



Action Plan 2006 v3.0

Document Control Form

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1.0	First draft for committee review	23 rd February 2006
2.0	Revised – ready for issue	27 th February 2006
3.0	Updated	February 2007

Upper Nithsdale Business Forum Action Plan 2006

Overview

This document forms the basis of the Business Forum's first year plan, outlining the specific actions of the Forum for the next year. This action plan is a working document and may be subject to change as member business needs dictate. It will be reviewed regularly and updated as necessary. Challenging targets have been set, which will be achievable only given the continued support of all parties involved.

UNBF is an organisation managed on a voluntary basis, without staff and open to all businesses within the Upper Nithsdale area (c. 167). Volunteer dedication, time and energy are vital for the success of UNBF. The organisation continues to benefit from the substantial support afforded by Dumfries & Galloway Council Regeneration and The Federation of Small Businesses. Initial grant funding of the group (£5,000) came from Dumfries & Galloway Council Regeneration. The organisation must now identify and investigate opportunities to become self sustaining whilst also capitalising on any applicable funding opportunities which may speed and enhance the group's progress.

Objectives

- ➔ To work in partnership with local businesses, voluntary and statutory organisations, for the purpose of creating business opportunities in Upper Nithsdale.
- ➔ To engage with related public/private sector bodies to help provide an environment for economic growth in Upper Nithsdale
- ➔ To improve the physical and commercial environment in order to foster existing and potential businesses.
- ➔ To encourage skills development and active citizenship amongst the business community.
- ➔ To raise the profile of the businesses in Upper Nithsdale and to encourage economic growth in the area.
- ➔ To promote the advantages of Upper Nithsdale as a hub for tourism to explore Scotland.

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Action Plan

The Action Plan covers four areas – development of the organisation, projects, partnership working and economic sustainability.

Activity	Actions
Development of the Business Forum and sub-groups	Recruitment of new members; Appointment of Secretary (volunteer); Publication of full events diary Marketing of activities – seek ongoing publicity of activities; Monitoring and evaluation of work – by review with sponsor.
Projects	See list of individual project activities following
Partnership working	Participate in PARS initiative; Continue to work with key partners such as D&G Council, Federation of Small Businesses (FSB), Scottish Enterprise Dumfries and Galloway; Develop activities with new partners e.g. the Southern Upland Partnership, Buccleuch Estates, Scottish Natural Heritage, VisitScotland, schools and colleges.
Economic Sustainability	Develop non grant income streams and promote sustainability of the organisation;

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		Consider applications for funding that will enable UNBF to develop as an income generating organisation. Such as....networkUN...others??					
Projects							
	Project Activities	Objectives	Notes	Timescale	Resources	Sub Group	Project Lead(s)
1	Business Directory	Compile, create & publish an Upper Nithsdale Business Directory to be issued to all households and available for download from networkUN – in PDF format.	Update of existing initiative – previously supported by community funding. This to be explored. Info and invitation via weepaper	May 2006	UNBF compilation ready for local printing. Admin, Marketing £££?? Printing & Circulation		Carol Baker
2	networkUN	Present a complete, unified, professional, and current view of Upper Nithsdale. Project to encourage growth and utilisation of existing businesses, publicise vacant premises / wanted premises and match candidate skills with job opportunities. Promote tourism and market activities within the area.	Work with partner organisations ie CERF, FSB, D&G Council. Explore relations with VisitScotland Incorporate SADTA website UNEvents website ?? Revenue model to be finalised. Funding secured (CERF)	Live presence by July 2006 – project ongoing	UNBF Project Manager, Project Team, Local skills Web dev, Admin, Marketing		Carol Baker

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3	Events	<p>To agree, publicise and deliver events in 2006 under the headings;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training for business - Fundraising - Networking/social 	<p>1 major event per qtr. Work with Partner organisations ie FSB, colleges, SEDG</p> <p>Utilise member facilities</p> <p>Seek out co-funded events</p> <p>Revenue opportunities to be considered for each event.</p>	<p>Draft Publication to all businesses soonest – then Ongoing</p>	<p>Co-ord Hosting Marketing & PR</p>	Events	Rob Clarke
4	UN Business DB	<p>To build and maintain a robust database of all businesses within UN.</p>	<p>Poorly maintained historical DB acting as base source of information.</p> <p>Eileen Mauchline chasing for original data recovery.</p> <p>Copy to be held by Sponsor – complete view to be in place by Nov 06.</p>	Complete	Admin Secretary		Carol Baker
5	Membership	<p>Increase uptake of memberships to targets.</p>	<p>Target: 20 members by April 06 40 members by Jan 07</p> <p>Target pillars of the community! Publication of action plan and delivery of events should increase participation.</p> <p>Increase lobbying activity in support of any identified business issues – and maximise publicity of results achieved.</p> <p>Produce application form</p> <p>Produce Renewals notice</p>	Ongoing	All UNBF members & support from partners.		Ken Thompson

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6	Business Property	Create and maintain database of available / wanted premises. Available online through networkUN	Availability of suitable premises was reported as one of the 3 main stumbling blocks to business expansion in the region. Creation and maintenance of this database will serve to demonstrate existence of gaps and perhaps serve to identify diversified income opportunities – eg redundant farm buildings.		Admin		Carol Baker
7	Secure Funding for Projects and Initiatives	To develop further links with D & G Council, SEDG and other organisations	Identify and explore possible funding opportunities for major projects	Ongoing			Carol Baker
8	Grant Application/funding	To lobby all relevant bodies in support of funding requirements of member businesses. To ensure all businesses have access to information on available resources / changes in funding policy	Eg. SEDG – ebusiness grant up to maximum 50% spend or £15,000 (no budget left in this financial year) Applications could be submitted now in readiness for April 2006. This project depends heavily on information sharing – only achievable through nurturing relationships with all relevant parties.	Ongoing	UNBF Project Manager, Project Team, Local skills Web dev, Admin, Marketing All local businesses involved in tourism Stand Manning		

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9	Foster new business	Engage with organisations working toward bringing new money into the area. Ensure awareness and involvement in related discussions and feedback to members.	Identify groups to work with				Douglas Watters
10	Liaise and work with other business forums	Engage with and benefit from experiences of established groups. Explore ways of working in partnership.	Identify and build relationships with appropriate groups. Feedback to forum members.				Jim Hogg
11	Liaise with other organisations to promote the activities and progress of the business forum		Identify groups. Attend meetings. Feedback to forum members.				Hugh Wright

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12	<p>Exhibit at Expo 2007</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A collaboration of Wigtonshire and Upper Nithsdale, 2 priority regeneration areas, to exhibit at VisitScotland Expo 2007 ▪ 18th – 19th April 2007 ▪ Royal Highland Centre, Edinburgh ▪ Scotland's only flagship business to business event for the travel trade that is entirely Scottish <p><i>http://www.visitscotlandexpo.com</i></p> <p>The project is proposed as, although the individual areas have many tourism related attractions, these would be most effectively promoted collectively in a packaged format that meets the expectation of the tourism trade. This will encourage a higher footfall and spend across all areas, driving connectivity of opportunities and a positive geographical ripple effect.</p>	<p>The project will deliver a single point portal access which connects the areas and the individual businesses / attractions / events / accommodation providers / facilities. For the first time, a tour operator will be able to identify and promote a 'packaged offering'. The end user can personalise a trip to the area through one point of access. All businesses across the region will have the opportunity to promote themselves to a much wider audience without the personal marketing expense.</p>	<p>Feb - April 2007</p>			<p>Carol Baker</p> <p>Meta Maltman</p>
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