

# Enterprise and Business Committee

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Meeting Venue:

**Committee Room 2 – Senedd**

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Meeting date:

**12 June 2014**

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Meeting time:

**09.00**

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Cynulliad  
Cenedlaethol  
Cymru

National  
Assembly for  
Wales



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## Agenda

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**Pre-meeting in private (09:00 – 09:15)**

**Formal public meeting (09:15 – 10:15)**

**1 Introductions, apologies and substitutions**

**2 Follow-up Inquiry into Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Skills (session 8) (09:15 – 10:15) (Pages 1 – 17)**

Witnesses:

Huw Lewis AM, Minister for Education and Skills

Ken Skates AM, Deputy Minister for Technology and Skills

Professor Julie Williams, Chief Scientific Adviser

Pat McCarthy, Senior Policy Developer and Implementation Manager

Attached Documents:

EBC(4)-15-14 (p1) Welsh Government

### **3 Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to resolve to exclude the public from the meeting for items 4 and 5 (10:15 – 11:45)**

#### **De-brief in private**

### **4 Forward Work Programme (Pages 18 – 26)**

Attached Documents:

EBC(4)-15-14 (p2) Forward Work Programme

### **5 Inquiry into EU funding opportunities 2014-2020 – Consideration of the Draft Report (Pages 27 – 76)**

Attached Documents:

EBC(3)-15-14 (p3) Draft report

#### **Formal public meeting (13:15 – 14:45)**

### **6 Inquiry into Tourism (session 1) (13:15 – 14:00) (Pages 77 – 119)**

Witness:

Professor Annette Pritchard, Professor of Tourism, Director of Welsh Centre for Tourism Research, Cardiff Metropolitan University

Attached Documents:

EBC(4)-15-14 (p4) – Professor Annette Pritchard

### **7 Inquiry into Tourism (session 2) (14:00 – 14:45) (Pages 120 – 125)**

Witnesses:

Lowri Gwilym, Team Manager – Europe and Regeneration, Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA)

Huw Parsons, Marketing & Tourism Manager, Carmarthenshire County Council

Attached Documents:

EBC(4)-15-14 (p5) Welsh Local Government Association

#### **De-brief in private (14:45 – 15:05)**

# Agenda Item 2

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## **Follow-up Inquiry into Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Skills**

### **Welsh Government**

#### *Purpose*

To provide the Enterprise and Business Committee with evidence for its follow-up inquiry into STEM skills, noting progress in areas under its terms of reference.

#### **What impact has the Welsh Government's strategy *Science for Wales* and Delivery Plan had on STEM skills in Wales?**

The *Science for Wales* strategic framework sets out priorities and key commitments to increase the science and engineering talent pool, these are being taken forward in specific policies. Progress in meeting our commitments is reported on internally on a regular basis and we also publish an annual report to update stakeholders on progress, linked to the Programme for Government. The Chief Scientific Adviser reports to Ministers on implementation and advises on any further action needed to meet our goals. We will be monitoring STEM skills within our three theme areas going forward, seeking to identify and address any gaps.

#### **What progress has been made in addressing the adequacy of provision of STEM skills in schools, further education colleges, higher education and work-based learning (including apprenticeships)?**

Early exposure to STEM initiatives positively impacts on primary pupils' dispositions towards STEM subjects and hence science remains important in the primary curriculum. In the Foundation Phase, through the 'Knowledge and Understanding of the World' Area of Learning children are given experiences that increase their curiosity about the world around them and are encouraged to enjoy learning by exploration, enquiry, experimentation, asking questions and trying to find answers.

In 2013 the Welsh Government established a Task and Finish Group to consider computer science and ICT, the group published their report in October 2013. It stressed the need to update the way ICT is taught in schools, making it more relevant to current and future needs. It also called for a Computing curriculum which encourages creativity, allowing thematic working and developing real world problem-solving. Digital literacy is not the end point, learners need to create as well as consume.

The current science curriculum at KS2 and 3 emphasises the development of skills and enquiry led science. In addition to the application of the non-statutory Skills Framework for 3 to 19 year olds, learners are taught to apply their scientific skills, knowledge and understanding to design strategies, solve problems and offer explanations. Estyn, however, has highlighted concerns over the planning of progression in scientific knowledge and understanding (June 2013), and how these key stages are preparing learners for GCSE study. Their report also highlighted that, in the majority of lessons observed, standards in science were good or better.

The Welsh Government recognises STEM skills as critically important, and notes year on year improvements since 2007/08 in the percentage of pupils aged 15 at KS4 achieving A\* to C grades in science. In 2012/13 this was 74.8% - up from 70.6% in 2011/12. However, PISA 2012 showed Wales' performance in science fell below the OECD average, including a 50% fall since 2006 in those attaining the highest levels. Consequently, the Welsh Government is keen to understand better the issues around PISA, how we can further support science teachers, and how we can help change the perception of the sciences and technology as a career or course of study of choice. We are particularly looking to support schools further during Key Stage 4 and tackle gender differentials.

The Minister for Education and Skills recently commissioned Professor Graham Donaldson to undertake an independent review of the National Curriculum and assessment arrangements. The review includes wide ranging stakeholder engagement and considers the needs of business and the economy, including the critical role of STEM skills, as well as issues highlighted by Estyn regarding delivery of science at Key Stages 2 and 3 in schools. Professor Donaldson's report and recommendations will be submitted around the turn of this year.

In taking forward the Review of Qualifications recommendations DfES officials are preparing for a new suite of GCSEs for first teaching from September 2016. It is likely that GCSEs will in future be the only science qualifications that will count towards key school performance measures (a letter set out this intention last year). Planned work includes formal engagement of stakeholders, including awarding organisations, practitioners and Estyn, to ensure our qualifications remain alive to wider developments and that learners access qualifications that are fit for the future.

The numbers undertaking apprenticeships in the main STEM related sectors were:

	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13</b>
Engineering*	2,319	2,021
Electrotechnical	981	1,031
IT User/s	842	1,222
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,142</b>	<b>4,274</b>

\*Data for Engineering includes all sector descriptions prefixed by the word Engineering.

One of most popular sectors was IT User/s which shows an increase of 45% from 2011/12 to 2012/13. This is due to the nature of the framework and its relevance to sector employers. The 13% reduction in Apprenticeship learners in Engineering is possibly due to the number of learners progressing from a Foundation Apprenticeship onto an Apprenticeship, and the recruitment cycles of employers in this sector.

Our additional investment in Apprenticeships has allowed us to fund Semta, the relevant Sector Skills Council to increase the number of STEM Apprenticeships through the 'I am an Engineer' project, in conjunction with the Engineering Education Scheme Wales (EESW) and the National Science Academy (NSA).

We are supporting intensive training for 16-24 year old learners to become Apprentices in STEM, the area which now achieves the strongest progression to Apprenticeships.

The Welsh Government places great emphasis on the continued development of STEM skills in higher education. Through the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) we continue to support STEM provision in HE in support of the ambitious *Science for Wales* agenda building on HEFCW's successful initiatives of recent years.

We are pleased to note that enrolments in STEM subject courses in HE continue to increase suggesting that interventions we are making throughout the curriculum are having a positive impact on individuals' choices in higher education and that provision in Wales is proving attractive to potential students. In addition, our 2012 HE reforms have put the HE sector in a much stronger position to invest in STEM provision. Latest forecasts suggest that the new funding regime will contribute an additional £200m in income to the sector during the lifetime of this Government, when compared to the previous funding formula.

**What progress has been made in addressing value for money from the additional funding to support and promote STEM skills, and whether the supply of STEM skills is meeting the needs of the Welsh labour market?**

Over 2013-15 the National Science Academy (NSA) grant scheme has funded 29 projects, worth approximately £1,650,000 and estimated as reaching out to 62,000 pupils through a wide variety of STEM engagement and enrichment activities. Participants range from those in Key Stage 1 through GCSE to A-level and other post-16 students. Funding from the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) for Techniquest (TQ) and Techniquest Glyndwr (TQG) is a further £1.755 million. The NSA is complementary to Careers Wales, which provides client-focused information and advice on careers.

The NSA Scheme has operated two competitive grant rounds and currently facilitates a longer term portfolio of projects up to March 2015. The NSA has also awarded grant funding to the EESW to stimulate interest and promote careers in the engineering sector, and to the British Science Association (BSA) towards delivery of the CREST Awards. It is keen to fund projects which attract or target under-represented groups, such as the Institute of Physics 'Lab in a Lorry' (attracting over 1,500 female students), the Swansea University-led 'S4 Summer School' (targeting Communities First Wards and female participants), and 'Girls into Engineering' (under the EESW). Work has been informed by a survey of STEM activity in Wales and relevant indicators are reported in line with the *Science for Wales* Delivery Plan.

A report by the Science Advisory Council for Wales proposed further development of the NSA, including a more formal strategy, set of indicators and project evaluation, and stronger co-ordination with STEMNET. The Chief Scientific Adviser is meeting with partners to discuss this further. During the next year projects will be evaluated and recommendations considered in implementing the next grant round. We are also developing stronger connections with UK science charities and centres and participating in a new STEM forum.

Where relevant, the NSA also co-operates with sector teams. The Advanced Materials and Manufacturing Sector team, for example, supports a pilot programme of Saturday Clubs with the Ford Motor Company to encourage young people into engineering careers through practical work with vehicle electronics and engines (and targeted on girls' engagement, with 29% female participation). Sector work is also supporting Airbus to run an all girls cohort of the Industrial Cadets programme.

Across the UK the STEMNET organisation promotes STEM Ambassadors and science clubs in schools and raises awareness of funding opportunities. 96% of Welsh secondary schools now hold at least one STEM Ambassador event per year, with 65% of schools holding three or more events and a Welsh winner of the latest *Most Dedicated STEM Ambassador Award*. Half of secondary schools run science clubs, with a third of those receiving grant funding in some form.

An evaluation has found that Welsh Government support performs an important function in the Techniquest and Techniquest Glyndŵr programme that teaches STEM skills in schools through on-site and outreach activity. This support is regarded as essential to maintaining current services and enhancing the offer and difficult to replicate from other sources. The vast majority of schools found the most recent service to be fun and exciting for pupils, contributing to tangible learning outcomes and rated as very good or excellent. The most commonly cited pupil impacts were increases in motivation and enthusiasm, subject interest, understanding of the concepts covered, and in overall understanding of STEM subjects.

A detailed external evaluation of the Further Maths Support Programme (FMSP) Wales, providing tuition and aiming to increase uptake of the subject, is being undertaken by Miller Research. The pilot has received over £581,000 Welsh Government funding between 2010-11 and 2013-14. An interim evaluation report (2013) judged that it has been well managed and that the majority of desired outcomes have been achieved. In the pilot areas over the last three years there has been a clear, year-on-year increase in students taking A level Further Mathematics; a four-fold increase between 2010 and 2012 in A level Further Mathematics entries; an overall increase in students studying A level Mathematics; and an increase in the number of applicants to HE mathematics courses.

**What progress has been made in addressing the supply of education professionals able to teach STEM subjects and the impact of Initial Teacher Training Grants and the Graduate Teacher Programme on recruiting STEM teachers and education professionals?**

The overall teacher vacancy rate across Wales remains low, at 0.3%. The latest (2012) Pupil Level Annual School Census found that the average ratio of applications to advertised vacancies for English medium teaching vacancy in chemistry was 13; in physics 6 and in mathematics 10. The ratio was significantly less (4) for Welsh medium teaching posts. The equivalent ratio number of applications received across all secondary English medium posts is 13 - see:

<https://statswales.wales.gov.uk/Catalogue/Education-and-Skills/Schools-and-Teachers/Schools-Census/Pupil-Level-Annual-School-Census/Staff-and-Governors>

We recognise the importance of an adequate supply of well qualified science and mathematics teachers which meets the demands of maintained schools in Wales.

Training incentives are now £20,000 for those with the highest degree classifications undertaking postgraduate initial teacher training courses in physics, chemistry and mathematics and up to £15,000 for teaching computer science. The programme is designed to encourage those with the highest level of subject knowledge to consider teaching in Wales as a career.

We also support these priority recruitment subjects under employment-based routes into teaching including the Graduate Teacher Programme, and from 2013/14 through Teach First Cymru, which emphasises recruitment of trainee science teachers with excellent subject knowledge.

The employment of teachers in schools is a matter for local authorities, head teachers and governing bodies. Governing bodies will take into account the skills, subject knowledge and qualifications of applicants alongside the needs of the school and the balance of expertise within their teaching workforce.

### **What progress has been made in addressing the effectiveness of education and business links between education institutions and STEM employers?**

A previous section highlighted enhanced education business links supported by the NSA and sector work. Under STEMNET in Wales there are now 1,400 STEM Ambassadors, about 70% from private sector employers, covering 870 employers including 120 SMEs. Public sector partners include Public Health Wales and the NHS more widely.

A 2013 review by ICF GHK Consulting Ltd of the Techniquest (TQ) and Techniquest Glyndŵr (TQG) core education services for schools found that the organisations have built strong networks of partnerships with other STEM support providers and universities, and been successful in attracting additional funding from a wide range of sources. Their role in sub-contracting primary outreach hubs has also highlighted how bringing together different organisations, including non-STEM specialists, can enhance the STEM offer to schools. TQG's close links with Glyndŵr University and local industry employers (such as the Toyota UK Engine Plant) are highlighted as being mutually beneficial, enhancing the offer to secondary schools while also providing access to potential new students or recruits for partners.

Building on plans set out in the National Numeracy Programme (2012), the Welsh Government awarded 2 year contracts from April 2013 to TQ, TQG and Steam Powered Stories to provide Numeracy Employer Engagement activity across all 4 consortia regions in Wales. The programme is brokering links between employers and schools to help support teachers and learners with the development of numeracy skills and their application in the world of work. Activity is focused specifically on raising the confidence and capability of numeracy for KS3 and KS4 pupils.

In addition, schools have access to employer led initiatives, such as the Schools Connect programme. This GE Healthcare initiative brings A-level students in Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Mathematics to The Maynard Centre to show what a career in science and technology would look like, focusing on the site work in cell technology and product lifecycle development.

The Lego Education Innovation Studio aims to make STEM subjects fun and exciting, and ensure businesses in the North Wales area have people with the necessary skills and motivation available to move into employment. It is supported by G2G Communities with funding from the European Regional Development Fund.

**Progress made on addressing negative perceptions and gender stereotypes of STEM and promoting good practice to encourage women to acquire STEM skills and to follow STEM related careers.**

The Girls in Science (GOWS) pilot project, funded by the Welsh Government, was led by CaST Cymru and Chwrae Teg from 2012 to 2014 to encourage the wider engagement of girls in STEM education and hence increase the numbers pursuing STEM careers. The project addressed negative perceptions, often developed early in life, that girls are ill suited to STEM subjects. The work aimed to improve the way science is delivered during the KS2-KS3 transition phase in primary and secondary schools to better reflect the needs of girls.

‘Science Champions’ helped break down the gender barriers in schools. The project also promoted improvements in industry’s policies and working practices in engaging with a female workforce. 170 teachers, 1,580 learners and 170 parents were involved, with an estimated further 31,000 learners indirectly benefitting from the project’s outcomes. The project led to resulted in the production of guidance on gender lensing, educational resources, good practice materials and case studies. These are being shared with teachers across Wales through Hwb, following a series of dissemination conferences. We are encouraging STEM partners to embrace the gender concept developed through the project, for example, in subsequent changes to DfES grant support for Techniquest and Techniquest Glyndŵr.

In 2013 DfES officials reviewed girls’ take up and progression in science, particularly to A level physics. Engaging with the Institute of Physics (IoP) the review highlighted the need to support the skills and knowledge of practitioners and tackle the perception of physics as a subject of choice for girls. It found that more can be done to record and highlight evidence of gender differentials to schools, and giving impetus to introduce remedial measures.

As noted above the NSA has supported several STEM enrichment projects which recognise and address gender disparity.

The issue of gender differentials and progression in STEM related subjects remains a priority area for the Welsh Government in taking forward grant funding, curriculum development and wider work in STEM. Professor Julie Williams, as CSAW, is establishing a ‘Women in Science in Wales’ group bringing together influential female scientists who will develop and coordinate actions to address this issue. A conference is arranged for September to encourage young women to consider roles in STEM and as decision makers in public service. We support strongly the Athena Swan awards scheme that promotes best practice in Universities in promoting female research careers. Spearhead Science Wales is planned to include steps to make it easier for researchers to move back into research after a career break, such as for childcare. The Chief Scientific Adviser is working with the Daphne Jackson Trust, who have a success rate of over 90% in helping scientists continue careers following a career break.

**What progress has been made on learning STEM skills through Welsh medium education and training?**

Under the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans and Assessing Demand for Welsh Medium Education (Wales) Regulations 2013 Local Authorities are required to indicate their strategy for increasing the percentage of pupils aged 15 and over studying for qualifications through the medium of Welsh.

The average number of applications received for Welsh-medium teaching posts across all subjects is typically lower than for English-medium posts. As noted earlier, the same is true for STEM subjects, with in 2012 an average of 4 applications per secondary post for Welsh-medium teaching , compared with 12 for English-medium. The Welsh-medium Incentive Scheme provides practical and financial support, to help increase the number of newly qualified secondary teachers able to teach confidently and competently through the medium of Welsh. There are more than 90 in the scheme this year, including 34 specialising in STEM subjects, of which more than two thirds have already shown an improvement in their linguistic skills by at least one grade.

# Agenda Item 4

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# Agenda Item 5

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# Agenda Item 6

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# WRITTEN EVIDENCE TO THE BUSINESS & ENTERPRISE COMMITTEE OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FOR WALES

Inquiry into Tourism

Submission by:

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Dated: 4<sup>th</sup>. June 2014

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## SUBMISSION HIGHLIGHTS

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- 2.0. The clarity and strength of Wales's tourism brand
- 3.0. The effectiveness of WG attempts to maximize the value of the domestic tourism market
- 4.0. The effectiveness of WG attempts to maximize the value of the international tourism market
- 5.0. Performance of Visit Wales compared with tourism development agencies in the rest of the UK
- 6.0. The success of Visit Wales marketing activities
- 7.0. The work of Visit Britain as it relates to Wales, and the extent of coordination between Visit Britain and Visit Wales
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- 13.0. The impact of major events on Wales's tourism economy, and the success of WG attempts to maximise this.

Appendix A: NTO Marketing Spend, 2009

Appendix B: Prof Pritchard Biog & Publications

Appendix C: Additional References

## Submission Highlights:

- Tourism is an economic engine for Wales; it is in the country's top three largest sectors and a major export industry, with 80% of visitor spending coming from outside Wales;
- Tourism is relatively *more* important to Wales' economy than to that of any other UK region. Five of the UK's 13 most tourism-dependent regions are in Wales (Anglesey, Gwynedd, Conwy and Denbighshire, Powys and SW Wales);
- The domestic tourism market accounts for 90% of Wales's visitors. Current visitors are extremely satisfied with their experience and exhibit high levels of destination loyalty but in key visitor markets Wales lacks currency as a desirable holiday destination by comparison with UK competitors (e.g. Cornwall);
- Brand Wales is at a tipping point. It needs greater clarity, stakeholder buy-in and consumer and media resonance;
- The overseas market is a small but valuable one, accounting for 10% of visitors but 20% of spend in Wales. Wales has lost almost a quarter of a million visitors during 2006-2013;
- Low consumer, media and travel trade awareness of Brand Wales and poor connectivity are barriers to promoting Wales in international markets;
- VW is operating in a challenging environment for which it is under-resourced – its marketing budget has fallen from almost £50 million in 2006 to just £7 million today. This compares to £47.5 million for Visit Scotland and £34.5 million for Tourism Ireland;
- Wales is almost totally absent from much of Visit Britain's digital content;
- Wales is building a significant events portfolio. Surprisingly, its reputation as an events destination has not changed deep-seated negative perceptions of Wales as a holiday destination in some key markets/regions;
- The London-based media does more to shape perceptions of Wales than any tourism marketing activities. More work needs to be done to challenge negative stereotypes and media representations of Wales.

## **1.0. Introduction**

- 1.1. Tourism is an economic engine for Wales and is in its top three largest sectors with energy and environment, broadly the same as professional and financial services. Critically it is Wales's fastest growing sector; experiencing 15.3% growth since 2005 and continuous growth since 2008 (Tourism Sector End of Year Report 2013).
- 1.2. Promoting leisure and business travel to and in Wales is an effective means to support economic development because the industry cuts across and is linked to many other economic sectors, generating additional demand in a wide range of services and professions. Tourism touches every part of Wales and it is rooted in its urban and rural communities. The industry can play a central part in reinforcing and reflecting Wales' distinctive national identity and could assume a key role in Wales's public diplomacy and economic development strategies (Anholt 2007).
- 1.3. Tourism is a major export industry for Wales, with 80% of visitor spending coming from outside Wales. A 2013 Deloitte and Oxford Economics report on tourism's economic contribution suggests that the wider tourism industry contributes £6.9 billion to Welsh Gross Value Added (GVA) –13.9% of its total, supporting 206,000 jobs or 14.9% of the Welsh total (Deloitte 2013, p. 17). If Welsh Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is measured, tourism contributes £8.7 billion or 17.6% of total GDP and supports almost a quarter of a million jobs (Deloitte 2013, p. 17).
- 1.4. Wales tops UK regions for tourism direct GVA (i.e. goods & services consumed by tourists), ahead of Scotland, the SW and London. This is the most useful measure of the proportionate impact of tourism expenditure in a region and indicates that tourism is proportionately *more* important to Wales' economy than to any other UK region.
- 1.5. In fact, five of the UK's 13 most tourism-dependent regions are in Wales. Anglesey tops the UK table, with tourism accounting for over 20% of its total GVA. This places it well above Blackpool (15%), the second ranked destination. Tourism is also hugely significant in Gwynedd (ranked #5), Conwy and Denbighshire (ranked #11), Powys (ranked #12) and South West Wales (ranked #13).
- 1.6. These figures demonstrate that such is tourism's significance to Wales, any improvements in tourism performance would lead to significant economic gains for Wales' communities. At the moment, London and the SE and Scotland account for the lion's share of UK tourism spending with Wales in the bottom two regions, just ahead of the NE.

## **2.0. Clarity and strengths of Wales' brand**

- 2.1. Most leading destination brands (e.g. New Zealand, Spain and Ireland), have evolved over a long period of time and have consistently communicated a set of

agreed and clearly established brand values (InterBrands 2005; Morgan, Pritchard & Piggott 2005).

- 2.2. Research clearly demonstrates that effective brand building requires sustained and prolonged investment in both the tourism product and its marketing (Morgan, Pritchard & Pride 2011). Unfortunately, the evidence suggests that Wales has been unable to achieve this. Investment in marketing has waxed and waned and the brand position has subsequently been compromised.
- 2.3. The brand identity of Wales is now at a critical point. Recently the brand has lacked a clear strategic focus, which may be the result of the hiatus created during the recent brand review. Previously, Wales Tourist Board (WTB) and later Visit Wales (VW) had pursued a clear brand strategy, evolving from the multi-award-winning *Two Hours and a Million Miles Away* campaigns to the challenger brand strategy of *Original Thinking*.
- 2.4. The territory captured by these campaigns has arguably been lost recently and today Wales faces a challenge to compete with Scotland, Ireland and key English regions, such as the SW. A persistent challenge is convincing potential tourists that Wales has a varied and high quality tourism offering. Whilst many people recognise Wales as a scenic destination, they remain unconvinced that it can offer aspirational, vibrant and fulfilling products and experiences (Morgan, Hastings & Pritchard 2012).
- 2.5. The current VW *'Have you Packed for Wales?'* campaign seeks to address this perceptual gap and by using a Welsh lullaby for its soundtrack it is attempting to communicate Wales' distinctive Welsh Celtic heritage. It is too early to comment on its impact and it remains to be seen how this campaign aligns with a long-term brand narrative for Wales.
- 2.6. Whilst the recent brand review has been completed, there appears to have been little discussion of its outcomes. Brand Wales must address the aspirational deficit discussed above and engage industry stakeholders. The development or evolution of a successful destination brand must involve its key stakeholders as they deliver the brand promise on the ground. The very best destination brands are those built on consultation and extensive stakeholder buy-in (Piggott, Morgan & Pritchard 2003).
- 3.0. **Effectiveness of Welsh Government in the domestic tourism market**
- 3.1. The domestic tourism market is key to Wales' economic success. It accounts for 90% of visitors and 80% of visitor spending. Within this market the holiday segment is the most important, accounting for almost 6 million trips and £1.1 billion spend.
- 3.2. 2013 figures suggest that Wales has performed well following a difficult period for the domestic tourism industry. In 2013 there were 9.93 million overnight trips to Wales by domestic or Great Britain (GB) residents, up 3.4% on the previous year. In contrast the GB total fell by 2.6%.

- 3.3. Existing research demonstrates that current visitors to Wales are extremely satisfied with their experience and exhibit high levels of destination loyalty; at the same time, people are very aware of Wales as a holiday destination and of its frequent award-winning marketing campaign activity (Morgan, Hastings and Pritchard 2012). In the long term, however, key challenges remain.
- 3.4. In a UK holiday market where proximity and familiarity are key drivers of tourist behaviour, Wales should be in a very strong market position vis-à-vis its competitors; it should at the very least be in UK consumers' decision-making sets. However, despite high levels of awareness, people are less likely to holiday in Wales than in other UK destinations, primarily because their emotional closeness to the country is lower and they are less likely to see Wales as an aspirational destination. In key visitor markets Wales lacks currency as a desirable holiday destination by comparison with competitors such as Cornwall.

#### **4.0. Effectiveness of Welsh Government in the international tourism market**

- 4.1. National Tourism Organisations (NTOs) like VW operate in an increasingly competitive marketplace. Around two-thirds of international tourists visit the top 10 major destinations; this means that there are over 180 countries and territories chasing less than a third of the world's international tourists (Morgan & Pritchard 2000; 2006). This creates a severe challenge for small countries, which are competing with a number of very powerful, well-resourced destination brands.
- 4.2. However, investment in destination marketing does deliver substantial ROI, with on average, each US\$1 spent in destination marketing generating US\$38 in visitor spending across international markets (Destination Marketing Association International, 2014). Similarly, Visit Scotland reports that every £1 spent on tourism marketing generates an additional £20 of visitor spending for the Scottish economy.
- 4.3. A 2013 survey conducted by Oxford Economics on behalf of the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) suggests that destination marketing activities are likely to: increase brand awareness; enhance perceptions of travel destinations; increase visitation and visitor spending.
- 4.4. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) provides the most recent and comprehensive survey of National Tourism Organization (NTO) budgets. Expenditure data for 2009 is the most complete (Appendix A) and shows that the *average* national DMO budget was approximately US\$50 million.
- 4.5. The survey demonstrates that a positive relationship exists between the funding of destination marketing and actual tourism receipts and that governments with larger tourism promotion budgets enjoy a higher level of international tourism spending (Morgan, Hastings & Pritchard 2012).

- 4.6. Total NTO funding had exhibited a general upward trend in this century before the global economic downturn reduced many countries' budgets in 2009/2010. This is now stabilizing and even reversing: for example Tourism New Zealand's budget will increase from NZ\$83.8m in 2014 to NZ\$115.8m by 2016, enabling significant expansion in Tourism New Zealand's current marketing activity (Tourism New Zealand, 2014).
- 4.7. The overseas market is a small but a high spending one for Wales. Whilst only 10% of staying trips are from overseas visitors they account for 20% of all staying expenditure (VB 2013). Wales has had overseas marketing powers since 1996 however, resource constraints and VW's need to prioritize the domestic market means that VW is heavily reliant on the overseas marketing conducted by Visit Britain (VB).
- 4.8. The overseas market is hugely significant in Great Britain and places the UK eighth in the world's tourism destinations. However, the growth in overseas visitors to GB is not being matched by similar growth in Wales. In contrast, Wales' share of the overseas visitor market has been falling for almost a decade. This is not a blip but a sustained decline, falling from a high point of 3.6% of the UK market (over 1.1. million visitors) to a current figure of 2.6% (884,000 visitors), spending £346 million. That is a loss of almost a quarter of a million visitors (VB 2013).
- 4.9. The fall in Welsh figures is replicated in other parts of the UK which have traditionally had a much stronger presence in the overseas market (i.e. Scotland and the English regions) – with one exception – London. During 2008-2013 Scotland has seen average figures fall from 7.8% to 7.4%, whilst the rest of England recorded a decline from 44.7% to 41.5% (VB 2013).
- 4.10. London, by contrast has seen its already dominant percentage share rise from 46.3% to 51% in the same period (VB 2013). It is absorbing a much bigger share of visitors than previously, whilst the rest of the UK is losing market share. The UK is not seeing a dispersal of overseas visitors around its countries and regions, which may well reflect changes in VB priorities and marketing campaigns, both of which are heavily influenced by the UK government's political and strategic requirements.
- 4.11. Wales has three major barriers to growing its international market. These barriers remain those identified by the WTB Marketing Plan 1994/5 and Pritchard and Morgan 1996. In overall terms, little progress has been made in the two decades since Wales secured overseas marketing powers to address these issues of:
- Low brand visibility;
  - Lack of brand awareness and perceived product offering across key travel sectors, the media and consumers;
  - Limited transport connectivity.

- 4.12. These barriers are compounded by a lack of funding. Table 1 demonstrates that there has been a steady decline in already scarce resources in each key market for Wales. It is not surprising therefore that visitor figures are recording steady declines. Indeed the correlation between spend and success appears quite clear. It is likely that this will continue to be the pattern if resources remain at their current level or are further eroded.

Table 1: VW Overseas Marketing Spend (£k)

	2011-12	2010-11	2009-10	2008-09
USA	473	411	391	720
Germany	63	82	98	300
France	117	76	99	323
The Netherlands	62	95	90	268
Belgium	40	26	43	54
Ireland	-	-	10	79
Spain	-	-	-	42
European specific	745.6	1925	1710	278.6

Source: Freedom of Information Request 3 Jan 2013, VW site

- 4.13. Wales is currently a destination only for the overseas traveller who is already familiar with the UK, probably on a third or fourth trip. There seems very little chance of Wales becoming a first choice destination.
- 4.14. Regardless of the independence vote result in Scotland, we are seeing a divergence in GB overseas marketing strategy with Scotland much more resourced and equipped and more inclined to work independently of VB in key inbound markets. Visit Scotland's marketing budget is approximately £50 million; by comparison, VW has a marketing budget of £7 million.
- 4.15. In contrast, Wales is heavily dependent on partnerships with VB and on influencing visitors who are already in the UK, paying particular attention to points of entry and to overseas visitor honeypot areas. Wales cannot rely on the ethnic roots and discovery market and it has neither the communication and transport links nor the image strengths to compete for overseas visitors on equal terms with its competitors. However, it does have the potential to build a unique destination within the UK based on its language, very strong built heritage (especially its castles) and living cultural heritage (Pritchard & Morgan 1996, 2001).
- 4.16. It is vital that investment in Cardiff Airport continues and that every effort is made to develop services between Wales and key hub cities. This is a key medium term aim of the Welsh government's strategy, which needs implementation. Air transport links are vital to growing the overseas market and facilitating overseas tourism. The recently announced Qatar-Edinburgh flight service for example is predicted to be worth an estimated £86 million to the Scottish economy (Glasgow Evening Times, May 19, 2014).

## **5.0. Performance of VW compared with tourism development agencies in the rest of the UK**

- 5.1. A number of factors are affecting VW's ability to perform effectively vis-à-vis its competitor TDAs. In contrast to Scotland, VW is significantly under-resourced (in budgets and staff). It should be commended for the work it undertakes in the domestic market but it has been less successful in international markets and is more reliant here on building partnerships with VB. This does not seem to have been very successful over recent years but may be improving through a planned VW secondment to VB's London offices and VW-VB work programmes.
- 5.2. Under-resourcing not only constrains VW's marketing effectiveness but also its stakeholder partnerships and communications. For example, VW undertakes excellent research yet its website contains very little research compared to those of Visit Scotland, Tourism Ireland or VB. Not only is it lacking content but easy interpretation, which undermines its take-up by partners. This is a key aspect of VW's remit and ability to lead debates, yet without more resources, this function will be further compromised.

## **6.0. The success of Visit Wales marketing activities**

- 6.1. VW have consistently produced high quality and often award-winning marketing material. The most recent campaign, *Have you Packed for Wales* was launched on St David's Day 2014 and its full impact will not be known until this summer season. It does however, promise an experience-rich offering which combines scenery, culture and heritage.

## **7.0. Work of VB as it relates to Wales**

- 7.1. It is evident that the international promotion of Wales is problematic. The current GREAT campaign is not an effective platform for Wales. Indeed, there are few opportunities for Wales in a campaign focused on promoting GB PLC where the creative platform is the Union flag. It is clear that the more British the message, the less space there is for communicating a distinctively Welsh message.
- 7.2. A more effective VB strategy for Wales would be one which marketed GB as a constellation of three distinct countries and cultures. However, this is not a preferred option for the UK government and it is difficult to see any significant change to VB priorities and strategies in the short term. A 'yes' vote for Scottish independence would of course have far reaching ramifications for all the GB Visit organisations.
- 7.3. It is vital that every effort is made to make the VB and VW partnership work effectively for Wales. This involves cooperation at a governmental and organisational level.

- 7.4. As it stands, Wales is not being explicitly presented as a distinctive, different destination offer in VB presentations. Creative executions in campaigns may occasionally feature Welsh castles or its coast/coastal path and countryside but it is rarely made transparent that these are photographs of Wales. VB's iconography is dominated by London and it seems that Wales is being squeezed out as VB pursues strong commercial partnerships with the private sector, such as British Airways and with other UK government departments.
- 7.5. Much more needs to be done to embed Welsh products on VB's digital platforms. This is particularly acute given that VB identifies its digital presence as 'the bedrock of contact with potential travellers' (VB evidence to WG Inquiry).
- 7.6. Welsh content is hard to find on the VB websites <http://www.visitbritain.tv/> and <http://www.visitbritainshop.com>; there is nothing on the homepages (dominated by London, England and Scotland) or in the Visit Britain shop. On the attraction pages, there are 20 Scottish and 4 Welsh attractions, none under 'we recommend' (<http://www.visitbritainshop.com/world/attractions/attractions-in-wales.html>). A Google search for Visit Britain, results in [www.visitbritain.com/](http://www.visitbritain.com/), described as 'Official UK tourism & places to visit England, Scotland & Britain'.
- 7.7. Wales is not alone in being disadvantaged by the current VB approach. Indeed, the situation is also of concern to Visit England and the English regions and will be the subject of *The Tourism Divide* conference in Liverpool in June 2014. It seems that without key strategic agreements to promote more effective working partnerships, however, Wales' marginalisation will only continue.

#### **8.0. Sufficiency and Effectiveness of Welsh Government Resources Targeted at Promoting Tourism/VFM**

- 8.1. Tourism is vitally important to the Welsh economy and unlike other sectors it touches every part of Wales. Moreover, promoting leisure and business travel to and in Wales delivers excellent VFM as it is an effective means to support economic development because the industry cuts across and is linked to many other economic sectors, generating additional demand in a wide range of services and professions.
- 8.2. In spite of tourism's importance to the Welsh economy, VW is much less resourced than its competitor tourism development agencies in the UK, as Visit Scotland and Tourism Ireland have marketing budgets of £47.5 million and £35.2 million respectively.
- 8.3. In Wales expenditure on tourism marketing has fallen dramatically since the mid-2000s when WTB expenditure was around £50 million (when EU funds were included). It is now £7 million; a fall much greater than that experienced by its competitor regions and most immediately reflected in the decline in overseas tourists to Wales, although domestic tourism performance has remained more robust.

8.4. It is difficult to see how Visit Wales can compete in this scenario as its position is being threatened by significant under-funding by comparison with its competitors. Their budgets are not only attracting tourists today but are building strong, effective and aspirational brands *for tomorrow*. In a context where Wales' brand is already weaker than those of its competitors, this is very worrying for the long-term sustainability of the industry.

8.5. Since 2010 tourism has been the fastest growing sector in the UK in employment terms, accounting for a third of the net increase in UK jobs 2010-2012. This trend is expected to continue until 2025 with annual growth rates of 3.8% - rates predicted to be much faster than manufacturing, construction and retail sectors. Given this predicted UK growth rate, a 10% Welsh growth target probably lacks ambition. Competitor TDAs have set more stretching targets, for example, Visit Scotland has a 50% growth target. Although it is unlikely to be achieved, setting a high and ambitious growth target sets the tone for Visit Scotland's organisational culture and ambition.

#### **9.0. How the WG monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of its tourism support and marketing activities**

9.1. VW undertakes substantial research and monitoring of its tourism marketing and support programmes. This research is a high quality but it could be more effectively communicated to key stakeholders and thereby used for advocacy and lobbying purposes.

#### **10.0. The Use Made of Opportunities for Funding and Other Support From the EU**

10.1. The current VW marketing campaign '*Have you Packed for Wales*' is part funded by EU funds and certainly in the past WTB/VW has made significant use of EU funding opportunities. Clearly, the Welsh Government, VW and the Welsh tourism industry need to maximize EU funding opportunities for both marketing spend and product development.

#### **11.0. The success of WG's efforts to increase the quality of Wales's tourism offer**

11.1. The VW's strategy rightly places considerable emphasis on improving the quality of the Welsh tourism product. This is central to building a strong and aspirational brand as Wales must convince opinion-formers in key markets/regions (especially London and the SE) that it can deliver a sophisticated and experience-rich travel product.

#### **12.0 The Extent to Which the Marketing and Development of Tourism Utilises Wales' Cultural, Historical and Natural Assets**

12.1. Wales' major leisure tourism attractions are its natural environment (especially its coastline and landscapes for activity and adventure tourists) and its heritage (especially its castles and language for cultural tourists). The Wales Coastal Path is a major attraction, which has attracted worldwide media attention and which features heavily in VW and to a lesser extent in VB marketing. Tourism offerings are also being developed around Wales's heritage in partnership with agencies such as Cadw.

- 12.2. Traditionally, domestic UK tourists have been less interested in Wales' linguistic heritage and more interested in its coastline and natural environment; although some important market segments (e.g. older explorers) are attracted by Wales' culture and heritage (see Pritchard & Morgan 1995, 1996, 1998, 2001). Non visitors or those who have not visited for three or more years have much more stereotypical and negative views and regard Wales as a destination with little to do (Morgan, Hastings & Pritchard 2012).
- 12.3. Internationally there is much greater interest in Wales' cultural, linguistic and heritage offering. Visitors often cite its castles, language and culture as key travel motivations. European visitors are also attracted by Wales' landscape and the opportunities it offers for exploration and adventure (see Pritchard & Morgan 1996, 2001).
- 12.4. Wales' castles are one of Britain's most popular attractions with foreign visitors according to a VB survey (2011). In this survey Wales' castles were more popular than Buckingham Palace and shopping in Harrods. Touring the castles of Wales has strong appeal in almost all markets, with Poland (49%), Russia (48%), Italy (46%), and Germany (44%) scoring the highest (BBC 2011).
- 12.5. Building on this, VB's most recent survey highlights how French visitors rank eating in a 'cosy Welsh pub' as a top three dream activity. American visitors are similarly attracted to Wales and rate it as *the* place to go for food (Nicolls 2013).
- 12.6. These attractors offer an ideal opportunity to develop appealing content and packages for these markets. The problem is that currently Wales lacks a clear brand strategy to harness and build on these key assets. Without such a brand to provide direction, marketing activities will be fragmented.

### **13.0. Impact of Major Events and Success of Welsh Government Maximisation**

- 13.1. Wales has a strong reputation for events, both sporting and cultural; it is a well-established player in this area. The Major Events Strategy was launched in September 2010 and the Major Events Unit (MEU) was established to lead and coordinate a coherent approach to major events in Wales.
- 13.2. The MEU has been very successful in attracting a number of high profile events to Wales with more planned. It has also helped to grow a number of Welsh events and Wales has an emerging reputation for alternative and 'quirky' events which generate a disproportionate amount of positive PR and social media coverage, such as the Do Lectures and Bog Snorkelling Championships.
- 13.3. Wales's reputation for and success in building events does not seem to be feeding through into the Welsh brand, however, which still lacks cachet. There is a disconnect between the two, which is hard to explain. At the same time, although Wales has some world-leading cultural events and a vibrant cultural offering, this has not translated into Wales having a reputation as a place to go to for culture.

13.4. The challenge remains to harness the success of the individual world-leading and national events and to make them work for Wales. The role of the UK and international media is key in challenging these perceptions and although beyond the scope of this inquiry, the London-based media does more to shape perceptions of Wales than any marketing activities. Much more work needs to be done to challenge negative stereotypes and media representations of Wales.

## Appendix A: NTO Marketing Spend, 2009

	Country	(US\$ millions)
1	Australia	85.4
2	Austria	44.1
3	Bahamas	59.3
4	Belgium	25.8
5	Brazil	39.6
6	China	11.8
7	Colombia	9.9
8	Costa Rica	17.1
9	Cyprus	111.7
10	Czech Republic	15.7
11	Denmark	29.6
12	Estonia	7.5
13	Finland	17.1
14	Greece	45.7
15	Hungary	19.3
16	Iceland	4.3
17	Ireland	77
18	Italy	22
19	Japan	18
20	Jordan	15.4
21	Korea (Republic of)	56
22	Latvia	1.1
23	Lithuania	1.7
24	Luxembourg	2.5
25	Madagascar	0.5
26	Malaysia	98.2
27	Malta	36
28	Mexico	148
29	Norway	37
30	Paraguay	0.5
31	Poland	9.4
32	Portugal	111.6
33	Romania	13.9
34	Serbia	1.8
35	Slovenia	9.8
36	South Africa	75.2
37	Spain	97.1
38	Sri Lanka	4.8
39	Sweden	16.7
40	Switzerland	53.2
41	UK	63.7
42	Uruguay	2.9

Source: WTTC, 2012 and UNWTO 2010.

## Appendix B: Prof Pritchard Biography & Select Publications Informing This Evidence

Professor Pritchard holds a personal chair in tourism at Cardiff Met University and has a background in sport, leisure and tourism national agency research. She has held senior academic posts and has extensive experience of leading international research teams and projects (she is currently leading a work package in a £1.7 million research project on the impact of tourism and events in peripheral regions funded by the Norwegian Research Council). She is Director of Cardiff Met's internationally recognised Welsh Centre for Tourism Research, with tourism and events management at the core of its research, teaching and industry consultancy and engagement activities.

Professor Pritchard is a leading international expert on place reputation management and tourism marketing and has completed several major tourism branding and marketing consultancy projects for governments and organisations in the UK and Europe, including the BBC and UNESCO and completed an evaluation of the £1.3 million European Union-funded Objective 1 Visit Wales Tourism Marketing Programmes (2011).

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# Agenda Item 7

Enterprise & Business Committee  
Inquiry into Tourism

## Evidence from the Welsh Local Government Association

### Introduction

1. The Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) represents the 22 local authorities in Wales, the three national park authorities and the three fire and rescue authorities.
2. It seeks to provide representation to local authorities within an emerging policy framework that satisfies the key priorities of our members and delivers a broad range of services that add value to Welsh Local Government and the communities they serve.
3. The WLGA welcomes this opportunity to contribute to the Enterprise and Business Committee's Inquiry into Tourism. Comments are offered against a number of the issues that the Committee is considering as part of the terms of reference.

**The sufficiency and effectiveness of Welsh Government resources targeted at promoting tourism and supporting Welsh tourism businesses, and whether it represents good value for money;**

4. Local authorities in discussion with tourism-related businesses have identified that these businesses require general business support in addition to IT, Marketing and using social media specifically tailored to the tourism business sector. Traditionally, local authorities have operated business grant schemes that target start up businesses and manufacturing based businesses. There would be merit in further developing targeted financial support for the tourism sector which would have different tiers of intervention by local government and Welsh government based on the level of tourism operation and level of financial support required.
5. All local authorities have prepared Destination Management Plans and these should inform resource allocation at a regional and local level. With limited

resources available nationally, there is concern that future funding could be directed at the high profile traditional tourism areas and the areas in Wales with a smaller tourism sector are under funded and as a result remain under-developed.

### **How the Welsh Government monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of its tourism support and marketing activities;**

6. There are inherent difficulties in measuring the effectiveness of marketing activities and indeed defining marketing activities. Local authorities have a key role to play in promoting their council area, events and the facilities that they and other stakeholders provide. This promotion should complement regional and national promotion. There are opportunities for greater co-ordination in evaluating marketing activity by working with tourism-related businesses to understand their customers and the effectiveness of marketing activities. The information that Welsh Government has on the effectiveness of marketing activities is not routinely shared with local authorities.
7. The WLGA is aware of a specific report into the economic benefits of the Wales Coast Path and the desire to widen the benefits to more businesses (tourism and retail) and this is welcomed and is considered good practice.
8. Measuring success and effectiveness also depends on being able to ascertain exactly what the value of domestic or overseas tourism is actually worth. Measuring the volume and value of tourism in Wales is problematic as it needs to be model based with a number of variables fed into that model such as accommodation occupancy statistics. The Wales occupancy survey undertaken on behalf of Welsh Government is a small sample size and cannot be used reliably for sub-national analysis to inform future initiatives.

### **The use made of opportunities for funding and other support from the EU;**

9. In the current programme, EU funding has been used to support tourism related initiatives including Digital Tourism programmes. Projects such as Valleys Regional Park have accessed significant levels of ERDF funding which has benefited a specific geographical area. Further, local authorities have benefited from ERDF funding via the Visit Wales led projects within the West

Wales and the Valleys Convergence Programmes' Environment for Growth theme.

10. It is anticipated that future EU funding for tourism will be locally targeted through the Rural Development Plan and that funding will be available from the other ESI Funds (Structural Funds & Fisheries) when linked to the Jobs & Growth agenda. Rural areas rely heavily on the tourism sector and RDP funding through Priority 6 – Promoting social inclusion, poverty and economic development in rural areas – and via the new Rural Community Development Fund will be crucial in supporting tourism based activities and businesses. It will be important that tourism related activity developed for RDP funding complements tourism related activity to be funded by ERDF. We would encourage further discussions between Visit Wales, and the wider Welsh Government Department for Economy and Transport, and local authorities as potential projects evolve for ERDF funding in order to ensure that activity developed nationally complements what is emerging regionally, sub-regionally and locally and vice-versa in order to maximise the impact of the funding available.
11. It is not clear whether Welsh Government will match EU funds at source thereby establishing financial support for tourism related businesses or whether this will be a more locally based approach. Locally the Destination Management Plans prepared by local authorities provide evidence for future funding applications.

**The success of Welsh Government efforts to increase the quality of Wales's tourism offer;**

12. Local authorities and the former Regional Tourism Partnerships have/had a key role to place in increasing the quality of Wales's tourism offer. It is not clear yet how the new arrangements will work with Visit Wales having a regional role; however we strongly advocate the need for enhanced partnership working to deliver programmes and projects at a local level. This localised approach should be inclusive of local government and local businesses and linked to the priorities with the Destination Management Plans which all local authorities have prepared.

13. Direct funding support such as Tourism Investment Support Scheme (TISS) has improved the tourism offer. However, the quality grading scheme for accommodation providers for which participation is a prerequisite for TISS funding is likely to become less effective in the future. In the past the most effective route to market accommodation was through Visit Wales and marketing area destination brochures. As more accommodation providers use the internet for marketing, there is no incentive for them to participate in the quality grading scheme and therefore do not receive feedback on how to improve their offer.

**The extent to which the marketing and development of tourism in Wales makes the most of Wales's cultural, historical and natural assets;**

14. The Destination Management Plans seek to capitalise on the local cultural, historical and natural assets. They set out key strategic priorities including products and themes for further development. It is important to recognise the important role local authorities play in the co-ordination, account management and guidance in developing iconic visitor destinations and the expertise that exists in local authorities; expertise that can be utilised by Visit Wales and Welsh Government to support the marketing and development of tourism in Wales.
15. There are existing partnerships and organisations that can be supported by Welsh Government to market and develop tourism; these include local authority partners, third sector and other public bodies. For example Cadw are proposing the preparation of a Strategic Plan for the historic environment as part of the forthcoming Heritage Bill and tourism opportunities should feature strongly in this plan. Natural Resources Wales are developing their thinking on the ecosystems approach to natural resource planning and using natural assets for tourism should be incorporated within this approach.
16. In 2013, the WLGA and the 3 National Parks commissioned a study to consider the economic value of the three National Parks. The study found "The economic benefits of the National Parks are felt outside the Park boundaries. Nowhere are the 'spillover' benefits of the National Parks more evident than with regard to the tourism sector. The Parks receive 12 million visitors each year spending an estimated £1bn on goods and services. This greatly exceeds

the turnover of tourism related businesses within the National Parks themselves, highlighting the fact that visitors to the Parks also stay and spend time in other parts of Wales.” “The Parks provide strong tourism ‘brands’ which are recognisable to both domestic and international visitors and convey positive messages about Wales as a place to live, work or visit.”

17. Further to the abolition of the Regional Tourism Partnerships, the WLGA is keen to ensure that the regional engagement teams within Welsh Government have a hands-on role across Wales. Local authorities are keen to engage particularly on destination marketing and in many areas existing partnerships such as the Destination Pembrokeshire Partnership would benefit from Visit Wales support. In times of restricted budgets, it is crucial that joint working is strengthened and that any funding is used to maximum effect at a local, regional and national level.

#### **The impact of major events on Wales’s tourism economy, and the success of Welsh Government attempts to maximise this**

18. Major Events can have a big impact on local areas and provide a significant boost to local economies. A number of local authorities have worked very closely with the Major Events Unit in Welsh Government to support and attract national and international events to different parts of Wales. Conwy County Borough Council, for example, has worked well in partnership with the Unit to secure a number of high profile events to their area, which have benefited the wider North Wales region as a whole, such as the Wales Rally GB and the Tour of Britain and World Mountain Championship in 2015.
19. We are keen to see such joint working increasing in the future, and are encouraging local authorities to progress their regional working to develop a more strategic approach to supporting, resourcing and coordinating major events across Wales.
20. This will be a key feature of the new regional working relationships to be developed following the demise of the Regional Tourism Partnerships. Local government is looking forward to working with the Welsh Government to develop the appropriate arrangements across Wales.

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