

Destination Conwy

Destination Management Sub Group Meeting

Monday 10th January 2022

Present:

Nigel Treacy (NT)	Llandudno Snowsports Centre
Glenn Evans (GE)	The Royal Oak Hotel (Betws-y-Coed)
Angharad Mair Owen (AO)	Tŷ Gwyn Holiday Park
Clive Wolfendale (CW)	Adferiad Recovery
Emiko Corney (EC)	Swn-y-Dwr Holiday Cottage
Chris Owens (CO)	Alpine Travel
Liam Donnelly (LD)	Belmont Hotel & Llandudno Bay Hotel
Edward Hiller (EH)	Mostyn Estates Ltd
Jules Arrowsmith (JA)	Manorafon Farm Park +Touring & Camping
Tansy Rogerson	Armadillo Events
Melissa Esplen-Metcalf (MEM)	Number 18 Conwy
Emma-Jane Sutcliffe (EJS)	Boathouse Climbing Centre
Kimberley Edmunds (KE)	The Jester's Tower
Caroline Somary (CS)	Sweet Snowdonia
Dana Williams (DW)	Snowdonia National Park Authority
Jon Merrick (JM)	Business and Tourism Manager, CCBC
Jasmin Koffler (JK)	Tourism and Regeneration Project Officer, CCBC
Kim Nicholls (KN)	Minute taker, CCBC

Apologies received

Louise Jowett /Graham Taylor	Beics Betws
Sally Paveley	The Motorsport Lounge
David Thornley	Thornley Leisure Parks
Graham Paul Jones	Grwp Llandrillo Cymru
Tamzyn Lawrence	t-l-c, Betws y Coed

1. Introduction and Welcome

JM welcomed everyone to the first Destination Management Sub Group Meeting. The group will address the look and feel of the county and how to meet the expectations of visitors

2. Overview of Destination Conwy

Destination Conwy started around 2010. It was an initiative across North Wales to set up forums for tourism businesses. Conwy was one of the first counties to commence meeting.

There are four key drivers in the current Terms of Reference:

1. Provide a local contribution to the successful implementation of the Destination Conwy Management Plan.
2. Support, monitor and review the Destination Conwy Management Plan and Action Plan.
3. To provide guidance and influence to local, regional and national tourism planning
4. To provide the gateway for open communication between the trade and Public bodies

The DC group has developed well over the years and has had an influence on Conwy.

By creating the DC group, CCBC have tried to put decisions into the hands of tourism businesses. For example, the Destination Management Plan was written by DC and endorsed by CCBC.

The DC has had a restructure for 2022.

Nigel Treacy is the Chair of the main Destination Conwy Group. A Vice Chair is still to be elected but will have to be selected from the Chairs of the five sub groups.

The Five groups are:

1. Skills
2. Destination Management
3. Marketing
4. Strategy/Action Plan
5. Tourist Information /Conwy Ambassador Scheme

There are approximately 16 members in each group.

There is also a DC Board which comprises: Chair, Vice Chair, the five sub group Chairs, Visit Wales representative (Andrew Forfar), CCBC Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Leisure (Cllr Louise Emery) and CCBC Tourism Manager (Jon Merrick)

The Chair of DC will also sit on the North Wales Tourism Forum which is hosted by Visit Wales

3. Election of Chair for Skill Group

Angharad Owen was elected Chair of the Destination Management Sub Group

4. Terms of Reference

ACTION - JM will share the main DC Terms of Reference with this group

The Destination Management Sub Group will need to develop their own ToR .

ACTION – JM and AO to develop ToR based on key areas and circulate draft to group

5. Forward Work Plan – key areas to focus on

JM's comments for the group were:

- Cleanliness, tidiness, signage, toilets, visitor info, infrastructure – raising issues and concerns by monitoring

- Brilliant Basics funding is about to launch for 2023. Only LA's can bid. This group should influence what we bid for e.g. infrastructure projects to influence tourism. Bid criteria is available January 2022 and the deadline for bids is April.

Comments from the group

- **Expectations** – is the county currently meeting expectations or exceeding them. Do we need to get to a baseline?
- There is an **annual visitor survey** which is sent to 50-60k visitors. They are usually asked why they visit and whether their expectations are met, which provides good information. We also get feedback from trade, locals etc. There are over 7 million visitors to the county each year. Some infrastructure is getting tired and old. Some refurbishment has started. There are gaps in provision. We could create our own survey.
ACTION – JM to share latest visitor survey
- **Relationship with National Park** – Snowdonia National Park (SNP) are taking strategic decisions at the moment. Their interaction with Gwynedd is strong. This always seem to be a grey area in Conwy County. Conwy County has a gateway to SNP. JM noted that Dana Williams from SNP is on this group
- **Sustainable and Seasonal tourism** and how they come together and how to support. There is over tourism in North Wales in the summer months. However it is hard to attract tourist in the off season. JM noted that sustainable tourism is an emerging priority for Wales. The WG have raised this issue. CCBC are on a watch and see brief at the moment. CCBC want sustainability but are reliant on day visitors. All sub groups need to think about sustainable tourism
- NW Energy Strategy 2023 Group meeting tomorrow. Looking at zero carbon, EV charging and linking to tourism. Accommodation is not mentioned on the strategy report. There is huge amounts of energy loss from the old Victorian hotels. Need to push this forward to find solutions
- **EV chargers on CCBC owned car parks** – need to address this type of sustainability sooner rather than later
- suggested breaking down into key topics and drive into further. For example:
 - Environmental impact
 - Sustainability
 - Litter
 - Managing visitor behaviour
 - Aesthetics – the look and feel of the area and how it can be improved
 - How we deliver information – to tourists and locals
 - Signage
 - Facilities
 - Amenities / Transport
 - Retail encouragement
 - Rural areas
 - Community engagement – create town focus groups to gain feedback. Towns are nervous about over tourism in the area e.g. AirB&B.
 - Invite key members from relevant departments in CCBC to bring us up to speed so that we can identify gaps and have a clear starting point

- agree with the above. We need to measure success of what we are doing and have a clear agenda. We need to know CCBC plans for the next five years re. infrastructure. Against that we can find out customer expectations through surveys. Thus identifying tourist gaps and CCBC aims
- We need to attract higher value visitors and more overnight stays rather than day visitors
- **What is the enhanced population grant?** This would give indication of what resources we could use from CCBC as it is all associated with the increase of visitor numbers in the summer. This should not be diluted down in the general CCBC budget. Gwynedd may be introducing a visitor tax. **ACTION – JM to provide info**
- a university recently did a perceptual survey. Visitors aged between 8-12 years old where disappointed there were not more dragons! We should capitalise on dragons as a theme/mascot.

The following was also agreed.

- **Flexibility** - the group should be flexible in order to invite guests to the meetings if relevant to agenda
- **Email addresses** - the members were happy to share their email addresses
- **Language** – it was agreed that the minutes would be acceptable in English only, unless being shared publicly
- **Confidentiality** – meetings are confidential to enable members to air their thoughts safely
- **Additional members** – **ACTION – JM to invite representative from CCBC ERF or Open Spaces Group**
- **Promote DC work** to a wider audience through CCBC business database, website and social media.
- **Local community** – JM noted that the direction of tourism is to put the local community at the heart of tourism. Conwy are currently doing a watching brief. DC to involve local communities.
- **Meeting frequency** – second meeting in early April to sign off ToRs. Monthly meetings for the next quarter then review. **ACTION – JM to coordinate dates with AO**
- **CCBC representatives** – will always be available to coordinate, facilitate and take notes at meetings
- **Members unable to attend** – can contribute by email or possibly meet with Chair individually.

KN

10.01.22.