

REPORT

To: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE		Subject: NORTH LANARKSHIRE TOURISM FORUM
From: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT		
Date: 11 July 1996	Ref: DW/JG/REP.036	

Background

Tourism is Scotland's largest industry and the sector of the economy which is forecast to grow fastest to the year 2000. In 1995 the tourism industry employed 8% of the workforce and accounted for 5% of GDP. The revenue from tourism in 1995 was £2.1bn and this is forecast to increase to £2.7bn by the year 2000. Thus tourism offers significant potential for the economic, physical and social regeneration of North Lanarkshire.

Local tourism development within North Lanarkshire sits within a national and regional framework. A regional pan-Lanarkshire tourism development strategy will be produced in association with South Lanarkshire Council, the Lanarkshire Development Agency and the Greater Glasgow and Clyde Valley Tourist Board. This will set out the strategy and address key priorities. This sub-regional strategy will play an important role in supporting applications for European, lottery and other funding.

The tourism industry, however, suffers from the problem of fragmentation. Much of the industry consists of small businesses and there are a number of public sector organisations with a remit for tourism. This can lead to duplication of effort and lost opportunities for tourism business development. At a North Lanarkshire level it is important to have a forum which can produce a sub-strategy for the area and address particular issues of service delivery.

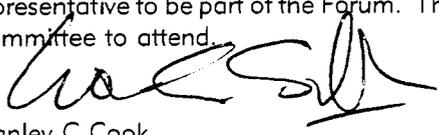
The creation of a North Lanarkshire Tourism Forum offers a mechanism designed to overcome these problems. It will provide an opportunity for informal discussion, presentations and brainstorming sessions which will bring together key individuals from public and private sector tourism interests. It will not be simply a talking shop, but will be a forum for new ideas. Smaller groups will take ideas forward. It will meet as and when it is appropriate to do so.

A similar organisation was initiated in the former Monklands District Council and provided a useful, productive and stimulating forum for a wide range of tourism development issues.

It is the intention of the Economic Development Unit to convene a North Lanarkshire Tourism Forum. Representatives will be invited from the Leisure Services Department, Chief Executives Department, the Lanarkshire Development Agency, the Greater Glasgow and Clyde Valley Tourist Board, Town Centre Initiatives, Local Enterprise Trusts, private sector attractions, the accommodation sector, Chambers of Commerce and so on. It is felt that it would be appropriate for an elected representative of the Economic Development Committee to be part of the Tourism Forum.

Recommendations

That the Committee agrees the inception of the North Lanarkshire Tourism Forum and nominates an elected representative to be part of the Forum. The Committee also invites an elected representative from the Leisure Services Committee to attend.



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Director of Planning and Development

For further information contact G Smith, Head of Business Development and Property.