

## **Herefordshire Food & Tourism Partnership, 25<sup>th</sup> April 2014**

**Present:** Jenny Beard (JB), David Curtis (DC), Cathy Meredith (CM), Bobbie Heavens (BH), Rachel Jones (RJ), David Bailey (DB), Nick Read (NR), Mike Pigrem (MP), Peter Norton (PN), Clare Greener (CG)

**Apologies:** Lyndsey McCron (LM), Christine Hope (CH)

As this was the inaugural meeting of the joint Food and Tourism Partnership, the meeting elected Jenny Beard as Chair.

JB introduced the purpose of the meeting – to look at the opportunities for synergistic working between the Food and Tourism Partnerships respectively.

DC gave a brief outline of the development of the Sustainable Food Partnership and the County-wide Sustainable Food Strategy published in 2010 and JB repeated the process for the Tourism Partnership. Both had responded to a significant reduction in funding available from Local Authority sources and both were wanting to be led by private sector interests. Each partnership had adopted a broadly similar constitutional basis.

### **Meeting reports and actions**

- Meetings had taken place with Geoff Hughes (Herefordshire Council) on behalf of the Tourism Partnership who welcomed the new group and gave it support though without the ability to give it resources.
- Good relations had also been established with Visit Herefordshire, who wanted to be involved at the strategic level. Visit Herefordshire were in the process of appointing new directors and may approach the Partnership for a potential delegate.
- CH had reported that Herefordshire had not been actively involved in the LEP food and tourism discussions and RJ had therefore attended as a Herefordshire representative. It was hoped that others might complement her.
- The LEP had written a draft tourism action plan though it had not been circulated.
- JB had spoken to Tim King, the tourism lead on economic development for Shropshire.

### **Draft Strategy**

JB had produced a Draft Destination Plan Partnership Action Plan and a business plan was in development. Members were asked to comment and to link this with the priorities from the Sustainable Food Strategy Action Plan in order to produce a coherent, single, document (A Herefordshire Food and Drink Development Action Plan).

### **Tourism Partnership event**

An event had been planned at the Council offices for the morning of the 1<sup>st</sup> May to which members of the local tourism associations had been invited. This was a follow-up to the meeting held at the Three Counties Hotel. Focus groups were to be developed to enable the group to develop an action plan for the county.

### **Governance and Strategic Engagement**

Members of both partnerships concluded that there was significant synergy between them and that, for the purposes of strategic operations and engagement, there should be a single Food and Tourism Partnership. It was therefore agreed to combine the two into a single committee. Individual events that were focused primarily on food issues or on tourism issues respectively could still be led by the

Food or Tourism Partnership as appropriate, but a single voice and operational group was required for planning and strategic engagement. NR would draft a joint Constitution for future discussion.

It was felt important to gather data on the respective membership and networks that this combined group brought to the table, so that external organisations such as the LEP, Council and Business Board could be appraised of the extent of the networking and business representation on the new group.

### **Branding**

As part of the discussion on strategic engagement RJ took members through the HERefordshire branding and the possibilities that existed to “badge” the new partnership. It was agreed to register the group with the HERefordshire brand and develop appropriate flyers, letter headed notepaper etc. Photographs were needed for publicity and marketing and Cathy Freeman had produced a portfolio that could be used with suitable recognition.

### **Food Festival Fringe**

PN outlined proposals for a fringe event at this year’s “Flavours of Herefordshire Festival”, scheduled for the late August Bank Holiday week-end. A partnership was in place with All Saints Church, New Leaf and others, and Visit Herefordshire had been consulted. The proposal was for speakers and events, including a Bring and Share meal at All Saints on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> August in the evening.

### **Wye Catchment Management Partnership**

Members were informed of the food and tourism event as part of the development of a management plan for the River Wye being held at the Swan Hotel at Hay-on-Wye on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> May.

### **Update on bids**

- LEADER funding would be in place for 2015 and CM and NR were to be part of the Herefordshire LEADER LAG (Local Action Group). The new LAG had to focus on business and growth and 20% of funding was earmarked for support for rural tourism. A draft LEADER strategy needed to be developed by early July.
- PN had continued discussions about Esme Fairburn and been advised that a major bid was a better proposal than small increments. A priority was to gather evidence of need and better data about Herefordshire and it was agreed to include relevant questions within the NFU/Rural Hub Business Survey being sent out.
- JB has looked at the potential for Heritage Lottery funding. Start-up grants were available for new organisations and transition funding might be available. JB would circulate a link.
- RB will also circulate the latest information on the Strategic Investment Fund (SIF) and the future development of LEADER.

### **Date of next meeting**

2pm on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> June at the Duchy of Cornwall offices at Dewsall.