

Appendix 2

Proposed Orkney Marketing Activities for 2018 to 2019.

Additional Detail.

Several developments and successes working with Industry partners over recent years have resulted in a significantly lower request for funding for the proposed 2018 / 2019 programme, endorsed by Orkney Marketing Advisory Group. These are summarised as follows:

- Destination Orkney is expected to appoint a Chief Executive who will lead an organisational transition to deliver destination management and marketing activities and a review of the Tourism marketing strategy. Whilst Tourism Marketing is funded from a different Council revenue budget the increased need to integrate marketing activities, recognised by all sector groups, requires that stakeholders review these wider priorities during the current year following planned evaluation and benchmarking with other areas.
- Several large contracts previously funded by the programme, for example, Exhibition Stand Management are either still being managed by Highlands and Islands Enterprise, or do not yet require the same level of ongoing investment, for example, Orkney.com.
- The LEADER funded Digital Media Orkney project has been universally regarded as a success by Orkney Marketing Advisory Group representatives in managing digital media and press activity. This runs until December 2019, with the possibility of a short extension but future planning decisions will need to be taken in the coming year.

1. Digital Assets – Programme of Orkney.com Upgrades and Integration Restructure.

Following last year's funding commitment to significantly upgrade and integrate the two main Orkney marketing websites (<http://www.orkney.com/> and <https://www.visitorkney.com/>), the current year's proposal reflects a lower ongoing level of financial investment. This will be limited to adding enhanced customer interface technologies building on sophisticated mapping, adding further dynamic functionality, enhanced search engine optimisation and hosting. This will support the integrated site in keeping pace with ongoing developments in functionality across all user platforms particularly as mobile phones and tablets are increasingly used by customers and visitors. The proposed level of development will be accommodated under current contractual arrangements managed by Highlands and Islands Enterprise, subject to budget approval. The website and database of customers is now a major tool used and valued by the sectors to reach and proactively engage with their markets (supported by the Digital Media Orkney resource funded by LEADER, Orkney Islands Council and Highlands and Islands Enterprise).

There is thus an ongoing need to keep up to date with digital innovations essential in keeping a space with other regions with larger budgets and with the rapidly increasing demand for continuous digital access to information.

2. Sectoral Events.

Orkney Marketing Advisory Group once again recommend support for sectoral events and propose only a one-year programme regards the various exhibitions, trade and retail shows listed in the report. There remains demand for the near-term events that are planned and require financial assistance from the 2017 / 2018 budget. The crafts industry in particular is also raising longer term questions about the most effective future approaches to customer and trade engagement and these continue to be reviewed.

There are state aid funding restrictions on the financial support available for individual businesses to attend such shows and so the support for a collective Orkney presence offered through the programme continues to be highly welcomed by Orkney Marketing Advisory Group and the businesses it represents. At this stage in planning the exact cost of each show cannot be determined, but the estimates are based on knowledge from previous years and will depend on final attendance decisions taken by the sector groups.

Food and Drink Industry Marketing.

Attendance at trade events remains vital for many of the food sector businesses providing the opportunity to meet buyers from all of the major UK supermarkets. Consumers shows do not expect significant sales but the co-ordinated Orkney presence at the events listed in the report will promote the Orkney brand and the support remains welcomed by OFD as it offers continuity and enhances Orkney product and brand awareness that is valued by their members.

Craft Industry Marketing.

In the craft sector, attendance at exhibitions has been a lower priority, mainly because of the size range of member businesses and differing priorities. The main event for this sector is the International Trade Fair at the SECC in January and this is well supported with attendees varying each year and constantly including new members.

Energy Industry Marketing.

All Energy takes place in Glasgow in May of each year and is still regarded as the key event for Orkney companies in the Marine Renewables calendar.

As the marketing programme runs from April each year, funding must be committed from this year's programme; an allowance has thus been made for a May 2019 event in the programme. Feedback from Orkney attendees attending in May 2018 will again be reviewed in due course, however Orkney Renewable Energy Forum recently confirmed the event as an ongoing priority for the Renewables sector and its supply chain in Orkney. Orkney Renewable Energy Forum will also identify and co-ordinate interest in specialist alternative events considered as priority by its members. This local supply chain may also consider Oil and Gas sector events which Orkney businesses also service.

Orkney 'Showcase' Event.

An opportunity to enhance the experience of key influencers invited to visit Orkney, to gain a better understanding of the widest possible range of its quality offering in the short time available. A bespoke showcase event will invite industry buyers and dedicated groups of visiting journalists to experience more than they could from a single issue visit thus providing opportunity to generate additional press content and media stories, whilst demonstrating Orkney's sustainable energy credentials that are important to supermarket customer influence groups. It will co-ordinate 'meet the buyer' style events and help gauge and plan future opportunities for more International buyer engagement.

3. Social Media.

Building on the success of the Digital Media Orkney project, it is recognised that whilst the expert resource costs are covered, certain ongoing costs remain ineligible for LEADER funding. The proposed activity is designed to significantly enhance the reach and engagement of current and planned campaigns with co-ordination resource, reactive media (for example the recent Orcas in Scapa flow), and use of social media boosting tools to promote more widely. A new campaign to encourage direct 'buying' from Orkney producers, along with a campaign designed to attract talent and improve recruitment success are planned to be trialled using social media marketing methods.

4. Orkney Brand Guideline Development.

A set of Quality Assurance guidelines are recommended to protect the Orkney Brand as it continues to be increasingly used across all key sector groups. This would include a style guide and template design to enable additional media content to fit appropriately with articles and adverts in print or digital formats. It is also proposed that stakeholders engage in an independent review process to ensure the Orkney brand and the wider marketing media utilised remains relevant and impactful in delivering increased sales and visitors to Orkney.

By integrating not just the Digital Assets but by jointly managing Social media and brand activity across all sectors, including Tourism, it will be proposed to Destination Orkney that these are considered as integrated projects with a supplemental contribution of Tourism Marketing funding requested to extend the reach of the current budget request.