

**REPORT TO: THE MORAY COUNCIL, 14<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2008**

**SUBJECT: ANCESTRAL TOURISM 2009 AND, THE YEAR OF  
HOMECOMING**

**BY: THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

**1. REASON FOR REPORT**

1.1 To allow the Moray Council to consider a request from the Lord Lieutenant of Banffshire for signs to mark the historic boundary of Banffshire.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

2.1 **If Members are minded to support the request for Banffshire signs, it should be remitted to Officers to investigate the permissions required to erect these signs, and how best to provide signage that does not confuse.**

2.2 **That any cost should be met from the Economic Development budget.**

**3. BACKGROUND**

3.1 The year 2009 marks the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns. As part of the celebration, a year long programme of events is being held to celebrate some of Scotland's contribution to the world.

3.2 The year of homecoming is a Scottish Government initiative managed by Event Scotland and has 5 central themes: -

Robert Burns  
Scottish Ancestry  
Whisky  
Golf  
Innovation and Scottish enlightenment

3.3 There are three types of event: -  
Signature, mainly funded and co-ordinated by Events Scotland  
Themed, where financial support of between £5000 and £50,000 may be available and,  
Community group events.

3.4 The Moray Council recently launched a 5-year ancestral Moray development plan in which homecoming activities are seen as pivotal to the growth of ancestral tourism in Moray.

- 3.5 The main pillar of Moray's homecoming activities will celebrate George Stephen born in Dufftown and his cousin Donald Alexander Smith born in Forres. Both emigrated to Canada where they founded the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) in 1880. The event "Moray, the birthplace of the Canadian Pacific Railway" is designed to bring 250 to 300 Canadians to Moray during the autumn of 2009. It will also provide the basis for long term economic benefits for Moray by strengthening the civic links between the two communities. The total cost of the project was estimated to be in the order of £192,000 with the Council providing a budget of £10000 plus £39650 of "in kind" funding. Other contributors are HI Moray, Visit Scotland, Lottery Funding, Private sponsors and the Canadian Pacific Railway.
- 3.6 The Council applied for a grant of £50,000 but has been notified that the Scottish Government has only allocated £10,000 towards the project.
- 3.7 The Lord Lieutenant of Banffshire, Mrs Claire Russell has pointed out that at the time the emigration took place Dufftown would have formed part of Banffshire. It is suggested that many visitors would have an affinity with the former County. and that the historical boundaries of Banffshire could be marked by tourist signs. She points out that although not universal this practice has been adopted elsewhere. It is understood that a similar approach has been made to Aberdeenshire Council.
- 3.8 Aberdeenshire Council have approached the Scottish Government for guidance on the erection of historic signs and following consideration by the appropriate departments, have been advised by the First Minister that roads authorities may erect prescribed signs under the terms of the Traffic Sign Regulations and General Directions 2002. Scottish Ministers have powers to authorise traffic signs not prescribed by these regulations (such as historic signs) where there is a specific need and the relevant road authority makes an application. In this case, Banffshire signs are not prescribed therefore permission would be required to erect these signs on both local and trunk roads, and councils would have to apply to the Transport Directorate and Transport Scotland to erect non-prescribed traffic signs.
- 3.9 A total of 12 signs have been requested (5 identified as priority sites) at the following locations:
- A98 near Bridge of Headitown (Aberdeenshire)
  - A947 near Bridge of Montbleton (Aberdeenshire)
  - A97 near Crofts of Yonder Bognie (the old Banff & Buchan and Gordon District boundary) (Aberdeenshire)
  - A96 Coachford at the existing Moray / Aberdeenshire Boundary (priority)
  - A920 at the existing Moray / Aberdeenshire Boundary
  - A941 Cabrach at the existing Moray / Aberdeenshire Boundary
  - A939 Lecht at the existing Moray / Aberdeenshire Boundary (priority)
  - A939 Bridge of Brown at existing Moray / Highland boundary (priority)
  - A95 Corries at existing Moray / Highland boundary (priority)
  - A941 at Craigellachie Bridge (Moray)
  - A96 at Forgie (Moray) (priority)

- A98 at Mill of Tynet (Moray)
- 3.10 It is important that the message "come to Moray" is not confused or diluted, however the erection of Banffshire signs could have that effect. Members should, in consideration of this request consider what signage should be erected at several of these locations where the old Banffshire boundary and the Moray boundary are now co-incident, and therefore both signs are applicable and could be erected. Also, and by way of an example, if a Banffshire sign were erected on the A98 at Mill of Tynet for eastbound travel, then what becomes of the Aberdeenshire sign currently located to the east of Cullen. This applies in the reverse for the Moray Council identity for west bound traffic approaching the east of Cullen.
- 3.11 If Members are minded to support this request, then it should be remitted to Officers to investigate the permissions required to erect these signs, and how best to provide signage that is not confusing to tourism motorists due to overlapping and differing boundaries. These investigations would necessarily involve Aberdeenshire Council and Transport Scotland as interested parties and relevant roads authorities.
- 3.12 The cost of such signs are usually paid for by the attraction being advertised, but in this instance would fall to the economic development budget.

#### 4. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

**(a) Corporate Development Plan/Community Plan/Service Improvement Plan**

**(b) Policy and Legal**

It is likely that the erection of such signs will require the approval of the Scottish Government.

**(c) Resources (Financial, Risks, Staffing and Property)**

A provisional cost of erection would be in the order of £1000 per sign although new regulations might require an alternative dearer pole design (a thousand pounds per pole) on Trunk Roads leading to a cost of several thousand pounds per sign.

**(d) Consultations**

The Head of Direct Services has been consulted and his comments incorporated in the report.

Normally the Director of Environmental Services would wish this matter considered by the Tourism steering group but the next meeting is not until the 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008.

The Council is in possession of 11 e-mails from companies located in the former Banffshire supporting the request.

**5. CONCLUSION**

**5.1 The Moray Council is asked to consider the request made by the Lord Lieutenant of Banffshire.**

Author of Report: R.A Stewart

Background Papers:

Ref: