

ANGUS COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 2 FEBRUARY 2016

THE SENIOR OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP AT CARNOUSTIE – TOURISM PROMOTION OPPORTUNITIES

REPORT BY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

ABSTRACT

This report seeks support for a package of tourism opportunities for the Senior Open Championship in July 2016 at Carnoustie and significant international promotion for the Carnoustie Country golf destination brand in the run up to The Open 2018.

1. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Committee:

- (i) support the Senior Open Championship 2016 at Carnoustie

2. ALIGNMENT TO THE ANGUS COMMUNITY PLAN/SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT/COPORATE PLAN

This report contributes to the following local outcomes contained within the Angus Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement 2013-2016:

- We have a sustainable economy with good employment opportunities.
- Angus is a good place to live in, work and visit.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Carnoustie Country is the golf destination brand and campaign managed by Angus Council in partnership with golf courses, accommodation providers and suppliers across Angus, Dundee, east Perthshire and north Fife. It comprises 34 golf courses within a 40 minute drive of Carnoustie Championship.
- 3.2 The aim of the campaign is to raise awareness of the destination, the wider golf product and golf tourism businesses, and to cross promote other things to see and do in Angus. The campaign requires a collaborative and integrated approach, working closely with partners across the public and private golf tourism sector.
- 3.3 A Carnoustie Country Golf Group is in place with a tiered fee paying structure and as of December 2015 consisted of 25 members from golf clubs, accommodation providers and tour operators.
- 3.4 The Senior Open Golf Championship is the top competition of the senior golf circuit, attracting golf's greatest senior players from Europe, the USA and the rest of the world.
- 3.5 It was held for the first time at Carnoustie in 2010 with a win by Germany's Bernhard Langer with attendance of 30,895 spectators over the four days of the tournament. Whilst a specific economic impact study was not undertaken, based on research carried out by Compario for Troon 2006, which had similar attendance figures, the event was worth £1.7m to the regional economy.
- 3.6 Carnoustie Country was offered significant partnership opportunities at this event including onsite course branding and exhibition space within the tented village in order to promote the area's tourism products.

- 3.7 The event attracted a global media coverage reach of 357 million households. Carnoustie Country's support also enabled the addition of a Junior Open event and Masterclasses with Loren Roberts, a US professional golfer, in order to attract in more young people from across Angus schools.
- 3.8 The event will return again in 2016 from 21 - 24 July and is likely to attract around 400 world class players to the qualifying event, with a field of 144 playing in the Senior Open Championship itself, and will bring significant media exposure and positive economic impact on the local economy.
- 3.9 The qualifying venues are also confirmed as Monifieth, Downfield, Panmure and Montrose – all Carnoustie Country courses.
- 3.10 With The Open also returning to Carnoustie in 2018, these events cement Carnoustie's place as a major Open venue and gives Carnoustie Country significant opportunity to promote our tourism strengths to a global audience.
- 3.11 Ensuring Carnoustie remains a major Championship venue with supporting infrastructure to ensure successful delivery of major tournaments is critical to the future of Carnoustie Country marketing activity.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The Senior Open Championship aims to increase attendance figures from over 30,000 in 2010 to 34,000 in 2016, but this will also require the support of Carnoustie Country marketing activity.
- 4.2 The proposed opportunities supplement Carnoustie Country's current stay and play marketing activity targeted across UK, Europe and Scandinavia. They also support the work of the golf clubs in aiming to increase their membership, visitor numbers and attract in more young people.
- 4.3 Discussions with the R& A and the European Tour have resulted in the offer of the following opportunities for Carnoustie Country in order to support the promotion of the area as a future golf and visitor destination:
- **Official Designation** – “Championship Sponsor of The Senior Open Championship Presented by Rolex 2016”;
 - **Championship Logo** – the right to use the Championship logo in all Carnoustie Country advertising and promotions until 31 December 2016.
 - **On-Course Advertising Boards** – the right to four on-course advertising boards which will be positioned on the golf course to attract TV exposure.
 - **Logo Identification** – the right to display the Carnoustie Country logo on the welcome archways, front cover of the official programme, daily drawsheet and promotional literature such as posters and flyers;
 - **Website Acknowledgement** – inclusion of the Carnoustie Country logo on the Championship sponsors' page on europeantour.com, linking to www.carnoustiecountry.com
 - **Official Programme** – one full colour page of advertising and a welcome message from the Provost of Angus
 - **Exhibition Space** – an allocated space in the public village to promote the area's tourism strengths to visitors and secure data for future consumer e-marketing activity.
 - **Patrons Golf Day** – two four-balls to play the Championship course on Monday 25 July for use by businesses and/or influencers;
 - **Admission Tickets** – one hundred daily tickets for use in Carnoustie Country marketing campaign. Additional tickets offer to local clubs at a 50% discount.
 - **Onsite TV Ads** - 2 x 30" Carnoustie Country ads per hour on Tournament TV, including Big Screen and all screens in hospitality areas
 - **Championship Trophy** - Use of the Championship trophy for promotional purposes within trade events in the run up to The Senior Open
 - **Junior Masterclass** – a leading professional to host a Junior Masterclass for a specified number of Angus schoolchildren (30) on Wednesday 20 July

- **Championship Merchandise** - 1 x item of signed merchandise, signed by the 2016 Senior Open Champion to be used for marketing purposes

- 4.4 In view of the global profile and potential economic impact of the event to the area, adding to Carnoustie's portfolio of staged golf events, it is considered that the opportunity presented will benefit Angus and further boost the profile of the Carnoustie Country campaign in the run up to Carnoustie hosting The Open in 2018.
- 4.5 The activity also aligns with the Carnoustie Country Framework and Action Plan (December 2015 – March 2017) and its vision “ that Carnoustie Country will become a first choice destination for UK and European stay and play golfers by 2020, offering an authentic high quality golf experience, which is delivered by a skilled and customer focussed industry.”
- 4.6 The intention would also be to work with the Angus Alive Sports Development team, the Council's Active Schools programme and ClubGolf to add in a "Junior Open" element to The Senior Open Championship aimed at showcasing club membership to young people.
- 4.7 Carnoustie Country will work with its Golf Industry Group members to produce stay and play packages around The Senior Open Championship to encourage increased visitors and longer stays.
- 4.8 Carnoustie Country will also advocate the use of local produce within the tented village and work with the Carnoustie retailers to promote opportunities to potential visitors.
- 4.9 This promotional opportunity underpins the work currently being undertaken to update and modernise the Carnoustie Country logo and branding, to further update www.carnoustiecountry.com, produce new promotional print and develop an integrated social media plan to drive up customer engagement and reach. Using online channels make it easier to undertake robust analytics and monitor return on investment. This work is vital to ensuring that Carnoustie Country is able to maximise every opportunity resulting from the return of both the Senior Open Championship in 2016 and The Open in 2018.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The cost of £40,000 for these opportunities can be met from the Economic Development Revenue budget for 2015/2016 and will consist of two instalments – the first on approval and the second prior to 31 March 2016.

6. CONSULTATION (IF APPLICABLE)

- 6.1 The Strategic Directors of Communities, People and Resources, Head of Corporate Improvement and Finance and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services have been consulted and are in agreement with the contents of this report.

NOTE: No background papers, as detailed by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report.

REPORT AUTHOR: Merlyn Dunn Business Manager – Industry Sectors
EMAIL DETAILS: DunnM@angus.gov.uk