

Cairngorms Tourism Emergency Response Group

6th April 2020

Note of meeting:

1. Stabilize

- **Key current issues from CBP, VA, MoraySpeyside.** There was a general feeling from DMOs that the situation was beginning to settle slightly, though communication with businesses to identify gaps in support remains key. MS are applying for funding from the BIDS resilience fund. Some gaps in support are being rectified. In particular, staff employed at 28/2/20 can be re-hired by their employer at that time and then furloughed. Several meetings were coming up with Scottish Government Ministers to review progress and raise issues of concern.
- **New guidance on holiday lettings.** The new self-catering support package will go live from Highland Council around lunchtime with other local authorities working to similar timescales. Discussion with ASSC about sufficient but pragmatic level of supporting evidence.
- **Business Support.** HC started making payments last Wednesday, and expect to be giving out £5m a day next week, for an expected total of around £94m in total. AC have also started processing payment and have had around 20000 applications (not all tourism)
- **VisitScotland overview.** [Business survey](#) had 1800 responses and was published last week. Also produced was a [Market Insight Summary](#), and '[Heart Grows Fonder](#)' video to keep Scotland in the mind of potential visitors.
- **Travel to the countryside /outdoor access.** There was a feeling that visitor numbers to the countryside had markedly decreased, and most residents were following guidelines around outdoor exercise.
- **Community-led response activities.** Community response teams are working well throughout the Park's communities. AC have set up a Community Resilience Fund to support community groups, distributed through Area Managers. Applications have been made for Community Resilience Fund.

2. Communicate, Inspire and Plan

- **Communicate and Inspire visitors.** DMOs continue to engage with followers, trying to strike the right tone. CBP are experimenting with more interactive content such as quizzes using Make it Yours materials. VA are following up planned Expo appointments by other means, as buyers are still planning ahead. VS are also looking to interact with Expo buyers and are investigating tech solutions for destination promotion.
- **Plan.** MF and MT to pull together a paper outlining a business-led approach to planning over the coming months. This will be available for discussion at the next meeting. Visitor Survey analysis is ongoing at the moment and fuller results will be available next month.
- **HIE / Caingorm Mountain.** Rhona Fraser sent apologies but gave an update on CMSL. Planning permission for funicular repair has been submitted and is likely to go to an online planning meeting in May. The masterplanning consultation is ongoing. Seasonal winter staff that had been given notice have been rehired and furloughed for the rest of their contract (MT pointed out that it would be possible to extend this beyond the end of their existing contracts as

new employment would still be difficult to find at the end of the month).

3. Prepare for Return

- VS continue to scenario plan for easing of restrictions. In China, rural destinations seem to recover much more quickly than urban. VA are planning to amend social media content for a more local audience as restrictions reduce.
- DMOs will continue dialogue with businesses about their preparedness and ability to re-open. CBP are planning to continue online business meetings, some general, some sector specific. They are also planning a business survey to establish readiness to re-open.

4. Date of next meeting

- Next Monday is Easter Monday so no meeting is planned unless there is any major change to the situation (that decision would be made and notified by Friday). The next meeting otherwise will be Monday 20th, which will be a short 30 minute meeting for key updates. The following day, Tuesday 21st, there will be the scheduled meeting of the full Cairngorms Tourism Partnership.