Connecting Scotland – how Scottish organisations engage internationally
Angus Council

ANGUS INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITY

Background

The Angus International Framework was adopted in December 2013 to consolidate council wide international activity into a Framework with an associated action plan to ensure that activity across the council was coordinated, focused and linked to council priorities.

The aim is also to ensure that council officers and elected members are aware of the opportunities and issues that relate to international perspectives, in terms of policy and that we identify and maximise opportunities to become involved in projects and partnerships that enhance and add value to our current activity and objectives. In addition this will then allow us to identify funding streams to add value to current resources.

In our work to grow, support and sustain the local economy, international markets and international profile are essential. For Angus and Scotland, international engagement is a key component in our strategy to secure our common future. Jobs, prosperity and quality of life will all be enhanced by our collective efforts to engage with the wider world.

Examples of activity:

Partnerships:

- member of East of Scotland European Consortium (ESEC) and current host authority working at an EU level to influence policy; project development and partnership engagement

- Chair of ESEC is an Angus elected member, Cllr Mairi Evans, who is actively involved in CEMR and in particular active at an EU level on youth engagement

- Membership of ESEC also brings membership of Scotland Europa and active engagement with them

- Recently the Scottish EU Funding Portal was launched which ESEC supported

- Working closely with agencies such as Scottish Enterprise, Scottish Development International, VisitScotland and Scotland’s Food and Drink to support opportunities for businesses

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• Supporting the development of an **EU action plan** through Scottish Government’s European Relations Team.

• As part of the **Scottish Enterprise Tayside Regional Advisory Board** Angus Council is supporting the key priority of Internationalisation. The **Tayside International Conference** was held in December 2014 as the launch of a three year Internationalisation Plan to support businesses in Tayside to become more competitive in the international market.

• Internationalisation is a planned topic of the forthcoming **Angus Business Week** in September 2015 including Global Scot involvement

• Export activity and ambitions form part of the **annual business survey** in Angus to ensure that a programme of support can be developed in response to business needs

• **Working on an east coast basis** with other local authorities to promote the east coast of Scotland at **national and international events** eg EXPO and Golf Shows in Germany and Sweden

• **First UK member of ENRICH** to promote the culinary heritage of Angus at an EU level

**Policy**

• **Aligning the International Framework to relevant Scottish Government policy and strategies** to demonstrate clearer alignment to national priorities

• **Early identification of and response to emerging EU policy** to ensure the council is prepared for new legislation

• **Providing input into consultations** for the Europe 2020 strategy, maritime transport strategy and the white paper on transport

• **Establishing a cross council State Aid group** to ensure compliance, raise awareness of State Aid issues and implications of non compliance. Hailed as best practice and now shared with other councils.

**Projects**

• Identification of **projects** to address objectives and successfully securing **funding** to deliver these

• Lead partner of **3 year ERDF project Rural Tourism Business Support** supporting SMEs across the east of Scotland in key sectors of golf, food and drink, outdoor tourism and heritage and partner in **ERDF funded East Coast Renewables project**. Under this project we organised a learning journey to
the world Sustainable Energy Days Conference in Wels Austria and took a number of companies

- Lead partner for Rural Tayside LEADER Programme 2007-13 delivering a £2.8 m programme and lead partner for new Angus LEADER Programme 2014-2020.

- Worldwide exposure to Golf in Carnoustie Country area through international press coverage, attendance at events, events in the area including the World Hickory Championship in 2014

- Angus Market Development Grant has been continued but simplified and promotion of this improved to encourage businesses to apply for funding to help with exploring new markets at home and abroad

Proposed activity

- Developing new long term relationship with Vastmanland region, Sweden to build on experience of Angus and Sweden in key sectors of heritage and food drink with shared learning utilising new IT development, webinars etc as well as learning visits.

- A number of funding bids currently submitted in preparation particularly transnational bids to support our objectives in the fields of social innovation, schools and learning and agrifood and civil society.

- Invited to submit a bid along with Mercy Corps to support development of Rural cooperation and Development in Georgia on basis of experience in LEADER delivery

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