

ANGUS COUNCIL

RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES COMMITTEE - 20 November 1997
PLANNING & TRANSPORT POLICIES COMMITTEE - 27 November 1997
ROADS COMMITTEE - 27 November 1997

ENVITOUR PROJECT

REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF RECREATION SERVICES
DIRECTOR OF PLANNING, TRANSPORT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT &
DIRECTOR OF ROADS

ABSTRACT

To advise Committee of the outcomes of the ENVITOUR Project.

1. RECOMMENDATION

Committee is asked to approve:

- a) The contents of this report, and;
- b) To Officers of the Council liaising with the ENVITOUR Partners to develop further Trans-National Projects, and
- c) To Officers of the Council seeking to develop Trans-National Projects with partners from ENVITOUR and INTEREG II, North Sea Commission Area.

2. INTRODUCTION

Angus Council was invited to participate in the ENVITOUR Exchange of Experience Project by the Co-Ordinators of the programme, the Municipality of Corfu in March 1996.

The ENVITOUR programme aims at the exchange of experience regarding methods of dealing with environmental problems resulting from tourism development in historical centres of European towns and is co-ordinated by the Municipality of Corfu, through its Development Enterprise.

ENVITOUR is part of the General Experience Change Programme - PACTE - 2 of the European Union under the auspicious of the Assembly of European Regions (AER).

On receipt of the invitation to participate in the programme, Angus Council carefully considered its position as a potential replacement for Stratford Upon Avon who were the intended original UK partner. In carrying out this evaluation the following areas were considered:-

- The programme "ENVITOUR" aims at the exchange of experience regarding methods of dealing with environmental problems resulting from tourist development in historical centres of European towns, co-ordinated by the Municipality of Corfu, through its Development Enterprise.
- Whilst Angus Council was keen to become a Partner in the programme, it was very conscious its contribution would clearly be in a different nature with regard to tourism and tourism development. Angus Council believed it had many alternative methods of

addressing problems associated with tourism, albeit not mass tourism and complementary attributes to offer to the other programme Partners, leading to a “well balanced” approach to such problems.

- It is worthwhile noting that Angus has well established previous and existing links with Corfu, particularly on an educational front. Therefore Angus Council warmly welcomed the invitation to become a full Partner in the ENVITOUR Project as it believed it had much to offer such partnerships and in particular to the ENVITOUR theme.
- At the introductory meeting in Corfu, the remit, objectives, timescales and theme areas of the projects were discussed by the Partners. At an early stage it was recognised that a detailed and in-depth research of existing experiences regarding the effects of tourism on the historical centres of participating towns would far exceed the demands of the programmes due to its limited duration and budget. Nonetheless and with the agreement of programme Partners, the Corfu Co-Ordinator (Project Leader) suggested that it would be advisable to confine discussions to those factors which can be researched and assessed within the framework of the present programme and which were of special interest to the participating Partners in respect of environmental problems they have to face.

Following consideration of these factors and the confirmation of Angus Council’s ability to provide a positive contribution to the programme, the decision was made to participate. This was confirmed to the Project Co-Ordinator and subsequently to the PACTE/AER Office.

The following fields of corporate experience exchange for detailed consideration were agreed between the project participants at the first meeting in Corfu:

- Improvement in the administration of transportation and traffic, to the more effective and environmentally sensitive decision on land planning and means of transportation.
- Integrated control of pollution and waste disposal.
- Improvement of the environment quality in urban areas (measures).
- Administration of visitors, and development of an environmental consciousness.
- Protection and improvement of historical heritage.
- Upgrading of the quality of tourism (alternative types of tourism such as agricultural tourism, conference tourism, etc.).
- Development of a tourism environmental policy.

Each programme Partner agreed to take the lead on 2 or 3 of the subject areas for the meeting in their town/city, whilst clearly also contributing to all the subject areas.

Programme (‘ENVITOUR’) : Timetable of Events

- a. 20-21 June 1996: first official meeting of the representatives of the Partners in Corfu. *(Finalisation of the fields of experience exchange, of the appropriate methodology for implementation of the project and allocation of duties).*
- b. September 1996 : second meeting of the representatives of the Partners in Angus, Scotland.
- c. January 1997 : third meeting of the representatives of the Partners in Siena, Italy.
- d. April 1997 : fourth meeting of the representatives of the Partners of Rethymnon, Greece.
- e. June 1997 : final meeting of the representatives of the Partners in Corfu.

(Recommendation of the co-ordinator relating to the issues discussed throughout the project and conclusions drawn by the research and evaluation of topics. Formulation of relevant proposals).

- f. September 1997 : Drafting of final report of the project for submission to the Pacte Office.

From the outset the Project Leader suggested that the Project Teams keep in regular contact between the official meetings, in order to monitor the course of the programme and to clarify queries and problems.

Furthermore, the Partners considered it essential that for the successful conclusion of the project, the Project Teams involved in the programme should contain a continuity of representative skills and expertise throughout the life of the project.

Financial Implications

The total budget of the programme is £119,336 (149,170 ECU) of which the contribution on behalf of the EU and Partners is £69,216 (86,519 ECU) and £50,120 (62,651 ECU) respectively.

Total Budget	: £119,336 (149,170 ECU)
Contribution of Partners	: £50,120 (62,651 ECU)
Contribution of EU	: £69,216 (86,519 ECU)

The table below details the division of the budget for the project.

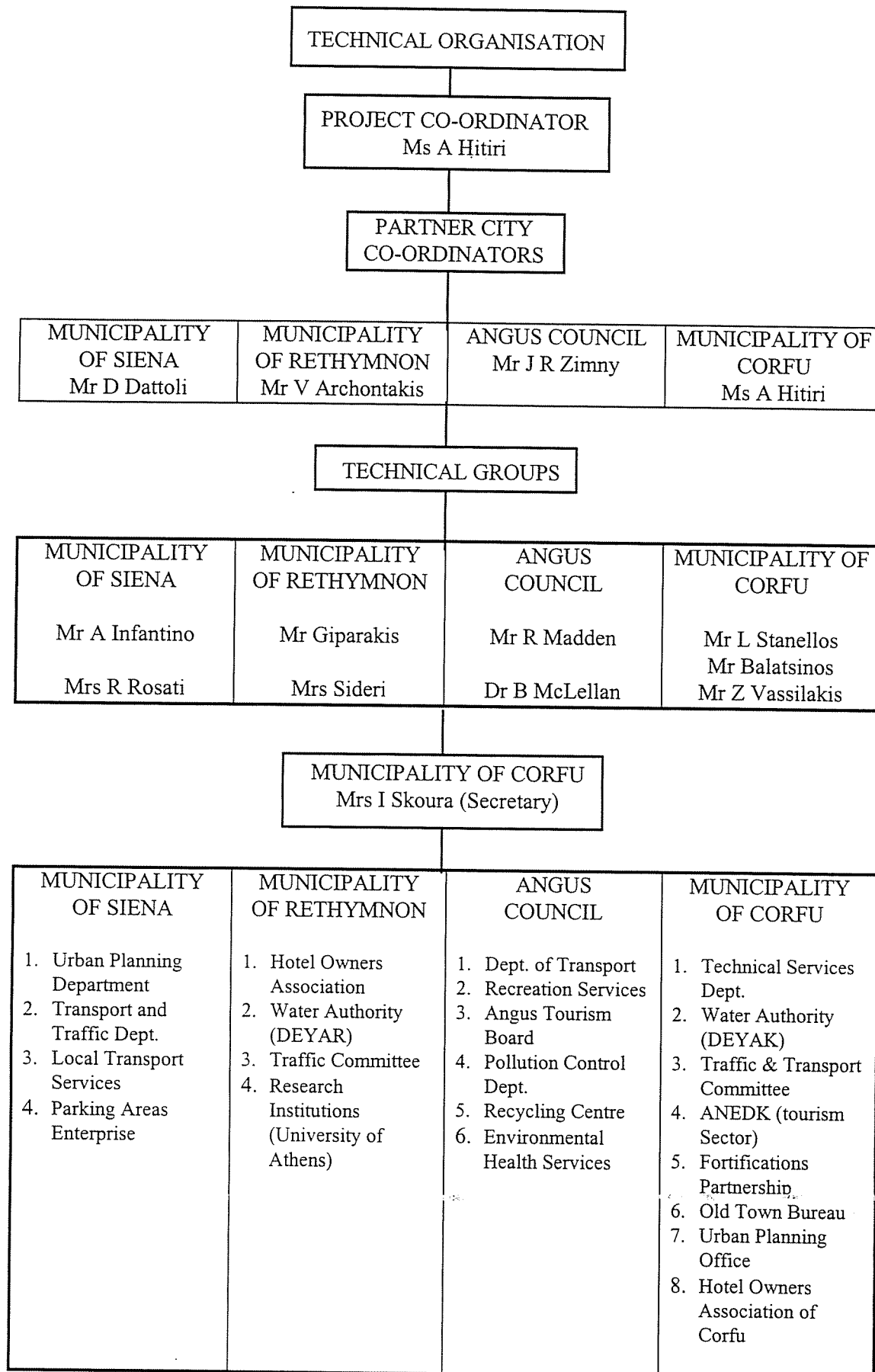
Authority	Local Finance		EU Finance		Total Budget	
	£	ECUs	£	ECUs	£	ECUs
Corfu (Project Leader)	20,415	25,519	35,538	44,422	55,953	69,941
Siena (Partner)	12,600	15,570	10,424	13,030	23,024	28,780
Angus (Partner)	12,600	15,750	10,424	13,030	23,024	28,780
Rethymnon (Partner)	4,505	5,632	12,380	16,037	17,335	21,669
TOTAL	50,120	62,651	69,216	86,519	119,336	149,170

It is expected that the EU funding of £10,424 (13,030 ECU's) will cover costs associated with Angus Council's input to the various seminars - meetings in Corfu, Rethymnon and Siena.

Angus Council's input to the project of £12,600 (15,750 ECU's) will be met from the Planning, Road and Recreation Revenue Budgets and will account primarily for staff time. These sums are contained within the 1996/97 and current Revenue budgets of the Council.

Organisation of Technical Partnership

The Organisation Plan of technical partnership, is as follows:



Lessons Learned from Co-Operation Within The ENVITOUR Project

The lessons learned from Corfu with the restoration of the Old Fortress will prove of value to Angus Council. The management of visitors to such historic buildings and experiences gained by the Angus delegation, from Siena and Corfu in minimising the environmental impact of increased tourism will prove invaluable in the development of Arbroath Abbey as a major tourist attraction.

The Angus delegation was interested to learn of the development by Siena and Corfu of route packages which would include an all inclusive ticket for museums, brochures, souvenirs, discounted shopping, etc. Angus Council is currently pursuing the development of a 'Swipe/Smartcard' package, initially for the leisure facilities, which could be extended to cover other Council functions and tourism marketing initiatives. The Angus delegates are of the opinion that this may form an item for further discussion

The experience from Siena with regard to the deterioration of its historic centre and increased air pollution which led them to develop a traffic restricted City, can be utilised by Angus.

The development by Siena with regard to Agricultural Tourism which is expanding into a major income generator for its area, by providing additional income to farmers was of particular interest to the Angus delegates as Agricultural Tourism is important to the rural economy of Angus.

The Angus delegates were interested in the details of how Rethymnon are proposing to extend its main tourist season, i.e. the winter carnival being the third biggest in Europe, as tourism in Angus is generally limited to a short summer season.

The major benefits to Angus Council have been the exchange of experience and contact in specific fields of corporate exchange with our European Partners on an individual basis which would be difficult to achieve under normal circumstances.

The Angus Council delegates were satisfied that the papers delivered at the Seminar sessions represented good practice in project management with regard to the subjects discussed and these will be of significant benefit to future developments.

Practical Implementation of Project Results of ENVITOUR Programme

Angus Council submitted a paper to the final working session in Corfu to promote an "Ecology and Environmental Project" with respective Education bodies. It is expected that existing partner countries will be willing to participate in this project.

Angus Council are actively pursuing the development of Smart Card/Swipe Cards as a tool for marketing services and facilities and are currently assessing a range of options covering employee benefits and wider public use, both for residents and tourists. Discussions with partners in Siena promoted an early implementation of a feasibility study to assess the use of technology to assist residents and tourists which appears to work well in Siena. Angus Council raised this as a topic for discussion and possible partnership project within the Envitour Group.

The experience of the negative aspects of large number of tourist visits will allow Angus Council to address such problems and how best to overcome them in relation to the development of Arbroath Abbey as a major tourist attraction.

The experiences gained by Angus Council from Rethymnon, Siena and Corfu regarding diversity of tourism packages, with particular regard to Arts programmes can be utilised to assist in developing an Arts Strategy for Angus. This will undoubtedly lead to a strengthening, diversity and positive development of the Arts in Angus. Angus Council are hopeful that exhibitions and cultural exchanges between the partners can develop in the future.

Experience gained from Siena regarding traffic management will be utilised by Angus Council in establishing traffic management/pedestrian priorities in the forthcoming redevelopment of Arbroath from the Harbour, through the retail sector to the Abbey.

Angus Council believes it has much to offer Rethymnon in the development of Golf. A number of discussions have already taken place between the Partners and these shall continue further once Rethymnon produce a draft brief for consultation.

The personal contacts made through the Envitour Project will lead to future co-operation on a wide range of topics. Such contact will prove of substantial benefit in developing future programmes and partnerships.

Overall Assessment of the Exchange of Experience Programme and Recommendations

Partners agreed the following recommendations to be submitted to the EU.

a Development of Integrated Controls for Pollution and Waste Disposal (Environmental Consciousness)

- Establishing the educational programmes within all partner schools regarding Environmental Education
- Develop "Environmental Chapter", obliging Local Authorities to protect natural and built environment
- Ensure that adequate services are provided by Local Authorities to meet the needs of residents and visitors to their respected cities and towns, i.e. waste collection, management of waste, water and energy consumption.
- To support the retail centres of the cities and towns and commercial activities, not only for encouraging tourism but to meet all local needs.
- Promote means of transportation to reduce sound and noise pollution, however this must also present value for money.
- Develop programme with hotels, guest houses, etc. to upgrade and improve environmental aspects of their operations, i.e. energy consumption, etc.

b Upgrading of the Quality of Tourism

- To develop artistic and cultural events within the partnerships. This can also be linked to sports development, and themes with specific aims.
- Develop tourism packages, guided tours, etc. to extend the tourism season.
- Develop information technology, Internet, etc. to assist in marketing all cities and towns.
- Seek affiliation to various international organisations to allow transfer of information regarding events, festivals, etc.

c Developing and Management of Traffic

- To assess the parking requirements of local residents, visitors and coaches to reduce the environmental impact within the centres of cities and towns.
- To develop, where possible and practical, the development of car and coach parking outwith the central areas and to promote a safe and traffic free pedestrian zones.

- To promote environmentally friendly means of transport from car and coach parks to central areas, i.e. electric buses, etc.

d Protection and Improvement of Historical Centres of Cities and Towns

- To value ancient monuments, historic buildings, etc. for residents and tourists.
- To seek to form partnership between various interested parties to restore historic buildings as appropriate, i.e. housing, retail sector, etc.

Possible Areas for Future Continuation

a Ecology and Environmental Exchange

It was agreed by Angus, Corfu, Siena and Rethymnon that it should be possible to arrange an exchange of school pupils, number 10 to 15 approximately, to participate in an exchange programme.

b Developing Economic Development Links

Proposed by Corfu to develop linkage and exchange of products, i.e. food and drink. Siena are also willing to become involved in exchanges with Corfu and Angus. Angus delegates also felt it appropriate that cultural exchanges programme could be linked with various events and festivals to gain maximum input.

c Development of Information Technology

The Angus Council paper was well received by all partners. Siena delegates gave background to their City Card. Siena City Card is utilised for the following:-

- a) Use as a Payment Card - A magnetic swipe card that allows for an immediate transfer of funds from the holders bank account onto the card, and vice versa.
- b) Second magnetic tape acts as a function of identity card in identifying regarding payment of bills, etc.
- c) The third magnetic tape is individualised for the card holder and allows they discount purchases, access to museums, etc.
- d) Siena City Card can also be purchased by tourists and used for bookings accommodation.

City Card project developed in co-operation with Monti De - Pasi Bank, and Siena and Bank have copyright on existing system. Siena shortly to make available first 10,000 cards for issue to residents of Siena who can utilise them for payment of nursery education and school meals.

Siena has developed strong Internet link and it is felt that this could be developed further to provide various tourist guides, city museum visits, etc.

All partners expressed an interest in further discussion on the above issues.

d Developing Golf Tourism

Angus delegates gave background to submitted paper regarding golf development and its possible benefits to other partners. Siena expressed a strong interest in entering into a

partnership regarding golf development as they have formed links with four private golf courses in the Tuscany area.

e Exchange of Craftsmen with Regard to Restoration Works

Corfu are seeking to form a partnership and exchange of craftsmen, in particular with Siena. Angus delegates commented that Historic Scotland are responsible for the ancient monuments and any training of craftsmen is done through their various programme. This said however, depending on how the project would develop, the Conservation Officer and various architects may be interested in participating in some form of partnership.

f Enhancement of Traffic Management, Cycling and Pedestrian Facilities

Angus delegates gave briefing regarding submitted paper. Corfu expressed and definite interest in investigating various aspects raised in the Angus paper, likewise Rethymnon would be keen to participate in any future exchange.

Copies of all seminar papers and reports are available in the Members Lounge. Should any member wish to discuss any aspects of the project then the Director of Recreation would be pleased to answer any queries in the first instance.

g Exchange Programme of Cultural Events

To develop a network of cultural events and exhibitions to promote the cultural heritage of the partners to complement the existing tourism promotional packages.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The ENVITOUR Project has been contained within the sums available from the European Union and the various Department Budgets.

4 CONSULTATION

The Chief Executive, Director of Law and Administration and the Director of Finance have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

5 CONCLUSION

It is felt by all who participated, that the ENVITOUR Project was extremely successful in promoting Angus Council. Building upon this success, it is hoped to establish further links which hopefully will lead to further exchanges of information and experience in the future.

A copy of the final report will be placed in the Member's Lounge.

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No background papers, as defined by section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information), were relied on to any material extent in preparing this report.