

Minutes STA Board Meeting
Wednesday 2 June 2016
Microsoft Office – Waverley Gate - Edinburgh

Present:

Stephen Leckie (SL), Henk Berits (HB), Rebecca Brooks (RB), Alison McRae (AM), Gordon Dewar (GD), Martin Bennett (MB), Calum Ross (CR)

Apologies

James Withers (JW), Marina Huggett (MH), David Lonsdale (DL)

In attendance

Marc Crothall (MC), Caroline Warburton (CW) - minute taker

1. Welcome / Apologies

Apologies were noted.

February Board Minute approved and actions discharged with the following comments:

- **Themed Years:** recommendations on approach to future Themed Years is understood to be with Tourism Minister.
- **TS2020 Strategy Group:** Rebecca Brooks has stood down due to additional commitments.

2. CEO & TS2020 Report

- **The Pulse & The Talker:** continued development of both online publications.
- **STA Website:** redevelopment well underway. Due to have soft launch in August 16.
- **Membership Brochure:** new online document outlining membership benefits has been developed by STA team for inclusion on the NEW website.
- Analytics will enable measurement of success. CR asked whether possible to have old website and new website stats at a future meeting to show impact of investment.

Action: STA Coms Team to produce paper for future Board meeting detailing analytics for STA website/The Talker/The Pulse (to show before and after redevelopment of website).

- **Membership Retention:** it is becoming evident that an account-managed approach is required to ensure retention of members. Graham Maclennan has analysed the figures which will form part of the discussion at the STA Away Day on 22 June. MC recently presented to senior teams at Cameron House and Westerwood Hotel and was surprised at their low awareness of the scope and scale of STA's activities and influence.

Action: MC to circulate STA overview presentation to Board to help them recruit STA members.

- **TS2020 Destination 'Rockets':** agreement that clear alignment across the destinations was a sign of adoption of TS2020 at destination level (and STA influence). Discussion over whether clear action plans to deliver strategies were clearly aligned as well.

3. STA Financials

- Financial papers approved, with note of successfully having paid outstanding monies to HMRC

4. MSP Survey Advocacy Measurement

- 2015 survey findings circulated and all agreed that it provided very interesting information. Agreement that STA should buy in to 2016 survey with PA Advocacy.

Action: MC to confirm to PA Advocacy that STA wish to be included in 2016 survey.

5. UK Tourism Industry Council & Future Cross Party Group/ STA Council Meetings

- **UKTIC:** MC attended recent meeting in London and reported back that group is still developing its role and function. Although meetings are short which offers little time for discussion, it is good networking and, if can arrange other meetings, is felt to be worthwhile at the moment.

Action: MC to forward UKTIC minute when received.

- **Scottish Parliament Tourism Cross Party Group:** received confirmation that Bruce Crawford MSP will reconvene the CPG, which will look to be held on Weds evenings thereby increasing the duration from one hour to an hour and a half. It has been confirmed that Tourism will sit within the Scottish Parliament's European and External Relations Committee.
- **STA Council:** a review of the Council membership and appointments process is underway. Constitution may need to be updated at AGM to reflect changes.
- **Succession planning for STA Board** (to be discussed at Sept Board meeting) and ensure that TS2020 Strategy Group retains industry focus (currently 4 public sector representatives).

Action: MC to update Board on STA Council changes and include STA Board succession planning as agenda item for next meeting. Chart showing timeline of each member term to be produced.

6. CEO & other Bonus Awards & Salary Reviews

- At this point MC and CW left the meeting.

Action RB to speak to MC about Board decision.

BOARD DISCUSSION

As time was short, two out of the four topics were discussed.

7. New Cabinet Secretary and MSP Engagement: not discussed.

8. "What is STA View on Action Needed in Respect of ADP Reduction given Minority Government?" (proposed by GD)

- Agreement that important to maintain pressure on SNP Government to honour their manifesto commitment. Need to reduce the opposition from voting no to abstaining.

Action: GD to provide crib sheet for approach to different political parties. Once available, STA Board to be allocated MSPs to approach on the matter.

9. "What is STA Position on AirBnB and advocating for regulation?" (proposed by RB)

- Agreement that online channels have changed the way travel is being purchased. STA view is that online channels are good news for the tourism industry however only if compliant with legislation. Discussion raised the question about whether AirBnB is acting as an agent, such as Booking.com and where liability for bookings lies. The issue is regulation. Is the onus on the owner, not the booking channel?

Action: RB to draft STA position on AirBnB

10. Future STA Policy Development/Lobbying Work Plan for Year-18Months Ahead (proposed by DL):

not discussed. MC advised he had met with DL and started this discussion and both agreed best first priority would be to draft a budget paper as supporting doc to our policy agenda for issue in Sept.

11. AOB / Future Meeting Dates:

- **STA Board / Team Away Day 21st June** : agreement that further information about format of the day needs to be provided. Clarity around purpose of day was discussed and it was agreed that the purpose was three fold
- **1.** Team / Board getting to know each other better (SL proposed form of speed date during the pm)
- **2** Chat around topics below in small groups for thinking agreement to be fed back captured in team meet session on am 22nd (MC advised any board member wishing to join in on the morning 9-12 session on 22nd @Crieff very welcome to do so)
- **3.** For all to let hair down & have a bit of fun food etc. on and off the water
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- The proposed discussion topics are:
 - a. "STA future industry engagement programme & communications"
 - b. "AGM & October Conference – Agenda & Speakers
 - c. "Scottish Tourism Week" - Is there room for improvement, if so on what and how?
 - d. "Membership – Current Mix, Future Mix, Proposition & Value"

Action: MC/SL to discuss and provide further information

Future Meeting Dates:

2016 Board meetings & other STA event dates & times

- **June 21st Board & STA Team social and strategy event** – Lochearn / Crieff 14.00- o'night *
- **Sept 13th STA Council meet** – Edinburgh 14.00- 16.30
- **Sept.14th STA / Barclays - Inverness Event** 17.30-19.30
- **Sept 21st Board Meeting:** Microsoft Offices, Waverley Gate, Edinburgh- 10.00-12.30
- **Oct 5th AGM & Autumn Conference:** Glasgow Royal Concert Hall – 09.30-16.00
- **Nov 3rd/4 Board Trip to Ireland Meet dinner with ITIC:** Dublin(dep c8.30hrs 3rd, rtn. c14.30 4th)
- **Nov 22nd STA Council meet** – Edinburgh 14.00- 16.30
- **Nov 30th Board Meeting:** Howard Hotel Edinburgh 13.30-16.00
- **Nov 30th Patrons & Business Leaders Dinner:** RBS Gogaburn 18.30-22.30

2017 STA Board meeting event dates & times

- **Jan. 24th Board Meeting:** Glasgow venue TBC 10.30-13.00
- **March 15/16 STW2017 Signature Conference / Dinner: – Glasgow - Crowne Plaza**
- **March 22nd Parliamentary Reception** – Holyrood - 18.00-20.00
- **June 8th Board Meeting:** Edinburgh – venue TBC - 13.30 -16.00
- **Sept. 14th Board Meeting:** Glasgow – venue TBC 10.30-13.00
- **Oct. 5th AGM & Autumn Conference** – Location TBC
- **Nov. 29th Board Meeting:** Edinburgh – venue TBC 13.30-16.00
- **Nov. 29th Patrons & Business Leaders Dinner** – Edinburgh venue TBC – 18.30-22.30