

To: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE	Subject:	
From: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT	MARKETING ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME FOR TOURISM BUSINESSES	
Date: 1 August 1997	Ref: DW/LC/REP.275	

1 Purpose of report

- 1.1 To seek approval for the development and delivery of a marketing assistance programme which is aimed specifically at small and medium sized enterprises in the tourism sector.

2 Background

- 2.1 Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries in the world and is one of the largest industries in Scotland. The sector accounts for some 6,100 jobs in North Lanarkshire and contributes £56.5 million pounds to the local economy. As an industry it can also suffer from problems of under investment and lack of skills. The Lanarkshire Tourism Strategy has identified the development of promotional and marketing skills as a gap in the current provision. Various national initiatives such as Tourism Business Success and Scotland Best offer elements of marketing within their programmes, but there is potential to develop an integrated marketing programme tailored for the specific needs of the tourism business. The Economic Development Unit seeks approval to appoint a consultant to develop and deliver a marketing assistance programme for the tourism sector. This pilot programme should be capable of being extended.

3 Objectives

- 3.1 The programme will need to be a practical course aimed at the needs of a broad spectrum of businesses operating in the tourism sector, from bed and breakfast businesses to visitor attractions. The course therefore has the following objectives :-
- It must succeed in conveying to participants the scale, structure and complexity of the tourism sector and the opportunities this offers for the success of their business.
 - It should demystify what is often perceived to be an activity shrouded in jargon.
 - It must be interactive in order to encourage participants to exchange ideas, contribute and relate the programme elements to their particular business background, experience and requirements.
 - It should be focused on the production of a tangible goal at the end of the programme in the form of a marketing plan.
 - It should make participants aware of the other tourism related skills, development and training programmes and support available in North Lanarkshire.

4 Course format

- 4.1 It is intended that the course would largely follow the format of the highly successful marketing assistance programme run through the Economic Development Unit. The course would be advertised locally to raise awareness among the target market and potential participants would be invited to a taster seminar run by the consultant undertaking the project. This would enable the businesses to assess the appropriateness of the course for their particular needs and the consultant to gain an idea of the nature and background of the companies involved. The course would consist of a maximum of twelve participants. These may be self selecting but if the course is over subscribed, the consultant, in conjunction with the client, would choose a mix which reflects the local industry. The consultant would then assess each participant's marketing experience and marketing training needs, this will include an assessment of their suitability for the programme.

- 4.2 A programme of weekly seminars will follow, dealing with an appropriate range of marketing topics. Participants will gain an awareness of the concepts of marketing and how to apply them to their own business.
- 4.3 The consultant would then carry out follow-up visits to the participants in order to help them to implement their marketing strategy
- 4.4 A final group session would identify and assess the actions taken and benefits gained by the participants in developing their marketing strategy, it would also allow for feedback on the structure of the course and the possible refinements.
- 4.5 The consultant would finally produce an evaluation report for each participant.

5 Course material

- 5.1 The consultant would provide a copy of all the training material (course structure, worksheets, evaluation forms etc.) developed for the course. The course would be owned by, and copyright would reside with, North Lanarkshire Council.

6 Time scale

- 6.1 It is envisaged that the course would start in mid September, at the end of the main tourism season, and would be substantially complete by Christmas. In order to progress with this timetable the successful consultant would need to be appointed in August in order to develop the course programme and the materials for the course to start in September.

7 Consultants

- 7.1 Suitable consultants were identified from the Management Technology Training Grant (MTTG) list and the consultancy brief was put out to competitive tender. On the basis of written submissions and an interview it was decided that the best submission came from In-house Development, based in Cumbernauld. The total fee for the project would be £11,100 plus VAT, to include workbooks and course materials.

8 Funding

- 8.1 The course would be funded from the existing budgets within the Economic Development Unit.

9 Recommendation

It is recommended that the Committee

- i) note the contents of the report
- ii) approve the development and delivery of a marketing assistance programme for businesses in the tourism sector.
- iii) approve the appointment of In-house Development Consultants to undertake development and delivery of the pilot programme.



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