

Minutes – CPG Recreational Boating and Marine Tourism, 20th Feb 2013

Attendees

Stuart McMillan MSP (SMcM), Ian Clark (IC), Stuart Mack (SM), Margaret Mitchell MSP (MM), James Stuart (JS), Simon Limb (SL), Martin Latimer (ML), Richard Miller (RM), Stuart Smith (SS), Hugh Henderson (HH), Rhona Fairgrieve (RF), Helen McMeekin (HMcM), Robert Hunter (RH), Paul Taylor (PT), Dr Graham Russell (GR), David Adams McGilp (DAM), Jim McLachlan (JMCL).

Apologies

Ronnie Rusack, David Vass, Alistair Vallance, Fiona Macleod MSP, Jackie Baillie MSP, Graeme Kerr, Richard Simpson MSP, Andy Carnduff, Niall Sommerville (NS)

The meeting was opened by Stuart McMillan MSP, convener.

Stuart McMillan (SMcM) began by welcoming everyone to the first meeting of the New Year. He noted the cancellation of the previous meeting due to the sad and untimely death of Mike Balmforth. He went on to describe the important contribution Mike had made to building his own knowledge of the boating sector as well as to forwarding the aims of the CPG and building the profile of the sector in the political arena. Mike's passing is a significant loss to the sector as a whole. The meeting agreed unanimously.

Minutes from the previous meeting were proposed by JS and seconded by RF.

Matters Arising

Update on the Helix – (RM) – construction is progressing well, on schedule for opening in Spring 2014.

Election of New Secretary

SMcM noted due to changes in the Parliamentary Code his office would be happy to remain as key contact for the CPG at Parliament but that they would be unable to undertake the secretariat for the CPG. The meeting agreed that a rolling secretariat would be appropriate with RYAS sharing the role with BMFS who will aim to offer additional support in due course. The meeting agreed to this approach. SB (FoCF) agreed to take the minutes of the meeting in NS's absence.

Update on Marine Tourism Symposium on 8th March

JS said that the event is now at capacity with more than 100 people booked, they are operating a reserve list. Speakers include Paul Wheelhouse, Minister for Environment and Climate Change, Malcolm Roughead Chief Executive of Visit Scotland and Stephen Leckie, Chair of the Scottish Tourism Alliance.

SB noted the organisers appreciation of the support they have received from the team at Parliament, especially from SMcM's office.

SMcM noted that the event was the first of its kind and it had significantly raised the profile of the sector within Parliament and elsewhere. He thanked everyone involved in organising the day and stated that the senior level of people attending was a credit to the sector and would be seen by others as a trail blazing event for other CPGs.

RF asked if there would be an opportunity for people staying overnight to gather for an informal networking event. SB confirmed that an email would be circulated encouraging this.

Value of the Cruise Ship Market to the Scottish Economy (DAM) **SEE ATTACHED REPORT**

RM noted that it was a shame more of the new cruise ships were not being built on the Clyde. SMcM pointed out that, unfortunately, of the 3 yards still operating one was too small and the other two were operating on defence contracts. HMCM/RM noted that sailing was not offered as an option for visitors to pre-book and it would be useful to have more routine collaboration with Cruise Scotland e.g. a representative to be invited to attend the CPG.

SMcM noted that the crew of cruise ships represented a significant and largely under targeted market for local businesses. Recent experiences in the Falkland Islands shows how the cruise market can make a significant difference to remote communities.

RF noted that commercial ports need to undertake a delicate balancing act to ensure the demands of the cruise market do not negatively impact on the commercial traffic and vice versa.

- Action Point – Cruise Scotland (Richard Alexander) to be invited to the next meeting by SMcM
- Action Point – DAM to ask Cruise Scotland about the breakdown of the spend per visitor

Work Plan for the Coming Year

JS suggested that **facilities** would make a good topic for discussion by the CPG. What is where and what could be used more effectively?

JS also suggested that **events** would be a useful topic. RYAS is only able to take an active role in a limited number of events, it would be useful to have a standing item to raise upcoming events and flag opportunities for CPG members.

- Action Point – add events as a standing item for the CPG

SL suggested that **tourism**, particularly a follow up and summary of the event on the 8th of March would be essential to add to an upcoming agenda.

- Action Point – add feedback from 8th March to next agenda

GR/IC suggested that **protecting resources** would be a good topic, especially the decline and erosion of historic harbours, coastal storage space and space/coastal access for small clubs. PT noted there is a perception that there is a plethora of decaying ports on the East Coast and in the Firth of Forth in particular. There are opportunities, especially within the Capital.

- Action Point – ‘Focus on the Forth’ to the core agenda for the autumn meeting
- Action Point – NS to circulate the link to the Local Government and Regeneration Committee consultation, ALL to engage if possible.

ML noted that **small budget investments** can have a very significant impact and spark larger and more sustainable regeneration than very large, mixed use projects, many of which have been shelved thanks to the recession.

RF noted that the **marine planning process** is ramping up and that it will be an important year for the sector to engage with that process.

- Action Point – SB to provide an update on relevant consultations at next meeting

AOCB

RM has been approached by Ian Davidson Porter from the BIDS programme. He is keen to investigate opportunities to expand the programme within the leisure marine sector.

- Action Point – BMFS and RYAS to liaise with RM

RF said that this was likely to be her last CPG for a year as she was being seconded to the European Commission in Brussels to work on the Maritime Spatial Planning and Integrated Coastal Management Directive. Her remit will also cover marine tourism and she looked forward to telling the rest of Europe about the good news stories coming from Scotland. SMcM said Brussels gain would be the CPG's loss but wished her luck, thanked her for her input to date and looked forward to hearing about her work when she returns.

JS noted his involvement in the Glasgow flotilla and feeder events and asked if the CPG would be happy to be referred to in the bid. The meeting agreed to this.

DONM

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 29th May. The agenda will cover the symposium on the 8th and will include the AGM. The final meeting of the year is likely to be in September and will focus on the Forth Estuary Opportunities.

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

	Actions	Resp.	Date Raised
1.	Cruise Scotland (Richard Alexander) to be invited to the next meeting by SMcM	SMcM	20/2/2013
2.	DAM to ask Cruise Scotland about the breakdown of the spend per visitor	DAM	20/2/2013
3.	Action Point – add events as a standing item for the CPG	SB	20/2/2013
4.	Add feedback from 8 th March to next agenda	SB	20/2/2013
5.	'Focus on the Forth' to the core agenda for the autumn meeting	SB	20/2/2013
6.	NS to circulate the link to the Local Government and Regeneration Committee consultation, ALL to engage if possible.	NS	20/2/2013
7.	SB to provide an update on relevant consultations at next meeting	SB	20/2/2013
8.	BMFS and RYAS to liaise with RM	BMFS/RYAS	20/2/2013