

Tourism Network Steering Group Meeting

15th February 2017

Meeting Notes

Present: Mike Studden (Berkeley Community Trust)
Leah Wellings (Dursley Town Council)
Jeff Walshe (Wotton Heritage/Visitor Centre)
Councillor Nick James (Hinton Parish Council)
Owen Gower (Dr Jenner's House, Museum & Garden)
Councillor Fiona Firth (Dursley Town Council)
John Roberts (Dursley Welcomes Walkers)

Apologies: Vicky Jennings (Foresters B&B)

1. Apologies

As above.

2. The Name

The group considered the results of the online survey and research work surrounding the brand name for the area so far. The discussion focused on the following names, with some disagreement still between members as to the preferred option:

Cotswold Edge & Severn Vale
Cotswold Edge & Vale
Cotswold Severn Vale

The possibility of including a simple strapline relating to 'history/heritage' was also discussed.

It was agreed that the Steering Group would recommend that the Network use ***Cotswold Edge & Severn Vale***. This had come out on top following the online survey. A review of its use as a brand name would be carried out in October; over the season feedback data would be collected using aligned set questions, to help with the review process.

3. Structure & Overall Direction

The handout summarising the draft structure and approach to the strategy, circulated at the January meeting, was discussed and amended (see amended version attached).

It was noted that Vicky Parr had submitted useful comments dated 30/1/17 relating to the structure of the steering group, data, events and potential activities/actions. These comments were discussed further and in particular the group agreed that, as suggested, the steering 'Executive' Group should have a strong membership from private business, it should be a good mix and representative of the Network. As it stands the group has reps from Council, community groups, venue and B&B. Representation would be strengthened moving forward.

Other points raised and discussed:

- The Terms of Reference should be very simple. There was a desire to avoid complexity and bureaucracy.

- The Membership Agreement (yet to be drafted) should not put people off joining the network. It should be simple and designed to show commitment to working together.
- The group recognised that large venues may already subscribe to other tourism groups/partnerships.
- It was agreed that in working 'with existing mechanisms' the Network should make efforts to provide content to be included on other established websites.

4. Draft Terms of Reference & Community Agreement

Leah gave out a draft Terms of Reference template which had kindly been supplied by the Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC). An example Terms of Reference from the Weymouth Tourism Partnership Broad was also made available.

In addition to the point raised under item 3 above, it was agreed that the Membership Agreement (yet to be drafted) should not require any monetary commitment/fee at this stage, but should be designed so that people can subscribe to the aims and objectives of the Network and Strategy.

It was agreed that Jeff, Mike and Leah would work together to draft the Terms of Reference for the next meeting; GRCC might be able to advise further on a suitable legal and financial structure.

5. Key documents – The Strategy & Action Plan

The draft Strategy was revisited. Leah gave out a document containing Tourism Objectives extracted from other strategies e.g. Local Plan, Cotswold Destination Management Plan, Neighbourhood Development Plan and Community Plans.

It was recognised that at the moment the Network is reliant on 'payment in kind' and the time of volunteers/council officers from the wider membership to complete work (meeting venues, meeting admin and gathering information from the area so far being the main resource needs). This arrangement was working at the moment but the Network does need to consider how it funds itself in the future to become sustainable and able to respond to needs (e.g. printing of materials).

Page 9/10 provides the start of what could be developed into an Action Plan. The plan should include the work we have already started. Funding will need to be looked at as an action.

We need to consider how we are going to engage, how we are going to measure success and demonstrate that things are happening.

It was noted that Cllr Gordon Craig had started discussions with the Prince of Wales Hotel and a local coach company to explore the possibility and viability of developing a local circular tour.

Mike agreed to look at redrafting the Strategy and Action Plan in light of recent developments and discussions, to be ready for the next meeting.

6. Harris Ethical Offer

It was noted that, following on from the January Network Meeting, Harris Ethical had come up with some suggestions and small scale mini projects to help support tourism and access to key trip destinations from Cam and Dursley Rail Station (a paper outlining the suggestions had been circulated); Harris Ethical have access to funds for a limited time to help groups such as the network with transport related research projects.

It was agreed that the group should work with Harris Ethical to get a 'quick win' if possible, given the network does not have any funds yet.

The group agreed to put forward the following projects (listed in priority order) to Harris Ethical:

1. The shuttle bus/Taxi sharing Feasibility Study
2. Three C's Rail Promotion
3. Development of a Locality Guide (as a series of leaflets for our area – the area is too big for 1 leaflet so we would need to break it down and pick an area to pilot)

The group agreed that ideally it would like to progress all of the above but recognised that this might not be a realistic option given time/funding constraints.

Leah agreed to submit the list to Sandy Moller at Harris Ethical.

7. Date and venue for next meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting should take place on 15th March 2017 6:30pm in Jacob's House, Castle Street, Dursley.