

Tourism Leadership Group Meeting

NOTE OF MEETING

Tuesday 26th September 2017

Historic Environment Scotland Offices, Edinburgh

Present:

- Robert Allan, Apex Hotels (RA)
- Fiona Cook, Scottish Government (FC)
- Marc Crothall, STA (MC)
- Danny Cusick, Scottish Enterprise (DC)
- Susan Deighan, Glasgow Life (SD)
- Gordon Dewar, Edinburgh Airport (GD)
- Stephen Duncan, Historic Environment Scotland (SD)
- Marina Huggett, Tourism Excellency Consultancy(MH)
- Anna Miller, Highlands & Islands Enterprise
- Russell Imrie, Queensferry Hotels (RI)
- Stephen Leckie, Crieff Hydro (SL) - Chair
- Judy Rae, Glasgow Science Centre (JR)
- Calum Ross, British Hospitality Association (CR)
- Malcolm Roughead, VisitScotland (MR)
- Bettina Sizeland, Scottish Government (BS)

In Attendance

- Caroline Warburton, STA (CW)
- Fiona Hyslop MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Tourism & External Affairs
- Caroline Bremner, Euromonitor International
- Jonathan Pryce, Scottish Government
- Malcolm Roughead, VisitScotland

Apologies

- David Allfrey, Royal Edin Military Tattoo (DA)
- Paul Easto, Wilderness Scotland (PE)
- Charlie Smith, VisitScotland (CS)
- James Stuart, Entrepreneurial Scotland (JS)

1. Welcome & Note of Previous Meeting

SL welcomed all to the meeting, especially the Cabinet Secretary, speakers and new members. He also thanked Stephen Duncan of HES for the meeting room and catering and noted the apologies.

The note of the previous meeting was approved. SL informed the group of a new format to the meetings which will comprise of a key theme for each meeting, expert speakers invited and where appropriate, other industry leaders invited to join the group for that meeting in order to feed into the discussion.

The following actions were carried forward.

Actions	Who?	Comments / Action
TLG requested access to more up-to-date business figures in order to track business confidence in disrupted times. SE/VS/(HIE) to provide full or summarised results to TLG from their business/brand tracking data.	DC / AO'C (CS) / (CT)	Info provided by SE / HIE – awaiting confirmation from SE that reports are publicly available. If so, CW will circulate to TLG. VS to provide
Tripadvisor (TA) figures (via VS) to be considered as visitor satisfaction measure for TS2020. VS to provide TA figures at next TLG meeting which can provide on-going high-level measures of satisfaction as well as the ability to strategically identify weaknesses and gaps and areas of excellence and opportunity.	VM (CS)	VS to provide.
SD to update TLG on Reputami pilot (when pilot is completed).	SD	Pilot almost completed. SD to provide update when available

2. TS2020 Update on Progress

An update was circulated prior to the meeting (Paper 2), together with additional papers on the CEO Quarterly Report and 2016 Visitor Spend Figures. There was discussion about the following points:

2.1. 2016 Visitor Spend & Analysis: the 2016 figures show a drop in GB visitor spend between 2015 and 2016, and a further drop between Jan-May 2016 and Jan-May 2017. The following observations were made by group members:

- We are yet to know whether drop is a downward trend or a one off drop. Important to recognise that 2015 figures are highest GB spend on record.
- Acknowledge decrease in domestic budgets and purchasing power. This is recognised by hoteliers in particular who are seeing a decline in guests' secondary spend.
- Decline does not tally with HES visitor numbers which are highest on record. Acknowledge that international and day visits are strong, however UK Travel Trade is also strongest ever. Noted that some central London attractions have seen a significant drop in visits (up to 30%) which has pushed visitors out to lesser known attractions, the ripple-effect has not reached Scotland.
- Concern on business travel spend (down 50%) which is being felt in cities which have seen a decline in the corporate market. Need to recognise that business events are cyclical which may have compounded the drop, however there is a feeling that Brexit may be delaying organisers' decisions to hold corporate events in Scotland.
- It is important to understand the methodology, however also need to acknowledge that results are mixed across the sector. Suggestion that the TLG acknowledge this, recognising that it's not good news for everyone in order to avoid complacency.

Decisions Asked of Group	Approved?	Comments / Actions	Who?
Agreement on how best to report the annual figures – adjust current figures to align with the original method, or adjust the previous figures to the new method?	-	CW suggested adjusting new figures to original method as only a couple of years of reporting required. TLG took the recommendation. TLG to be available for comment/prepared statement when 2016 spend figures published.	CW / VS

2.2. Economic Narrative: CW updated the meeting that the Scottish Government is keen to work with the group on the document. As a result the publication has been delayed. BS added that there was the opportunity to look beyond the facts and figures to maximise the document's impact and there is a meeting to discuss this in a few days' time. Members of the TLG stressed the importance of getting the document published quickly, ideally by the end of October.

Decisions Asked of Group	Approved?	Comments / Actions	Who?
Agreement that the economic narrative will be jointly published by TLG & Scottish Government	Y	Meeting of key partners to be held (a few days after TLG meeting) to agree next steps and responsibilities. TLG keen that the document is published quickly. CW to report back at next meeting.	CW

2.3 Tourism Data Plan: TLG members endorsed the importance of a more focused approach on developing opportunities to better exploit data for the tourism sector.

Decisions Asked of Group	Approved?	Comments / Actions	Who?
Agreement of need to develop a tourism data plan, and coordinated delivery approach.	Y		
Agreement of industry chair for the tourism data steering group.	Y	Suggestions of an industry chair (from tourism or technology sectors) invited.	ALL

3. VisitScotland's Strategic Vision – Good to Great to World Class

Malcolm Roughead, Chief Executive of VisitScotland presented their recent activities which have informed their own strategic planning, and which may be valuable in informing the next tourism strategy to 2030. There was discussion about what kind of destination do we want Scotland to be. Are we looking to focus on growth from international markets or domestic? Should all destinations within Scotland receive the same focus? Are different regions needing different responses? How do we value tourism in policy terms? Are there non-financial/economic measures which needs to be included in future strategic approach?

The presentation is provided with the note of the meeting.

4. Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Tourism & External Affairs, Fiona Hyslop MSP

SL thanked the Cabinet Secretary again for meeting the TLG and invited her to provide her thoughts on the tourism sector in Scotland.

Cabinet Secretary Fiona Hyslop MSP congratulated the Tourism Leadership Group for their collaborative approach to the national tourism strategy, commenting that the vision for the next strategy needs to come from the industry. In addition the Cabinet Secretary highlighted:

- Profile of tourism within the Scottish Government is high.
- High-Level Tourism Working Group (which the Cabinet Secretary chairs) has been working to identify the enablers and tackle constraints of the industry.
- Scottish Government's Programme for Government; highlighting sectoral and geographical differences, an international marketing campaign, commitment to increasing digital connectivity and South of Scotland and Ayrshire.
- Inclusion of South of Scotland priority in the Enterprise & Skills Review, which will include regional support for the tourism and creative industries.
- Support for festivals and increasing concert space, using film and TV as a showcase for Scotland and Paisley UK City of Culture 2021 Bid and Dundee EU City of Culture 2023 Bid.
- City Deals & how tourism is included.
- Significant challenge of Brexit and importance of details from UK Government around transition period and EU Withdrawal Bill.
- Importance of reassuring EU nationals living in Scotland that not only *can* they stay but they are *welcome* to stay.

5. Mega-Trends for Scottish Tourism, Beyond 2020

Caroline Bremner from Euromonitor International presented the emerging findings of Phase 2 of this project, funded by Scottish Enterprise. Phase 1 was presented at the previous meeting which considered consumer trends, phase 2 overlaid industry insights. The presentation is circulated with the note of the meeting.

SL invited comments on the presentation and the broader themes of the meeting. All agreed that the five mega-trends presented a good basis for discussions of key themes for the next tourism strategy to 2030, and that work should begin on planning the process for the next tourism strategy. Whether volume or value should be the focus was highlighted, together with the earlier discussion on other non-financial measures.

Decisions Asked of Group	Approved?	Comments / Actions	Who?
		The process plan for the next tourism strategy to be developed for next meeting.	CW, BS, VS, SE, HIE

6. AOB

CW proposed that the theme for the next meeting was 'influencing investment'. The following topics which could be covered were suggested by members of the group:

- Update from Scottish Government on approach to tourism investment: BS agreed to contribute.
- Private sector investment: bank or other financial institution
- Whether the infrastructure is ready for changing market, eg Chinese market

- Apprenticeship Levy and Scottish Apprenticeship Advisory Board

Date of Next Meeting

Thurs 30th November, Edinburgh, 9.30am – 12.30pm.

Theme: Influencing Investment