

## SECTOR-SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS – FOOD AND DRINK

### NEAR FUTURE: 2018-2019 – DRAFT ACTION PLAN

Recommendations	Actions	Key Partners
Assist the development of new, and improve the quality of existing, food and drink based visitor attractions, experiences and events.	<i>Group work to identify and share best practice, foster collaborative working which can lead to product packages and joint marketing, and to pull in specialists to aid this development.</i>	
Develop opportunities for local food and drink producers to sell at the wide range of events held within the region, with the dual aim of increasing sales of local food and drink, but also to provide all visitors to the NE with an authentic and distinctive food offering.	<i>Research and develop templates and training for successful street food and pop-up shop ventures, including collaborative models which may allow smaller business to gain access and grow.</i>	
Connect <b>Aberdeenshire</b> 's food and drink experiences better with online distribution channels such as table booking engines, activity booking sites and collaborative economy platforms.	<p><i>Carry out market analysis to identify major food and drink distribution platforms.</i></p> <p><i>Research value of a centrally managed Food and Drink Tourism website/ platform, within the overall Visit<b>Aberdeenshire</b> website. Investigate the need for a dedicated manager/ developer and how they and the platform might be self-sustaining.</i></p> <p><i>Carry out training to improve digital capabilities among food producers, suppliers and restaurants.</i></p>	
Work with locally based global food and drink brands to extend the reach of the destination message and attract more visitors.	<p><i>Establish a Destination <b>Aberdeenshire</b> Food and Drink Programme and invite signature product brands to join.</i></p> <p><i>Implement joint marketing initiatives in identified Core Markets where the signature brands are present</i></p>	

	Assess potential for agri tours.	
Carry out research to understand the brand perception of food and drink in <b>Aberdeenshire</b> compared to competitor destinations.	<p><i>Develop relationships with major online platforms to encourage data sharing, business training and optimal positioning of <b>Aberdeenshire's</b> food and drink tourism providers.</i></p> <p><i>Carry out training in digital capabilities among these providers to ensure optimal product positioning and distribution.</i></p>	
Identify the gap in chef/ culinary/ gourmet skills required to underpin a food tourism strategy which would bring in more visitors with high expectations.	<i>Research the skills gap and scope a programme to develop and promote gourmet chefs and venues, with the emphasis on young talent.</i>	
Give a higher profile to food and drink in promotion of events and festivals	<i>Engage event and festival organisers in food and drink promotion. Encourage groups of food service businesses to make event themed offers.</i>	
Raise awareness amongst food service businesses of the importance of utilising locally sourced food and drink and communicating this clearly to customers.	<p><i>Augment activity to bring together local food producers and food service providers.</i></p> <p><i>Encourage food service businesses to tell the local food story of the producers they utilise.</i></p> <p><i>Encourage uptake of the VisitScotland Taste Our Best food and drink Quality Assurance scheme which recognises businesses which utilise local/Scottish produce.</i></p>	
<b>MID-TERM: 2020-2021 - RECOMMENDATIONS</b>		
Following the 2018/19 development phase, develop and deliver a digital promotion programme for the NE Food and Drink Tourism offering,		

<p>perhaps tapping into the VisitScotland Growth Fund.</p> <p>Develop a strong portfolio of food and drink related experiences (including attractions, food tours, home dining, cafes and restaurants) to match emerging opportunities such as the cruise ship market.</p> <p>Promote opportunities for cross promotion of food and drink experiences with other core sectors identified by this strategy, in particular: business events, golf, cruise, culture &amp; heritage, and touring</p> <p>Develop a strong product proposition for Food-Loving Culturalists, leveraging their influence in recommending <b>Aberdeenshire</b> to friends and relatives. This to be promoted through the programme described above.</p>		
<p>Connect the supply of a skilled catering workforce with demand. Highlight catering as a career path of choice.</p>	<p><i>Establish and nurture strong strategic relationships with tourism and catering schools in Aberdeenshire and the rest of Scotland, and Aberdeenshire's food service sector. Identify and fulfil skills gaps in line with national skills programmes</i></p>	
<p>Connect the supply of a skilled catering workforce with demand. Highlight catering as a career path of choice. Elevate the gourmet chef/venue image of the NE.</p>	<p><i>Establish and nurture strong strategic relationships with tourism and catering schools in Aberdeenshire and the rest of Scotland, and Aberdeenshire's food service sector. Identify and fulfil skills gaps in line with national skills programmes. Deliver a programme to develop and promote gourmet chefs and</i></p>	

	<i>venues, with the emphasis on young talent.</i>	
<b>LONG TERM: UP TO 2023 - RECOMMENDATIONS</b>		
Carry out marketing programmes to help visitors (esp. international) to understand Aberdeenshire's role in UK food production and the provenance and exclusivity of its produce.	Encourage partnerships between local food producers, retailers, and restaurants in order to promote a stronger, more sustainable 'local food model'.	

DRAFT