

Tourism Scotland 2020 Strategy Group Meeting

NOTE OF MEETING

Thursday 4th December 2014
Bruntsfield Hotel, Edinburgh

Present:

- David Allfrey, The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo (part)
- Gordon Dewar, Edinburgh Airport
- Stephen Duncan, Historic Scotland
- Paul Easto, Wilderness Scotland
- Marina Huggett, Tourism Excellence Consultancy
- Russell Imrie, Queensferry Hotels (RI)
- Stephen Leckie, Crieff Hydro Ltd (SL) – Chair
- Judy Rae, Glasgow Science Centre (JR)
- Calum Ross, British Hospitality Association
- James Stuart, EPP Ltd
- Chris Wayne-Wills, Macdonald Hotels
- Ian Whitaker, Cawdor Castle
- Stephen Balfour, SLAED
- Riddell Graham, VisitScotland (RG)
- Paul McCafferty, Scottish Enterprise (PM)
- Chris Taylor, Highlands & Islands Enterprise (CT)
- Emma Sinclair, Scottish Government

In attendance

- Marc Crothall, Scottish Tourism Alliance (MC)
- Caroline Warburton, Scottish Tourism Alliance (CW)
- Henk Berits, NTS (part)
- Virginia Grant, VMG Consulting

Apologies

- Rebecca Brooks, Abbey Tours (Scotland)
- James Withers, Scotland Food and Drink
- Ann Camus, Fife Council / SLAED
- Danny Cusick, Scottish Enterprise

1. Welcome

SL welcomed everyone, in particular Chris Wayne-Wills who has joined the Strategy Group, Stephen Balfour and Paul McCafferty representing others and Henks Berits and Virginia Grant as observers from STA Board.

2. Approval of Note of Previous Meeting

The note of the previous meeting was approved with the following actions carried forwards.

Decisions Asked of Group	Approved?	Comments / Actions	Who?
Approve note of previous meeting	Y	Further discussion required on Industry Barometer.	CW/CT/RG

3. Scottish Tourism Week 2015 & TS2020

MC outlined the Scottish Tourism Week (STW) 2015 industry conference – STA TV (Tourism Vision) – in Glasgow in March. The group was invited to provide suggestions for Day 2 (Thursday 5th March) which is a half day event and which will focus on TS2020. The programme for Day 1 (4th March) is almost complete. STA

also has influence over the Spotlight Stages for Day 2 of ScotHot (5th March) which is taking place at the same time at STA TV in the SECC.

There was general agreement to use the overarching themes of the strategy (Providing Authentic Experiences etc) and to focus how the strategy has made a difference (or could make a difference) to businesses. Suggestions included transport, customer journey mapping and using Thistle Award winners.

Decisions Asked of Group	Approved?	Comments / Actions	Who?
		Suggestions for key topics/speakers for Day 2 STA TV.	ALL

4. The Industry Leadership Group

CW outlined Paper 2 which proposes a short review of the Strategy Group's activities, to ensure its effectiveness and that the remit and delivery mechanisms are clear. GD offered insight from the earlier Board meeting on the structure of the Industry Leadership Group (comprised of Strategy Group, STA Board and STA Council).

Decisions Asked of Group	Approved?	Comments / Actions	Who?
Approve proposal.	Y		
Appoint Strategy Group sponsor.	Y		
Agree agenda item for next meeting.	Y		

5. TS2020 Update

5.1: Headline Figures

Paper 3 provided the updated KPIs. The following points were raised:

- Significant growth in international spend compared to poor growth for UK visitor spend;
- Emerging markets target has been reached 7 years early. Opportunity to amend this target at the mid-term review;
- Need for continued support (from group and wider industry) for VisitScotland to protect/increase their marketing budget.

Decisions Asked of Group	Approved?	Comments / Actions	Who?
During discussion, call for continued support to protect VS's marketing budget.	Y	Draft statement on value of VS. Use statement to send letters to local Council members, Each strategy group member to send letter to their local MSP and similar support from their local councillors or council leaders.	MC ALL

5.2: TS2020 Projects

CW outlined Paper 4 which showed progress on the key TS2020 projects. The paper is still to be circulated to the agencies where additional projects may be added. General comments were invited:

- **Quality:** need to maintain discussion of importance of quality experiences. RG informed the group that VS is looking to add an aggregated social media/UGC score to VS.com listings. RI asked that businesses listed on VS.com be ranked according to their QA & aggregated social media score to highlight the importance of providing a quality experience. This aggregator score could also be used as the TS2020 KPI for customer satisfaction at national and regional levels. This was agreed.

- **Digital:** poor digital infrastructure continues to be a significant issue for tourism businesses/groups and the Strategy Group agreed that pressure should continue to be applied. Further work is needed to understand how Strategy Group can best encourage faster development of digital infrastructure. It was also agreed that the current digital projects should be moved to 'Skills' section.
- **Transport:** this is another key area identified by businesses, however it was felt that further work is needed to understand what 'better transport for tourism' would be.

Decisions Asked of Group	Approved?	Comments / Actions	Who?
Comments on paper.	-	Paper 4 to be circulated to agencies for additional projects to added. Update to be provided on social media aggregator on VS.com (including use as TS2020 KPI for Visitor Satisfaction & listings ranked by score). Current Digital projects moved to 'Skills'.	CW RG CW
Support for Destination Leadership Programme.	N	Support in principle for initiatives which tackle TS2020 themes, however did not feel could support DLP at this stage. Further information required.	PM

5.3: Asset Group Monitoring Frameworks

Draft strategic frameworks for the Business Tourism and Nature & Activities asset themes (Papers 5 & 6) were circulated prior to meeting. The frameworks are still to be circulated to agencies and signed off by asset groups who will take responsibility for the documents. No additional comments were made. Draft strategic frameworks for Heritage Tourism and Events & Festivals to be available to Strategy Group by STW.

Decisions Asked of Group	Approved?	Comments / Actions	Who?
No decisions required.	-		

6. Business Tourism

JR updated the group on the Business Tourism activities. Copy of presentation circulated with note of meeting. All agreed that significant progress had been made by the Business Tourism for Scotland (BTfS) group (www.businesstourismforscotland.com). There was discussion around how the strategy group could support asset groups and industry communication (and demystifying TS2020) was the main issue.

Decisions Asked of Group	Approved?	Comments / Actions	Who?
No decisions required.		Support for TS2020 communications & business engagement to be investigated.	CW

7. Emerging Issues from Destinations

CW presented an overview of the key themes emerging from those destinations which have submitted TS2020 'rockets' (nine rockets received to date). The key inhibitors to delivering their strategies are:

- ICT Infrastructure (Digital Connectivity)
- Transport
- Seasonality
- Quality of Customer Journey
- Skills/Labour Availability

The key issues resonate with those discussed in Agenda Item 5.2.

Decisions Asked of Group	Approved?	Comments / Actions	Who?
No decisions asked			

8. AOB

Air Passenger Duty (APD): GD asked that the Strategy Group continue to push the UK Government to devolve APD as soon as possible.

Decisions Asked of Group	Approved?	Comments / Actions	Who?
Encourage Government to move quickly of APD.	-	STA to send letter to UK Government about rapid devolution of APD. Update: STA sent letter 8.12.14.	MC

Date of Next Meeting

20th January 2015, Stirling (venue to be agreed), 1pm – 4pm