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| HIGH LIFE HIGHLAND REPORT TO BOARD OF DIRECTORS15 June 2017 | AGENDA ITEM REPORT No HLH /17 |

## **MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE - Report by Chief Executive**

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| **Summary**The purpose of this report is to provide an update on progress made in implementing the 2015-19 Marketing and Communications Plan.It is recommended that Directors comment on and note the update. |

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| **1.** | **Business Plan Contribution** |
| 1.1 | This report supports the highlighted Business Outcomes from the High Life Highland (HLH) Business Plan:1. **To advance sustainable growth and financial sustainability**
2. Deliver the Service Delivery Contract with THC
3. **Improving staff satisfaction**
4. **Improving customer satisfaction**
5. **A positive company image**
6. **Services designed around customers and through market opportunities**
7. Sustain a good health and safety performance
8. **A trusted partner**
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| **2.** | **Background** |
| 2.1 | The Board approved the 2015-19 Marketing and Communications Plan for HLH on 18 June 2015. At the Board meeting on 2 October 2013, Directors requested an update on progress in implementing the actions outlined in the Plan on a six monthly basis. The purpose of this report is to provide that update. |
| **3.**  | **Marketing and Communications Plan Update**  |
| 3.1 | **Appendix A** contains the Marketing Plan update. |
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| **4.** | **Implications** |
| 4.14.24.34.4 | Resource Implications – the resources associated with the delivery of the Marketing and Communications Plan have been approved within the 2017/18 budget.Legal Implications – there are no new legal implications associated with this report.Equality Implications – there are no new equality issues associated with this report.Risk Implications – there are no new risks associated with this report. |

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| **Recommendation**It is recommended that Directors comment on and note the update. |

Designation: Chief Executive

Date: 2 June 2017

**Appendix A – Marketing Plan Update**

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| **Tactic** | **Action** | **Update** |
| Branding | Uniform1. Ensure the company brand and logo is represented across the HLH staff and volunteer uniform range.
2. Develop appropriate applications of the brand to any new promotional give-aways.
 | The HLH brand is being applied consistently across the full range of uniform and appropriately on promotional material.All staff at Strathpeffer Pavilion issued with appropriate uniform/corporate identity and notices around The Pavilion have been changed to HLH Branding.Discussions are underway with a local clothing supplier to develop a sample range of HLH branded sportswear to be trialled in a selection of leisure centres. |
| Induction and role model behaviour1. Contribute to any updates of the company induction process as required.
2. Demonstrate role model behaviour to peers and staff.
3. Develop role model behaviours in teams and as part of staff appraisals.
4. Positively challenge individuals and situations where role model behaviour isn’t being displayed.
5. Invest time in supporting and developing staff.
6. Address poor performance.
 | Where new staff take-up/change a post with HLH they are reminded of the Corporate branding guidelines as part of their induction.This has been the case with key staff at Strathpeffer Pavilion and North Coast Leisure and will also be the case at Poolewe. |
| Site branding1. Identify opportunities to roll out the use of company branded signage across all HLH facilities.
2. Work with the Estates Manager to apply company branding to sites receiving capital investment.
 | Site branding is considered on a case-by-case basis. As a result, corporate branding has been introduced (or is in the process of installation) in the following key sites:* Inverness Castle Viewpoint;
* East Caithness Community Facility (Wick);
* Averon Leisure Centre and Library;
* Ferrycroft Visitor Centre.

Site branding is in the design stages for the following key developments/refurbishments:* Ben Nevis Visitor Centre (BNVC);
* Canal Parks (Highland Rugby Football Club).
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| Marketing toolkit1. Ensure consistent and appropriate use of the marketing toolkit.
2. Identify new templates required and apply the brand appropriately.
 | The marketing toolkit continues to be used across the organisation under the guidance of the Marketing, PR & Communications (MPRC) Team. |
| Digital Communications | Website1. Liaise with the ICT team to co-ordinate the development of the new company website.
2. Liaise with all HLH services to agree the functionality and content required for each service.
3. Manage the contract with the supplier to ensure that the website is developed on time, within budget and to the specification required.
4. Monitor the implementation of the website to ensure that it meets customer needs and arrange for any updates or changes as required.
5. Monitor the content management of the website by each service.
 | Structural changes in the organisation (with ICT moving to the Development Service) – have effected more clearly defined coordination and communication between the MPRC and ICT Teams – with bi-monthly meetings scheduled between both sections.Standardised facility programme templates and online booking for Inverness Royal Academy Sports Centre (pilot) is nearing completion – due to go live early summer. If pilot proves successful, the format will be rolled out across all sites by end of 2017.Bespoke bookings systems implemented for:* Active schools (trialled);
* Outdoor activities.

New themes in development for:* Strathpeffer Pavilion;
* Ben Nevis Visitor Centre;
* North Coast Leisure.

The Summer Activity programme online booking system has been improved and updated for 2017 taking into account feedback from the customer survey in 2016.Further developments to highlifehighland.com:* Summer activities catalogue;
* Benefits pages;
* Inverness Castle Viewpoint;
* Outdoor activities.
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| Email marketing1. Ensure that all service staff are proactively encouraging customers to give permission for their email addresses to be added to our databases.
2. Segment groups of customers relevant to individual promotions.
3. Send specific campaign information to segmented customer markets.
4. Devise online surveys using ‘Survey Gizmo’ as required to gain customer feedback. (an online survey platform that allows comprehensive reporting and data analysis)
5. Analyse the feedback and act on the findings.
6. Ensure customers are informed of our response to their feedback.
7. Use ‘Mailchimp’ to enable customers to sign up for a range of HLH information.
8. Ensure the information is sent to those requesting it.
 | As a result of a proactive campaign to collect customer/member email addresses, the email marketing database is now reaching an audience of c.45.5K across leisure, library, visitor attraction and summer programme (SAP) databases.Monthly e-mail campaigns are proving successful and recent promotions with partners like Harry Fairbairn and Costwold Outdoor have helped increase engagement levels.Communications regarding concerts held in HLH venues have also been communicated using email messaging along with competitions (courtesy of promoters) for:* Texas (Inverness Leisure);
* UB40 (Northern Meeting Park);
* Hooley in the Highlands (Strathpeffer)

Survey Gizmo continues to be used for obtaining internal/external feedback.The ‘Digital First’ ethos continues to be implemented across all services.  |
| Social media1. Determine which sites are most beneficial to post to and when to post to them.
2. Decide how large the social media presence should be.
3. Identify the right metrics to use to measure progress towards social media goals
4. Set out how and why to engage current and potential customers online.
5. Set up and manage the company’s Facebook presence.
6. Set up and manage the company’s Twitter presence.
7. Arrange for the integration of a YOUTUBE channel into the website.
8. Assess FLICKR, Instagram, Snapchat, Vine and WhatsApp to determine which channel is the most appropriate for HLH customer engagement.
9. Set up and manage the use of Trip Advisor in Highland Folk Museum, Inverness Museum and Art Gallery, Inverness Botanic Gardens, Ferrycroft Visitor Centre and Ben Nevis Visitor Centre.
10. Devise social media plans for each individual platform.
11. Ensure the ongoing adherence to the company’s social media policy by all HLH staff.
 | The main social media platforms in use by HLH are:* Facebook;
* Twitter;
* YouTube;

Other platforms currently under consideration:* Instagram; and
* Snapchat.

Social media has been positively used in advertising the Summer Programme.A number of YouTube films around the ‘You Time’ project have now been signed off. These have been professionally produced and suitable for viewing on desktop and mobile devices.In addition, the MPRC Team supported a Staff Vacancy Advert for a senior position in HLH being promoted using ‘target advertising’ on social media. The feedback from the appointing Manager was extremely positive with a much higher yield of interest that the previously placed newspaper advert (and at a fraction of the cost). |
| Analytics1. Use Google Analytics to monitor the performance of variables such as advertising and campaign performance, audience characteristics and behaviour, sales leads and conversion.
2. Use Facebook user insights to monitor the success of campaigns through the following:
3. monthly fan size growth;
4. the average number of likes or comments;
5. unlikes and attrition rate;
6. demographics;
7. page views;
8. mentions.
9. Develop the use of Hootsuite Pro to establish who is reading, responding to and reposting HLH social media traffic.
 | Google Analytics continues to be used across highlifehighland.com and all associated websites.Facebook Manager continues to be used to monitor user behaviours on this particular social media platform. |
| Press and public relations | 1. Maintain a close working relationship with THC’s Press and Communications team.
2. Work with Heads of Service and Principal Managers to identify opportunities to actively place stories and features in publications in support of HLH service activities and achievements.
3. Engage and manage the services of a media monitoring company to maintain a library of press and media coverage and to evaluate the success of HLH PR activity.
 | The press service is now operated internally using existing staffing resources to monitor any coverage of HLH in the media and/or online. The new system continues to monitor:* Publication;
* Reporter/Journalist;
* Number of clippings;
* Page coverage (in ¼ pages);
* Positive/Negative/Neutral.

The above information is presented to Senior Management in the format of a weekly Media Bulletin.A member of the MPRC Team has also been made available to attend any meetings held by Principal Managers in order to ensure a consistent message and understanding of projects to/from the Service. |
| Advertising | 1. Assess advertising opportunities on a case by case basis to ensure that any advertising spend delivers value for money.
2. Minimise the use of traditional display advertising that is not carefully targeted or easily measured.
 | There remains a focus on the use of cost-effective, targeted advertising using social media. |
| Direct marketing and mailing | 1. Establish databases of key customer groups.
2. Maximise on the use of electronic communication to these direct markets.
3. Identify occasions that would benefit from door drop marketing.
4. Designate the geographic area for the campaign and arrange for leaflets to be delivered.

  | A door-to-door drop undertaken by Royal Mail was used to promote the opening of Thurso Leisure Centre (print). This was followed up by an online social media campaign.Whilst difficult to measure the success of the maildrop campaign – it is clear that the engagement on the targeted social media campaign was far more positive; therefore at a much reduced cost in terms of ROI.For the above reasons, the focus prior to the opening of East Caithness Community Facility remained online/social media.  |
| Events and exhibitions | 1. Identify key events at which HLH services can be showcased.
2. Create, maintain and manage the distribution of an event toolkit that can be used indoors and outside.
3. Develop a range of promotional giveaways that can be distributed at events and as part of individual campaigns.
 | Other than supporting venues with promotional and marketing support (primarily online via social media) – this section has not been a priority during the last period. |
| Marketing toolkit | 1. Ensure all HLH staff are using the following marketing toolkit:
2. Poster
3. Newsletter
4. Certificate
5. Notice
6. Leaflet
7. Timetable
8. Activity booking form
9. Powerpoint slide
10. Presentation pack cover
11. Identify additional templates that may be required and arrange for their design and addition to the toolkit.
 | All staff continue to be encouraged to use the HLH Marketing Tool kit.The following collateral has been created using the brand guidelines and toolkit:* High Life Card development
* Inverness Castle Viewpoint;
* Strathpeffer Pavilion.
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| Membership marketing and sales promotions | 1. Develop membership marketing and sales promotions for the following as required:
2. New services (for example digital newspapers)
3. Pilot initiatives (for example Love to Swim)
4. Special projects (for example You Time);
5. Existing services (for example researching your family history).
6. Maximise on the use of email, social media and direct marketing in each promotion.
7. Work with the HIE appointed consultant to design and host a marketing seminar with SMT for the purposes of identifying key actions to develop the High Life membership scheme and to increase sales.
8. Update the High Life work streams document to reflect the outcome of the seminar.
9. Oversee the implementation of the work streams.
10. Review the outcomes and monitor sales levels in response to the actions implemented.
 | The High Life Card redevelopment was launched in Caithness in April 2017 – the project has included:* Design of campaign collateral;
* Development of staff training/information session;
* Engagement with business community to offer cardholder discounts/offers;
* Development of web presence;
* Development of social media marketing.

Further training is scheduled during the summer to take place across other HLH facilities. The scheme will also be promoted by eMarketing (as highlighted above). The MPRC Team also assisted in the promotion of the High Life card and other services when East Caithness Community Facility opened. The ‘200/300’ promotion (previously used successfully for IRASC and Thurso) was presented whereby new members can purchase a 12-month membership thus:* Individual £200 (saving £40 PA); or
* Family £300 (saving £60 PA).
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| Photography | 1. Build and manage the bank of high quality photographic images which communicate the company’s key messages and which will be used to promote HLH services across all media.
 | The bank of images has continued to be increased. The MPRC Team has also identified an additional approved photographer to be utilised at HLH events/activities and for press calls.  |
| Newspapers, television and radio | 1. Maintain proactive working contact will all local newspapers, radio stations and television stations.
2. Identify opportunities to engage with the relevant media contacts as part of individual campaigns or promotions.
 | The MPRC team continue to work with colleagues across the services to identify press and media opportunities. |
| Sponsorship, advertising and contra deals | 1. Identify opportunities to secure partnerships with third party and commercial organisations to progress sponsorship, advertising and contra deal packages.
2. Maintain an overview of the activity of all HLH staff to ensure that they are operating within the company’s policy and guidelines for sponsorship, advertising and contra deals.
3. Manage the relationship with the marketing departments of companies with whom sponsorship, advertising and contra deal agreements have been reached to ensure that the terms of the agreements are realised.
 | Joint promotions have been undertaken in conjunction with promoters for concerts taking place in HLH facilities.Although not directly sponsorship or contra-deals – liaison with promoters in terms of national concert tours has assisted in promoting HLH facilities to the residents of the Highlands and beyond. |
| Print | 1. Encourage all HLH staff to minimise the use of printed promotional material.
2. Identify opportunities to maximise the use of digital communications.
3. Work with the Finance Manager and service staff to further reduce the costs of managed print.
4. Focus any spend on managed print in support of increasing customers numbers at the company’s visitor attractions and on increasing High Life membership sales.
 | In line with the ‘Digital First’ ethos – print has been kept to a minimum during this period.Low print-run productions associated with High Life Card development:* A7 Foldout brochure for High Life Card;
* A4 Posters
* Leaflet holders and backdrop; and
* Window Stickers.
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| Research | 1. Identify research that would provide key data to inform the development of specific marketing and sales activities to increase High Life membership sales, increase visitor numbers at HLH tourism centres and enhance service delivery.
2. Determine the most appropriate and cost effective method to undertake the research.
3. Complete the research, analyse the findings and act on the results.
4. Work with the HIE Specialist Advisor to complete the Price Sensitivity analysis of High Life.
5. Use the findings of the report to inform future price change recommendations.
 | An online membership cancellation survey will be launched over the summer as part of a market-research process to identify the reason(s) that individuals cancel their High Life Memberships. The information from this system will be co-managed by the MPRC Team and the central High Life Team.Funding has been granted by HIE to undertake a further review on potential price-sensitivities around High Life over the next 5 years. |