Deputy Eoghan Murphy, T.D.,
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

Dear Deputy Murphy

Re: PQ 43179/14. Dáil Number 574

Your parliamentary question on anti-social behaviour in Dublin has passed to Fáilte Ireland, to provide you with our strategy document for Dublin to 2020.

To ask the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport, the way anti-social behaviour is impacting on the city’s reputation as evidenced by recent negative media articles in the foreign press; and, if he has confidence in Fáilte Ireland, as it seems to be more interested in focusing time and money on how cobblestones impact upon high-heel use in shoes in this area, where drugs are readily available and needles litter the laneways.

Fáilte Ireland is the National Tourism Development Authority. Our role is to support the tourism industry and work to sustain Ireland as a high-quality and competitive tourism destination. We provide a range of practical business supports to help tourism businesses better manage and market their products and services. We promote Ireland as a holiday destination through our domestic marketing campaign (DiscoverIreland.ie) and manage a network of nationwide tourist information centres that provide help and advice for visitors to Ireland.

We are aware that negative perceptions of Dublin exist and as part of the work that Fáilte Ireland is now undertaking with the recently formed Grow Dublin Tourism Alliance (see attached press release), we will continue to work closely with other state agencies to address any issues raised. Fáilte Ireland works closely with other state agencies and representative bodies, including Local Authorities, to implement and champion positive and practical strategies that will benefit tourism and the Irish economy in Dublin.

The strategy document which details the work that will be further undertaken to 2020 to promote Dublin as a world class visitor destination can be found at http://www.failteireland.ie/FailteIreland/media/WebsiteStructure/Documents/4_Corporate_Documents/Strategy_Operations_Plans/Destination_Dublin_GDT_2020_Full_File.pdf?ext=.pdf

Section 5 of the Destination Dublin report deals with personal security and safety and references the ‘Better City for All’ report produced by the Strategic Response Group. This report can be found at http://www.drugsandalcohol.ie/17769/.

Yours sincerely

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New ‘Grow Dublin Tourism Alliance’ established to drive Tourism forward

14 November 2014

A new group, the Grow Dublin Tourism Alliance has been established under Fáilte Ireland to develop a cohesive brand identity for the Dublin region which will attract more tourists, boost job creation and enhance revenue streams.

The group will be led by Michael Carey, who will be responsible for implementing the Grow Dublin Taskforce strategy set out last year. A highly experienced marketer, Mr Carey is Executive Chairman of ‘The Company of Food’, a specialist food investment business with shareholdings in a number of private and public food companies and has held various senior management roles in the food industry including Managing Director of Kellogg’s UK/Ireland and Managing Director of Fox’s Biscuits.

The establishment of the Alliance follows the publication earlier this year of the Destination Dublin strategy which found that, while Dublin has recently experienced the beginnings of a recovery where tourism is concerned, the city is underperforming against its potential and has the capacity to attract even more tourists than is currently the case.
This strategy was developed by the Grow Dublin Taskforce (GDT) which was established by Fáilte Ireland and brought together senior stakeholders from industry, State agencies, local authorities and international destination experts to examine Dublin tourism and to devise a strategy to help Dublin strive competitively for market share. One of its recommendations was the establishment of a group to progress the strategy and drive tourism forward in the capital.

Speaking today, Fáilte Ireland CEO Shaun Quinn, emphasised:

'Dublin is a great destination but nobody ever got ahead by standing still and Dublin is in danger of becoming a bit stale while our competitor cities overseas have been reinventing themselves. It’s important that Dublin performs to its full potential. As two out of three visitors arriving in Ireland spend some time in Dublin, moulding their perception of Ireland, what is good for the region is good for tourism in the country at large'.

"The recent 'Destination Dublin’ report was a very timely wake-up call and gave us a valuable blueprint for repositioning Dublin and improving its appeal. Ultimately, the success of Dublin as a tourism destination will be dependent on tourism operators, sports, arts and culture interests and the wider business community working closer together than ever before and the work of the 'Grow Dublin Tourism Alliance’ will be crucial in that regard.”

Minister for Transport, Tourism and Trade, Paschal Donohoe, officially announcing the new Grow Dublin Tourism Alliance, said:

"If Dublin does not fulfil its potential in terms of tourism, there are implications for the rest of the country, for the creation of jobs and for the amount of revenue the State takes in. The Wild Atlantic Way has been a huge success for the west of Ireland and with a strategy currently being developed for the South and East, it is time to look at Dublin’s performance and put a cohesive strategy in place to ensure the maximum performance of the region”.

"We have seen steady growth in tourism figures nationally, with an increase of more than 9% so far this year. But we cannot afford to be complacent. Dublin has so much to offer and by harnessing the skills of all relevant stakeholders, as well as that of Dubliners themselves, we can send a strong message to the rest of the world that Dublin is top of the list in terms of global city destinations. My ambition is to increase the number of tourist to Ireland to 10 million, the amount of revenue we take in to €5 billion and to have 250,000 people working in tourism related industries each year by 2025. Dublin has a strong role to play in that and this group will be instrumental in helping us deliver to that end.”

Head of the new Grow Dublin Tourism Alliance, Michael Carey, said:

"This is an opportunity to establish an appropriate source of funds and to allocate it in a way that will change how Dublin is perceived and experienced by visitors. By getting the right group together to guide
this process, providing a new focus on Dublin, I believe we can get extraordinary results”.

"I am excited by the prospect of devising a clear and compelling brand for Dublin. I look forward to working with the relevant agencies, the key commercial stakeholders and some of Ireland’s brightest branding specialists to define and establish a compelling brand with which visitors can identify. Dublin has much to offer visitors, we need to ensure we optimise that experience and manage its reputation as a leading city destination.”

The original Destination Dublin report can be accessed he re.
Minister’s response

Overall responsibility for tackling anti-social behaviour rests with my colleague, the Minister for Justice, Equality and Defence. For my own part, I am of course concerned about anything impacting negatively on our tourists’ experience and liaise on an ongoing basis with my cabinet colleagues on such matters.

Thankfully, Ireland remains a very safe destination generally for holidaymakers and the rate of crime against tourists is relatively low. Research has shown that the vast majority of our overseas visitors are happy to recommend Ireland as a holiday destination to others.

With specific regard to Dublin, in line with its regional tourism development functions, Fáilte Ireland is currently pursuing “Destination Dublin: A Collective Strategy for Tourism Growth to 2020”. This strategy was developed by the Grow Dublin Taskforce, representing all the key tourism stakeholders in Dublin. I have asked the agency to provide the Deputy with any further relevant information relating to this tourism strategy and its promotion of Dublin as a tourism destination. Please advise my private office if you do not receive a reply within ten working days.

Section 5 of Destination Dublin Report
Personal Security and Safety
Although Dublin is - by international standards – a remarkably safe city, in which very few visitors experience any problems, there is a perception that this is not so in certain areas. This was identified in the ‘Better City for All’ report by the Strategic Response Group. This report outlines a partnership approach to address public substance abuse and perceived anti-social behaviour in Dublin City Centre and gives 60 recommendations that would need to be fully implemented to overcome the real and visible challenge that Dublin is facing. It is recognised that solutions to social and economic/tourism issues may not always coincide. However the potential damage to the visitor economy needs to be kept in mind in seeking a solution to this issue.