
COMMUNITY PLANNING

THEMATIC ACTION PLANNING (TAP) TEAM: Tourism Economy Meeting

DATE: 17th April 2018, **TIME:** 12:00pm, **VENUE:** Workshop 2, Marketplace Theatre, Armagh

Attendees: Ciaran O’Kane –**Invest NI**, Danny Silverson – **Armagh Cider Company**, Hilda Winter – **Dan Winter’s Cottage and Ancestral Home**, Jennie Dunlop – **ABC Council**, Jennifer Doak – **ABC Council**, Michelle Markey – **ABC Council**, Sara McGearry – **ABC Council**, Stephen Bill – **Tourism NI**, Zoe Millar-Minouge – **Armagh City Hotel**

Apologies: Brian Johnston - **ABC Council**, Carol Conlin – **Armagh Public Library**, Helen Troughton – **Armagh Cider Company**, Nigel Spiers – **Thomas Ferguson Irish Linen**,

1. Welcome and Introductions

Stephen Bill, Tourism NI welcomed everyone to the first meeting for the Tourism Action Planning Team for Community Planning. He introduced himself as chair of this team and advised that the purpose of the meeting was develop an action plan.

Team members introduced themselves and apologies were noted.

2. Background to Community Planning

Jennie Dunlop, Community and Strategic Planning Manager within Council outlined the agenda for the session which provided a background to the community planning, an overview of the draft Tourism Economy Action Plan and Next Steps for the action planning team.

Jennie went through the Powerpoint Presentation elaborating briefly on the following points:

- **Introduction to Community Planning**
Community Planning is about improving the wellbeing of the Borough and the quality of life for people through local services that are joined up, responsive and take an evidence based approach. The Community Plan for our borough is entitled “Connected” and sets out the long-term vision for the borough over a 13 year period up to 2030. Community Planning takes a partnership approach. There are thirteen statutory partners named in the legislation with specific duties around community planning but to achieve the aspirations in the plan statutory, private and community sectors need to work together.¹
- **Community Planning Governance Overview**
The formal governance structure is two tiered, with a Community Planning Strategic Partnership (CPSP), which has strategic oversight of the process, and six Thematic Action Planning (TAP) Teams reporting into the partnership. The TAP Teams will develop and deliver on agreed actions and will report into the CPSP through the Chairs from each Team. Stephen as Chair of this team will be the formal link to the Partnership.

¹ The Housing Executive, Invest NI, PSNI, Public Health Agency, Education Authority, NIFRS, Health and Social Care Board, Tourism NI, Southern Health and Social Care Trust, CCMS, Sport NI and Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council. The Local Government (Community Planning Partners) Order (Northern Ireland) 2016

A Community and Voluntary Sector Panel is being established for community planning in May and two reps from it will sit on each action planning team.

- **Approach to Community Planning**

The approach to Community Planning in this area follows three overlapping principles around Partnership Working, Engaging Communities and Using Evidence.

For each Action Planning Team there are four key deliverables:

1. Develop clear, achievable and measurable shared **action plans** to cover a 2 year period
2. Consult with stakeholders and promote involvement of Section 75 groups in this process
3. Implementation within a performance management framework
4. Ensure cross-cutting themes are integrated

In developing the Council's Tourism Strategy there has already been extensive research and consultation therefore the Tourism Economy Action Plan will take some of the actions from the Tourism Strategy as a starting point for community planning.

This group will work towards realising the Tourism long-term outcome in the community plan:

Tourism Economy Long-term Outcome

Our borough is the destination of choice for international* Visitors.

The following population indicator will be used to track our progress over time:

- Number of overnight trips made by visitors from outside Northern Ireland

Jennifer Doak presented the baseline statistics for the Tourism Economy Action Plan. Statistics.

3. Draft Tourism Action Plan for Community Planning

Sara McGeary XX from Council presented an overview of the Strategic Priorities within "Transform A Tourism Strategy for Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough". The Strategy sets out very clearly to where council will concentrate their effort the over the next five years.

Stephen advised that there were actions in the Tourism Strategy that needed buy in and partnership working from the local tourism industry to be successful.

Sara presented the draft action plan to the team

1. **Establish a baseline of tourism performance against which growth in the visitor economy can be measured**

Sara advised that whilst there are quantitative statistics available as presented by Jennifer, there was a need to gain qualitative data to gain a deeper understanding of who are the visitors to the area.

2. **Embed new tourism brand for the Borough with trade partners**

This action looks at how this borough wants to be viewed on the world stage. Sara advised that work has already commenced to develop a new tourism brand for the borough. The new brand is framed around "The First Place" and will be incorporated on all tourism literature. Sara advised that there was a narrative being drafted and would be shared with this team.

3. **Increase overnight visitors to the Borough**

This action had a strong link to the long-term outcome within the Community Plan. Stephen advised that Tourism Ireland were always looking for industry providers from Northern Ireland to attend Trade Shows and Meet the Buyer events to showcase the

Northern Ireland offering. Sara advised that people were looking to be more experiential. Discussions ensued around the importance of knowing what the borough has to offer as whole as more often at trade shows the person is selling the Northern Ireland region. Tourism is a relatively young and emerging market and the confidence and capacity needs to be increased. An additional action could be to provide opportunities for the industries to come together to learn about each others' offerings and to package their offering on visitor experiences.

Tourism NI have recently held Cultural Awareness training for the regional accommodation sector for Chinese Tourists. Discussion ensued that this could be rolled out across the local tourism industry and all agreed it should be added as an action to the draft action plan.

4. Embed signature events as key part of destination development

Sara advised that the Tourism Department were hosting three annual signature events. Stakeholder support for these events was very important.

- St Patrick's Festival
- Georgian Day
- Food and Drink Festival

5. Promote investment in new and existing tourism products

Stephen advised that there was always continual investment required within the Tourism industry and providers needed to ready eg undertake feasibility studies to ensure they were able to avail of any future funding applications.

4 Next Steps

The draft action plan for the Tourism Economy will be refined and updated following comments from the team. Stephen will present the action plan to the Community Planning Strategic Partnership on 10th May 2018 for review and approval.

Jennifer will work with the Sara and Stephen to develop performance measures.

It was agreed that this team would meet again following the Community Planning Strategic Partnership meeting.

ACTION: Community Planning team to update Action Plan.

ACTION: Stephen Bill to present Action Plan to CPSP 10th May 2018

ACTION: CPT to arrange next meeting

5 Close

Stephen closed the meeting by thanking everyone for their support and active participation in the meeting and advised community planning team would be in touch regarding dates of next meeting.