bus Operators. 2013/14.

3.5 ACTION: Develop tourism information targeting Edinburgh based tourists. MCTT; Bus Operators. 2013/15.

3.6 ACTION: Improve Tourism signposting at bus stops. MCTT; Places of Interest. 2013/15

3.7 ACTION: Promote the area as Open for Development as detailed in the Midlothian Plan. MC. 2013/15.

3.8 ACTION: www.visitmidlothian.org.uk will be redeveloped. MTF; MC. 2013.

3.9 ACTION: Explore the opportunities round social media and mobile technology. All partners. 2013/15.

4.1 ACTION: The Council will work with partners over the period of the plan to:

1. Help unemployed people into tourism jobs;
2. Accelerate social mobility – females into management positions;
3. Professionalise the workforce;
4. Improve customer service; and
5. Increase business investment.

4.2 ACTION: The partners will collaborate with OfA to look at ways of providing opportunities at the local level. OfA; MC; MTF; VS. 2013.

4.3 ACTION: *Introduce an Activity Tourism/Work Experience Programme and identify suitable work experience employers. SRUC Oatridge; MC; MTF. 2013.*

4.4 ACTION: *Potential to establish a Midlothian Tourism Academy examined. Queen Margaret University; MC; MTF. 2013/15.*

4.5 ACTION: *All businesses in Tourism and related sectors highlighted on refreshed www.visitmidlothian.org.uk with links established and benefits of MTF membership provided. MC; MTF. 2013/2015*

4.6 ACTION: *Organise leaflet exchange for businesses Leaflet. MTF; MC. March 2013/15*

4.7 ACTION: *MTF to consider establishing a marketing sub group to develop initiatives with the potential to develop packages for VS Expo 2013 and future years. MTF; MC. 2013.*

4.8 ACTION: *Continue developing an annual Partnership Programme of Marketing Opportunities and Visitor Servicing. VS; MC; MTF. 2013/15*

4.9 ACTION: *Steering Group formed to consider options regarding VIC provision. All partners. 2013/15*

4.10 ACTION: *Promotion at Expo of refreshed website and new initiatives/packages developed. VS, MC; MTF. Early 2013 and ongoing to 2015.*

4.11 ACTION: *Examine the potential to work across Local Authority boundaries to develop collaborative tourism initiatives concentrating on the SG themed years. VS; MC; ME; VWL; VEL; SE. 2013/15.*

4.12 ACTION: *Optimise External Funding Support and make every effort to maximise the quantity of match funding required to increase leverage. MC; MTF; VS. 2013/15.*

5.1 ACTION: *MC to sign up to delivery of the Scottish Tourism Economic Activity Monitor (STEAM). 2013 and will work with VS to ensure the most robust method of measuring the economic impact of the local visitor economy is adopted in future years. VS; MC. 2013/15.*

GLOSSARY:

BID	Business Improvement District
CARS	Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme
CTC	Cyclist Tourism Club
E&LATP	Edinburgh and Lothians Area Tourism Partnership
EAE	Edinburgh Arts and Entertainment (Commercial Leaflet Distributor)
ECB	Edinburgh Convention Bureau
FAM	Familiarisation
FCS	Forestry Commission Scotland
HS	Historic Scotland
LEADER	European Rural Funding Programme

MIM	Meet in Midlothian (Business Tourism Partnership)
MC	Midlothian Council
MCTT	Midlothian Council Travel Team
MERP	Midlothian Economic Recovery Plan
ME	Marketing Edinburgh
MTAP	Midlothian Tourism Action Plan
MTF	Midlothian Tourism Forum
MVA	Midlothian Voluntary Action
NMMS	National Mining Museum Scotland
OfA	Opportunities for All (Employment Programme)
PHRP	Pentland Hills Regional Park
RCT	Rosslyn Chapel Trust
SE	Scottish Enterprise
SG	Scottish Government
STEAM	Scottish Tourism Economic Activity Monitor
SEStran	South East of Scotland Transport Partnership
SRUC	Scotland's Rural College
SUSTRANS	Sustainable Transport Charity (UK)
THI	Townscape Heritage Initiative
TIPs	Tourism Information Points
VEL	Visit East Lothian
VS	VisitScotland
VIC	VisitScotland Information Centre
VWL	Visit West Lothian

Midlothian Council Equality Impact Assessment Form



Information published by Midlothian Council can be provided on request in many of the community languages e.g. Cantonese, Punjabi, Urdu and also in large print, Braille, or audio tape. For more information please contact Midlothian Council on 0131 270 7500.

Lead contact:

Sandy Macmillan, Economic Development Officer, Tourism and Rural Development.

Section A: Introduction

1. Title of policy, procedure or function being assessed

Midlothian Tourism Action Plan 2013/15

2. Divisions/organisations/groups involved in doing this Equality Impact Assessment

Corporate Resources Division – Economic Development Section.

3. Date started:

01 January 2013

Date completed:

08 February 2013

Section B: Information

4. Please describe the Policy, Procedure or Function you are impact assessing

The MTAP is an action plan setting out the strategic approach to be adopted by the partners in the next three years and the activity to be delivered across Midlothian. It highlights priorities and serves as a lever for investment and to further promote partnership working by businesses, agencies and communities.

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5. What information and consultation data do you have to inform your assessment? What does it tell you?

Extensive consultation undertaken with a range of strategic partners, businesses and community groups. This included Midlothian Tourism Forum (MTF) members and a wide range of agencies and individual businesses.

6. Do you need more information or more consultation/engagement data?

- Do you need anything more:
 - i. to do this Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)
 - ii. to monitor or assess, in future, the impact of the policy/procedure or function you are EQIAing on people with different equalities characteristics
- Lack of data is not a sufficient reason to conclude there is no impact. It is insufficient to state that a policy will affect everyone equally without having considered the different barriers some people may encounter.

No further information/data required.

Section C: Assessment

Midlothian Council equality impact assesses on **all** of the characteristics in the shaded area below, so you should consider all of these in your assessment. If you want you can consider other groups as well.

Race (this includes ethnic or national origins, colour and nationality)

Disability (e.g. physical disabilities, sensory impairments, learning disabilities, mental health conditions or long-term illnesses)

Sex(male/female)

Age (all ages)

Sexual Orientation (gay man, gay woman/lesbian, bisexual, heterosexual/straight)

Religion or belief (including having no religion or belief)

Pregnancy and maternity (having just had a baby or being pregnant)

Gender reassignment or transgender status (a person who is proposing to undergo is undergoing or has undergone a process to change their sex)

Marriage and Civil Partnership

People experiencing poverty or at risk of poverty: (poverty may be simply defined as not having enough money to meet one's basic daily needs or to have the things that most people in the UK take for granted).

As you answer questions 7i. to 7iv. over the page:

a) Think about the policy, practice or function you are assessing and

- people with the above characteristics
- people associated with them (e.g. a parent or carer)
- people mistakenly assumed to have the above characteristics

Remember to consider impacts on staff as well as communities and customers.

Continued.../

b) Consider whether the above people are likely to have different needs, or be affected in different ways by what you are doing/proposing. e.g.

- People may need, or benefit from, information provided in a particular format, like large print or easy read.
- A queuing system which relies on people standing for long periods will make it very difficult for some people to use the service.
- Charging more for a service is likely to affect people from several of the groups in the shaded area above, as on average they have a lower income.
- Targeting an area of high poverty could leave people experiencing poverty outside the area even worse off in comparison

c) Consider the General Equality Duty requirements to pay due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, victimization, harassment or other local conduct that is prohibited under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to the characteristics listed in shaded area at the top of this page (except poverty)
- advance equality of opportunity between and foster good relations between people who share a characteristic in the shaded area and those who do not (except marriage and civil partnership and poverty)

7i. Note any positive impacts on the above equalities groups

The implementation of the MTAP will have positive impacts on strategic partners/businesses throughout Midlothian and is totally inclusive with regard to participation. The new plan features more collaborative working (co-production and capacity building) focusing on growth opportunities and responding positively to the change agenda. The MTAP will address operational and promotional matters in the tourism sector such as communications, visitor information, marketing, service, skills, training and quality.

7ii. Note any negative impacts on equalities groups

The partners are aware of equality issues and inclusion is at the core of the plan. As a consequence there will be no discernible or expected negative impacts on equalities groups. In some instances charges do apply for entrance to tourist attractions and those businesses will be approached and encouraged to participate in Doors Open Day to allow those who cannot afford the entry fee admission at least annually.

7iii. How significant would this negative impact be, and what kind of numbers would be affected?

Not applicable.

7iv. Note any opportunities for making a positive impact on equalities groups.

The plan will help unemployed people into tourism jobs, accelerate social mobility, professionalise the workforce and improve customer service. (See section 4 Building our Capabilities).

Annual reports will highlight activity and impacts.

Section D: Actions and Outcomes

Questions 8 and 9 below ask about actions which have been taken, or will be taken **as a result** of this Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA). Any pre-existing actions should be included in earlier sections.

8. Note any actions you will be taking as a result of this EQIA:

Think about what you can do to:

- minimise or remove any negative impacts, and
- maximise the opportunities for positive impacts

Gathering and acting upon visitor satisfaction information will be a major focus for the industry and the partners will be encouraged to report on visitor satisfaction studies in the first year.

9. Please note any actions you have already taken as a result of this EQIA here.

Meetings are ongoing with partners to deliver the actions outlined in the plan. This includes businesses in the tourism, food and drink and education sectors. The Food and Drink Steering Group are promoting a schools menu competition as part of the Food and Drink Award ceremony. Opportunities for All have made contact with the organizers of the Midlothian Science Festival and Midlothian Tourism Forum to look for volunteering opportunities.

10. How will you track/monitor that the actions you mentioned in 8. have been achieved?

e.g. by adding them to a work plan, service plan etc.

Outcomes will be reported on an annual basis at the AGM of the MTF. Towards the end of the plan a visitor survey will be commissioned to check what has been achieved and direct remedial action in the future.

11. If you have decided not to take any action please note why this is, and any justification, here.

A significant negative impact, even if it affects only a small number of people, should be addressed.

Not applicable.

12. Is a more detailed assessment recommended?

Not recommended.

Version: EQIA Form V1.3 29 March 12

Declaration Box

Instructions: This box must be completed by the author of the report. The box will be copied and saved by the Council Secretariat who will delete it from the report prior to photocopying the agenda.

Title of Report: Midlothian Tourism Action Plan 2013/15

Meeting Presented to: Cabinet 26 February 2013

Author of Report: Sandy Macmillan

I confirm that I have undertaken the following actions before submitting this report to the Council Secretariat:-

- ***All resource implications have been addressed. Any financial and HR implications have been approved by the Head of Finance and Human Resources.***
- ***All risk implications have been addressed.***
- ***All policy implications have been addressed.***
- ***My Director has endorsed the report for submission to the Council Secretariat.***

The report has an education interest.