

ANGUS COUNCIL**POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE - 12 MAY 1998****ANGUS MARKETING STRATEGY - CONSULTANT'S REPORT****REPORT BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE****ABSTRACT**

This report brings forward the final report from the consultants appointed by the Partnership Funding Member Officer Group to assist with the Angus Marketing Strategy and makes recommendations for the future implementation and co-ordination of the proposed strategy.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee:

- (i) note the contents of the consultants report;
- (ii) note that the Partnership Funding Member/Officer Group has fulfilled its remit and has handed over responsibility for the development of the 'Angus -Scotland' initiative to a core group of members and officers;
- (iii) agree that the Council should continue to take a lead role in promoting, facilitating and co-ordinating a marketing strategy for Angus, in line with the consultants report;
- (iv) agree to the licensing of the 'Angus Scotland' logo by Angus Council;
- (v) agree to adopt and promote as appropriate the 'Angus Scotland' brand across all Council departments and activities in conjunction and in accordance with the Council's own corporate identity;
- (vi) approve the production of an 'Angus Achievers' publication within the current financial year and thereafter consider the merit of future editions;
- (vii) agree to the Chief Executive exploring the creation of a more formal framework, taking forward the marketing of Angus at a strategic level as part of a Community Planning approach;
- (viii) agree to the bringing forward of a further report by the Chief Executive specifically to consider the sourcing of marketing services and to develop the most effective means of providing marketing resources within the Council.

2. BACKGROUND

A Member/Officer Group was established in June 1997 to examine partnership funding and related matters in the context of the Council's Guiding Principles and Key Themes. The remit of the group was to

- define the Unique Selling Point (USP) about Angus
- address how the Council could corporately package this idea and get the message across in a positive and high profile way
- identify core areas where the Council should encourage other groups, organisations and individuals to support its USP product
- suggest ways in which the Council could become more aware of its marketability without compromising its fundamental aim to provide high quality public services.

After initial discussion and detailed exploration of the optimal way forward to address the remit of the group, it was recognised by the MO group that specialist external assistance was required. After the due process Prospect PR, a local public relations agency, were engaged to explore and compile, in conjunction with a core group of members and officers drawn from the MO group, a proposal for a marketing strategy for the Angus area.

3. ANGUS AHEAD

The consultants remit drawn up by this core group stipulated that to be effective any strategy needed to be as inclusive as possible and bring on board not only the Council and its many departments but also the business, tourism and voluntary sectors.

Under the banner 'Angus Ahead' a highly successful community forum was held in January 1998 which was attended by over 100 delegates representing a cross section of each of these sectors in Angus. The overwhelming endorsement given by the Forum to the concept of an over-arching Angus marketing strategy gave the Council a clear mandate to bring forward proposals for an area marketing plan.

In tandem with the forum UK wide market research was commissioned to inform the strategy and provide a benchmark against which any campaign could be measured in the future. The market research clearly confirms the view that Angus has neither a significant nor accurate profile in either the business or tourism sectors in the UK.

The attached report 'Putting Angus on the Map' draws together both the findings from the forum and the market research (pages 4/5) and makes recommendations on how the initiative could effectively be taken forward at various levels.

The Partnership Funding Member/Officer Group accepted the recommendations contained in the report and agreed that the MO group had therefore fulfilled its

remit and remitted responsibility for the development of the initiative to the core group of members and officers.

4. ANGUS - THE BRAND

An Angus identity in the form of a strong pictish based logo has been created as a brand mark for the area. It has been designed as a quality symbol and is intended for use alongside other corporate identities.

Its use is to be encouraged by as many Angus based organisations as possible, including the Council, to begin to raise the 'Angus awareness' of internal and external audiences. The logo was positively received by over 85% of the Forum delegates and requests to use it have already been received.

It is proposed that the Council register 'Angus - Scotland' as a licensed trademark the use of which to be under the Council's control. Users would be required to apply to the Council for permission to use the logo and it will remain within the Council's power to withdraw that permission should circumstance dictate.

A set of guidelines on the use of the logo is being drafted which users will be required to adhere to. The agreement between users and the Council will be formal and binding. To encourage maximum usage of the logo no charge will be levied for use.

The Chief Executive's department will have the responsibility for administering the scheme and maintaining a register of users.

5. ACTION

Fundamental to the strategy is the understanding that what is being proposed is intended to complement and enhance existing promotional/marketing activity not replace it. It is the role of the campaign to encourage a commonality of message and so add value to existing activities through a raised awareness of the many assets of the area.

The consultants report makes a number of suggestions for a targeted awareness raising campaign. Although a few of the proposals could require resources others are intended to overlay existing and proposed activity and can therefore be achieved with minimal financial outlay. For example the return of the Open Golf Championship to Carnoustie in 1999 offers an unrivalled opportunity to market Angus to a world-wide audience.

In an effort to capitalise on this and the momentum of the Angus Ahead Forum it is suggested that the Council agrees to undertake the following targeted promotional activities in the current financial year to launch the 'Angus - Scotland' campaign in the lead-up to the Open.

- Launch the 'Angus - Scotland' campaign with a media event in May/June 1998 involving participants from the private and public sectors, including the Council, signing up to use the brand and support the campaign.

- Adopt the 'Angus -Scotland' brand as appropriate on all Council promotional leaflets, displays, publications etc.
- Produce one edition of 'Angus Achievers', as a 12/16pg full colour supplement in the local daily newspaper (100,000 copies), with a portion of the costs offset by advertising. The purpose of the publication would be to inform the public of the aims and objectives of the campaign, give local achievers the chance to 'blow their own trumpet' and generate a sense of pride in the achievement of Angus based companies, organisations and individuals. 5,000 copies of each edition would also be available to the Council for separate targeted distribution.
- Establish an inter-schools debate to give young people in Angus the opportunity to become involved in and influence the campaign. The Council and/or the private sector to sponsor/judge the event, building on the links created by the Angus Education Business Partnership.
- Investigate the production of low cost promotional goods, such as car stickers, pens etc., available for purchase by external agencies, providing a source of revenue.
- Produce a 'Snapshot of Angus' information sheet, (A4 colour) for introductory/promotional packs and recruitment, for use by the Council and external agencies.
- Create an angus.org web site linked to the existing angus.gov site to focus on the area. It would actively encourage a link between agencies/businesses in Angus to what would become the central directory of information relating to Angus. Links would be established under certain conditions i.e. quality of linked site, appropriate promotion/product, use of 'Angus - Scotland' brand on home page etc., and would remain in the control of the Council as the registered holder of the site.

Each of the above could be achieved at relatively little cost but would effectively launch the campaign locally.

6. SUPPORT STRUCTURE

The Council has the opportunity, along with the endorsement of the Forum, to continue in the role of promoter and facilitator of the concept of an Angus-wide marketing strategy. To do this the Council must lead by example, seizing every opportunity to talk Angus up, not see it put down and one of the most important resources to enable the Council to effectively fulfil this role will therefore be available manpower.

In the early stages of the campaign a very hands on approach will be needed to bring people, organisations and companies on board. Dedicated officer time will be needed to oversee and guide the campaign in addition to meeting with Council departments, schools, companies, community councils, chambers of commerce, round tables, health trust, colleges etc., to discuss with them the benefits of a strong Angus identity.

The Council has already taken steps in this direction, identifying as one of its corporate priorities ('Angus - Towards the Millennium') that a more co-ordinated corporate approach to the marketing of its services and activities is required. In light of this and the recommendations of the Angus Ahead Initiative it would

appear to be an opportune time to review the provision and development of marketing/promotional resources within the Council.

There is already specific although limited provision for marketing within the Chief Executive's Department across its Economic Development, Policy and Public Relations Units, albeit that one post (partnership funding officer) is currently the subject of a fixed term secondment, one remains vacant (marketing officer, Economic Development) as part of the budget exercise and another (millennium officer) has yet to be filled. A separate report will be brought forward by the Chief Executive regarding the filling of the vacant Economic Development post. An application for European funding to progress the Angus Ahead initiative has also been submitted.

A review of the dedicated staffing resources needed and those available is urgently required to determine how the Council can become adequately equipped to carry forward the actions needed to fulfil its own and the Angus Ahead marketing objectives.

It is recommended that this review be carried out initially by the Chief Executive's Department, drawing on the expertise and experience of other departments as appropriate with a view to the establishment of a Corporate Marketing Group to co-ordinate, oversee and publicise the Angus marketing campaign, both internally and externally.

It may also be appropriate to explore the setting up of a more strategic Angus-wide framework, which would encompass marketing activity within its remit. Initial soundings of the public and private sectors indicates support for the creation of some form of Angus Alliance/Partnership to provide a platform to best represent and promote Angus interests locally, nationally and internationally within the context of a Community Planning approach.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

By adopting a focused and targeted approach much of what has been outlined for the current financial year could be achieved at relatively low cost to the Council with participating agencies meeting all or most of their own costs.

European funding could offset some of the initial set up costs of promotional activity and material and if a recharging policy was to be established for promotional goods that too could provide a useful but as yet undetermined amount of revenue. If European funding is not available then the sum of £10,000 is required to meet the start up costs of the campaign.

Advertising/sponsorship may offset a portion of the costs of the 'Angus Achiever' publications but £10,000 is required to underwrite the production of the first issue planned for this financial year. A further production may also be produced following a review of the success of the first publication.

The above proposals require a budget provision of £20,000 to be set aside and this could be met from the Corporate Initiatives Revenue Budget 1998/99.

Any remaining costs associated with the above proposals could be resourced from the 1998/99 Chief Executive's Department Revenue Budget.

The Committee should note that dedicated funding will be required next year and in subsequent years if the Angus area is adequately to capitalise on the opportunity provided by the Open Golf Championship in 1999, the establishment of the Scottish Parliament and the Millennium the following year. This will need to be considered as part of the 1999/2000 Revenue Budget preparation exercise.

8. CONSULTATION

The Directors of Law & Administration, Finance, Personnel, IT and Education have been consulted on the contents of this report.

9. CONCLUSION

The Council accurately gauged the desire of Angus citizens and organisations to more effectively promote the area to its many audiences. It received a clear mandate from the Angus Ahead Forum to bring forward a marketing strategy for the area.

In the longer term a more formal strategic structure may be required to take on the responsibility for the ongoing implementation and development of the campaign. However action is needed now to build on the momentum of the Forum, the return of the Open to Carnoustie and the advent of the Scottish Parliament in 1999.

It is imperative that the Council continues to facilitate and co-ordinate the campaign as outlined in this report - to establish Angus as a distinct and thriving part of Scotland.

A B Watson
Chief Executive

27 April 1998

Note: 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

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