

Minutes STA Board Meeting
17 June 2014
Bruntsfield Hotel, Edinburgh

Present:

Stephen Leckie (SL), Calum Ross (CR), Gordon Dewar (GD), James Withers (JW), Rebecca Brooks (RB), Martin Bennett (MB)

Apologies

Marina Huggett (MH)

In attendance

Marc Crothall (MC), Elaine Townsend (ET) – minute taker

1. Welcome / Apologies

All were welcomed to the meeting.

Apologies were noted.

Minutes from the last meeting were taken as a true reflection of the meeting.

Note: No date advised from Chris Taylor (CT) for the STA to meet with the HIE board. CT is presenting the HIE strategy at the next Strategy Meeting.

2. Matters Arising

Council Minutes:

- requirement for all Council members to be pro-active and participate more (some are already actively involved) in their involvement.
- State Aid: more clarification needed e.g. in definition of "Tourism Authorities"
- 5th August: tourism debate on Accessible tourism. **SL to attend**
- What can we get the Council to do for the STA?
- Important for 2-way communications: an electronic report template has been created.
- Important to understand what is happening in the destinations: what projects are they doing?

GTS Update:

MC gave an update of current activity.

3. Finance

Cash flow/Year End forecast

Cashflow is healthy. Year end forecast is looking to be in the region of £6/£6.5K.

HMRC repayments to be increased to £625/month from August, which will leave a deficit of approx £8K by July 2015. If cashflow allows additional payments can be made. **ACTION ET**

Budget 2014-2015

2 scenarios were presented to the board - with SE support / without SE support.

The predicted year end shows a tight surplus, MC was asked for views on what scenarios might be troublesome and what would be the desired level of cash reserve. - **ACTION MC**.

Balance sheet deficit - looking to zero balance by end 2016/17. Current deficit is c£21K. Clearing the balance sheet is a priority.

Caroline Warburton is contracted to December 2016 - associated costs are 100% funded by SE until then; STA to fund beyond.

Budget to include all TS2020 costs (shown separately at the bottom) - **ACTION MC**

Budget approved.

4. Personnel

SL & RB to meet with MC for a formal review and to discuss and agree 2014/15 performance targets and future salary review process. **ACTION SL/RB**

Chair Remuneration - proposal submitted approved by the board for the future chair. SL thanked the board. Given finances in the early part of this year he suggested that the Rem Comm consider an honorarium at the end of the year, dependent on circumstance.

Recruitment board directors - flexibility to recruit 3 directors (2 co-opt board and 1 council appointment).

Guests to be invited to some board meetings to discuss/give advice on specific topics:

- **ACTION GD** - to invite the MD of Skyscanner & A Communications contact.
- **ACTION MC** - to invite Robbie Parrish, Scottish Government

ACTION SL/MC to work up a succession plan process for directors.

Recruitment of Business Development & Membership Retention Executive - Jenny Whyte's CV presented to the board; both MH and MC have met with Jenny. Role agreed by the board.

5. Scottish Government & Agency Matters: Wind Farm developments

Windfarm development coming to the forefront again. Following the workshop held in September 2012, the STA called for research to be carried out - has this happened? Probably a challenge who is to fund the research. GD proposed that SE be approached formally by STA and be asked to provide report on what is the economic impact of wind farms -v- energy generation? Board agreed .Also discuss with Fergus Ewing.

ACTION MC.

General Policy Matters - STA to engage more frequently and formally with FE to highlight set of key issues and challenge if necessary on policy matters - BHA acknowledged as being effective in this area through WM.

6. STA Business Plan & Funding Proposal - Next Steps

The proposal written by Virginia Grant, following the last workshop was presented to the board. The board to read the following pages and feedback.

- pages 6 & 7 - What is our mission/vision?
- page 8 - Strand 4 statement.
- pages 18 & 19 - Core values.

ACTION BOARD to feedback to MC by 30th June

7. 2014 STA Events

AGM/Open Meeting, 8 October, The Golden Lion, Stirling

Confirmed speakers:

- Pedro Ortun, European Commission
- Fergus Ewing MSP

Dec Open Meeting 9th December, MalMaison, Dundee

MD of Skyscanner suggested as a possible speaker for 8th. **ACTION MC**

STW'15 Update

Plans are coming together - MC advised rates negotiated are very good.

8. AOCB

STA to produce a list of topics to discuss with Fergus Ewing for when they meet - CR to share the BHA list of 'call to actions'. **ACTION CR**

Leon Thompson, VS has been in touch with MC suggesting a 'cross-party tourism group' is formed. MC advised the STA Council is already in place, therefore not necessary to form another group. It was suggested inviting cross-party political groups to some of the Council meetings. **ACTION MC**

Future Board / Strategy Meeting Dates

9th September: Strategy meeting. 11.00-14.30

23 September: Board meeting - Howard Hotel, Edinburgh. 13.30-16.00

4th Dec: Board (10.00-13.00) & Strategy meeting (13.30 -16.30)- Todds Murray offices - followed by dinner with Patrons Venue TBC

It was decided the Board & Strategy meetings will take place on the same day beyond September 14.