



Your Local
Chamber of Commerce
Working for You

Cairngorms Business Partnership

Operations Plan

2012-13

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INTRODUCTION

The Cairngorms Business partnership (CBP) has achieved a great deal since its inception in April 2011. In the past year the organisations has:

- Appointed a new board representing eleven sectors and the five areas of the Cairngorms National Park.
- Delivered an annual conference attended by the John Swinney cabinet secretary for finance, workshops and business development programmes.
- Developed innovative mobile digital solutions in building communications channels between the customer and members and providing 130,000 click throughs to members' sites.
- Produced and distributed 12 Whats On magazines and carried out a full upgrade of the Park-i guide
- Consolidated accounting functions of three organisations and brought that service in house.
- Introduced a members to members benefits schemes, the first in a series of innovations to broaden the appeal of the CBP across sectors
- Submitted a local business view to;
 - National Park Plan 2 Consultation
 - Transport Scotland 2014 raise Franchise Consultation
- Held regular meetings at a ministerial level in government and at senior executive levels with key public agencies.
- Held workshops and a series of business lunches.

The CBP now looks to further consolidate its place as the leading private sector led membership organisation in the Cairngorms National Park. The CBP is an affiliated member of the Scottish Chambers of Commerce and will continue to deliver work under three key headings of:

1. Marketing and Promotion
2. Business Development
3. Advocacy

and a fourth;

4. CBP Development

The CBP has developed significant levels of goodwill across the private and public sectors over the past year. The organisation now must continue to deliver key benefits for members so as to enhance return on investment by members and stakeholders. The 2012-13 Operational Plan is designed to consolidate on key works streams and projects developed in 2011-12. In addition the CBP board along with stakeholders will conclude a visioning exercise that seeks to create a vision of a sustainable organisation that can make a meaningful contribution to the local economy and successful delivery of the Cairngorms National Park Plan.

MARKETING & PROMOTION

CBP operate www.visitcairngorms.com that provides local businesses with over 11,000 customer click throughs each month to member's websites. The site is designed to get the customer to the point of purchase of their choice of business as quickly as possible. We own and operate; Visit Cairngorms i-phone app, m.visitcairngorms.com Whats On, Park-i, advertise in press and media and manage press trips & PR activities for the area. We are also involved with partners in bringing events and conferences to the area and seek to develop a world class all year round calendar of events and festivals. We maximise the benefits of social media connecting with many thousands of people on a weekly basis. Our office distributes customer enquiries to member businesses.

The marketing Plan will be based around the following key objectives:

1. To grow the appeal of the Cairngorms National Park as a must visit destination.
2. Create a series of strong campaigns and 'calls to action' that will connect customers with member businesses.

Connecting customers to Members

The CBP will continue to pursue the ambition of providing innovative and cost effective ways for customers to make contact with member businesses in order to buy goods and services throughout the Customer Information Journey of; *Look, Book, Travel, Stay and Keep in Touch*. The CBP will continue to 'future proof' the methods of communication between the customer and the business.

The CBP will continue to develop:

- Visitcairngorms.com
- m.visitcairngormsd.com
- i-phone app
- Whats On
- Park-i
- Sector leaflets
- Local offline material
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Blog
- YouTube

In the coming year the CBP will seek to establish a revenue generating platform on the website. The operating arrangements will be developed along with the appropriate business model that will drive sales to members and revenue to the CBP.

Promotional Activities

A series of activities will be undertaken throughout the year:

- CNP Awareness promotion with call to action: visitcairngorms.com
- Stakeholder funded marketing campaigns with offer led call to action
 - Led by CBP and sector partners in activities, attractions, accommodation and the food and drink sector.
- Direct mail to customer partnership campaigns
 - Partnership with VisitScotland direct mailing campaigns
- Direct mail to Customer newsletter
 - Regular offer driven email newsletter based campaigns to own database of consumer contacts
- Develop a comprehensive image and video library
- Developing a year round calendar of world class events and festivals supported by PR and promotional activities.

PR Campaigns

- PR activities to support CNP and stakeholder campaigns
 - Development and delivery of an annual PR campaign based around events, seasons, locations and areas.

Printed Guides

Activity will surround two paid-for advertising publications; Whats On and Park-i. Both publications produce an essential surplus that supports the sustainability of the organisation. During the year every effort will be made to secure advertising revenue and advertising sell across the CNP. Advertising revenues are targeted to hold as per 2012 with a small increase budgeted for park-i due to its recent facelift and increase in appeal.

Activities:

- Production and distribution of a monthly park-wide Whats On.
- Production and distribution of an annual Park –i
- Discussions with CNPA and VisitScotland regarding rationalisation of printed material and park guides to be implemented in 2013 and beyond.

Customer Services

The CBP office continues to take customer enquiries by phone, email and through web enquiry services. The service will continue along with the distribution of enquiries to local member businesses. In addition the CBP will explore with public agency partners the potential of a local partnership approach to the provision of customer services at the local VIC network.

Activities:

- Ongoing distribution of customer enquiries
- Local VIC Network: CBP will explore the potential of a partnership approach in the delivery of the local VIC network. To improve local customer information service levels, increase profile/identity of CNP whilst enhancing the VIC network and standing with local communities.
- QA: The CBP will explore with VS and the CNPA the possibility of the area becoming a pilot area for the development and improved take-up of QA across member businesses. The pilot will seek to develop a compelling reason to participate driven by ROI potential for the business.

E Media

CBP will follow an agenda of further development of e-media based communications development. This area is seen as essential in order to keep the destination up to speed with developing and changing communications channels both with consumers and local businesses. There also remains the ambition to rationalise web portals operated by CNPA and CBP.

Activities:

- Development of visitcairngorms.com
- Development of mobile information platforms
- Ongoing development of social media connections
- Placement of touch screen information points across the CNP
- Development of village network websites

Business Tourism

It is increasingly recognised that Business Tourism including association, conference, and incentive businesses is a high value business for the area and leads to delegate returning to the area. Past events such as the ATWS 2010 are clear examples of a partnership led approach that has secured a major event that will have long lasting benefits to the area. The CBP will develop a working plan with key Business Tourism operators in the area.

Activities:

- Creation of bid support documentation
- Involvement in key conference bid processes
- Establishing of a DMC model for the area.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

The CBP will continue to pursue an agenda of business development working around the agendas of:

- Sector Development
- Business Intelligence
- Research
- Business capacity and competency building

Sector Groups

The CBP is a unique combination of private and public sector businesses in a unique environment in terms of place and economy. The CBP will host a series of business and sector meetings throughout the year that will bring businesses together by sector and by area. The objective of such meetings is to share information, network and improve overall levels of understanding, awareness and trade across the business community. The groups will also assist towards the formation of policy and advocacy lobbying positions adopted by the CBP.

The following sector groups will meet to enhance sector development;

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| • Activity Providers | • Attractions |
| • Hostels | • Golf |
| • Horse Riding | • Business Tourism |

Business Intelligence

The CBP will continue to provide member businesses links to business information and intelligence that will assist their business. Local surveys and signposting to external resources will be carried out via newsletters, workshops and direct correspondence.

- Business Hub on vc.com
- KPI report with key businesses
- Business barometer

Customer Feedback

The CBP will continue to collect visitor feedback through public collected data and promote the collection of data at business level. The CBP will also meet with members to bring together local expertise to assist in creating a strong feedback mechanism.

- DOVE collection across destination
- DOVE Business collection
- Mystery shopping of destination
- Customer focus groups

Benchmarking

The CBP will develop a system of benchmarking business development in the CNP with other areas of Scotland and overseas. The work will also allow the CBP to gather best practice from other areas and share local best practice with other destinations either by hosting learning journeys to the CNP or undertaking commercial consultancy. Discussions and support will be sought from the public agencies towards the development of benchmarking activities.

- Benchmarking project
- Learning Journeys to key destinations or sector leaders

Business capacity and competency building

- Business workshops programme
 - Series of events around increasing the skills, capacities and competencies of local businesses.
- Business meetings programme
 - Series of business lunches and business meetings
- Sector development meetings
 - CBP membership sector development meetings looking at key issues affecting the sector. Such meetings will also feed into the partnership marketing initiatives.

Park Aware

The CBP will work in partnership with the CNPA an innovative programme that seeks to enhance the consistency of message around the brand of the CNP. Such a project will seek a position where businesses are proud to be a part of the part, promoting the values of the park as a place to visit and improving business performance as a result.

- Staff induction and networking schemes
- Company Networking
- Interpretation material

ADVOCACY

The CBP is affiliated to the Scottish Chambers of Commerce so bringing direct business benefits along with the strength of a national network. Working on behalf of local of 280 business members we interact on a regular basis with; Scottish Government CNPA, Local Authorities (Highland, Moray, Aberdeenshire, Angus and Perthshire) SNH, VisitScotland, HIE, Scottish Enterprise and other public agencies.

There is a strongly held ambition that a cohesive and close business community will together make the area stronger in both product development but also in the provision of excellent services and customer satisfaction levels. Such a network will also attract new business to the area across all sectors.

Advocacy

- Cairngorms Economic Forum
- Economic Development Strategy
- Planning
- Transport
- Employment
- Sectoral issues

National Park Plan

The NPP 2012-20-17 offers a unique opportunity for the CBP to take forward the business agenda across the CNP. The CBP submitted a Business Manifesto calling for greater clarity around the business development agenda called for a specific Business Development and Diversification Strategy for the area. To ensure this agenda remains 'live' and is taken forward by stakeholders the CBP have called for the formation of Cairngorms Economic Forum.

During 2012-13 the CBP will focus on realising these ambitions along with public sector stakeholders.

CBP DEVELOPMENT

It is essential that the CBP is developed into a sustainable organisation in order to deliver consistency of service to members, value for money for members and provide them with an exceptional interface with the consumer. The organisation will continue to strive towards sustainability in a financial sense but expects a partnership relationship with the public sector in delivering the 2012-13 Ops plan.

A key priority for the CBP is to broaden its appeal to non tourism businesses. A working group will develop membership benefits that are directly of benefit to businesses across all sectors. A major overhaul of presentational material, membership promotional material and documentation will be delivered in the year. Such collateral will increase membership numbers in line with budgeted increase.

The 2012-13 plan will see the CBP consolidate its administrative and resources. Expectations by members and stakeholders have increased substantially over the past year. The coming year requires a strengthening of the core delivery team. To achieve this aim the staff team will be enhanced and more use of bought-in project staff will be utilised.

The driving principles for such development work will incorporate:

- Providing value for money membership services and so grow membership.
- Innovate and make more efficient the day to day operations of the CBP office.

Staff Development and capacities of the CBP

The following is assumed within the budget:

- New Staff role of Development Manager(s). The role will concentrate on sales of memberships, additional services, advertising and conference/workshop take up.
- Staff benefits scheme
 - Introduction of a series of staff benefits around; pension, healthcare and improvement of the workplace.
- Staff training and development programme
 - Administration and accounting
 - Database and customer relationship management
 - Social media, marketing and campaign skills
- Adopt a group of consultant based suppliers to strengthen outputs.
 - To strengthen the skills within call to the CBP and our members it is envisaged that to a greater extent than in the past the CBP will bring in skill sets to match key developmental projects. This will be in addition to the ongoing development of staff.

CBP Governance & Company

The CBP team will continue to supply administrative services for:

- Regular Board meetings addressing the delivery of corporate plan by the CBP executive
- Membership support
- HR & Admin
- Accounting & Financial recordkeeping
- Admin support to Board
- Admin support to sector groups

Funding partner engagement

Ongoing relationship building and sharing of activities, work streams and ideas will be pursued during the term of this plan. Such activities will strengthen the links between the public sector agencies and the private sector network in the Cairngorms National Park. This will be achieved as a result of regular meetings with HIE, SE, CNPA, VS and local authorities

- Calendar of meetings
- Ongoing information exchange
- Staff and meetings cross involvement

Advisory Groups

The CBP will bring together groups of members to assist the CBP executive team. The groups will be a mix of permanent and semi permanent groups.

- Policy and Resources: Providing advice and discussion platform on policy issues and development of new ideas and initiatives. The group can act as an advisory body but also a sounding board.
- Marketing: To provide advice and input that will in turn strengthen the marketing and promotional performance of the CBP.
- Business Development: Provide input to developing membership take up across sectors and advice on the development of membership services.

Cairngorms Business Partnership

April 2012