

**Minutes STA Board Meeting**  
**23 September 2014**  
**The Howard Hotel, 34 Great King Street, Edinburgh, EH3 6QH**

Present:

Stephen Leckie (SL), Calum Ross (CR), Rebecca Brooks (RB), Marina Huggett (MH), Henk Berits (HB); David Lonsdale (DL), Alison McRae,

Apologies

Gordon Dewar (GD), James Withers (JW), Martin Bennett (MB)

In attendance

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

**Round Table Lunch Discussion with Fergus Ewing MSP**

***Actions Points - Main Priorities***

- Chief Planners
- Digital - 7 Cities Agenda - SCDI engage /Nicola Sturgeon MSP
- Fergus Ewing MSP to attend a future STA Council meeting
- Lobbying - business rates, Tourism VAT, Devolved APD
- Working with FSB, ASVA etc
- VisitScotland International marketing funding- Need to make sure JS allocates sufficient
- Debates - Asset Groups - What next?
- Quality & Investment -
- Pro-activity around theme planning- how can we better engage industry ?
- STA board member - seek out digital representative
- Clans - seek to engage with STA
- Stakeholder mapping exercise - where are the gaps?
- 8 October - vote on specific actions at the meeting
- Mobile phone connectivity - minister to speak with providers
- Business rates - work carried out by Willie Macleod on behalf of the BHA - CR to advise

**1. Welcome / Apologies**

Apologies were noted and new board members welcomed.

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

**Matters Arising**

Should tax on Film Shooting in Scotland be devolved? As there is a big discount currently in place.

The Accessible Tourism Debate in Parliament this coming Thursday; should a STA representative attend? None of the board members are available; MC subsequently attended.

Important not to lose the State Aid issue. MC met with Emma Sinclair, Scottish Government; Emma agreed to scan the horizons to ensure other bodies are conforming, if not Emma will flag. MC will continue to monitor.

The last Council meeting was a good meeting. Communications by Council members need to be improved. STA HQ to make this better/ easier for onward cascade

A joint (STA VS HIE SE B GATEWAY SDS )response made to the FSB CEO ( Andy Wilcox) in response to report and recommendations with invite to meet RG co-ordinating . FSB now engaged at Council table. A joint article also placed in the latest FSB magazine, with aim to provide clarity on roles of each organisation .

Following the referendum, the Cabinet reshuffle is likely to be in November; an invite will be sent out to the new tourism minister ASAP following the announcement. **Action MC**

An invitation to be sent to Mike Cantlay, VS Chair and Malcolm Roughead, VS Chief Exec to attend a round table board lunch. **Action MC**

There are 50 invites to go out for the Patron dinner on 3 December 7pm- 11pm, which will include Patron representatives, senior business leaders, invited Politicians . **All Board invited to attend**

The Business Tourism conference will be held on 2 December in the Assembly Rooms, Edinburgh with evening reception in Edinburgh Castle. Scottish Government has contributed £20k for BTfS group to stage 7 business tourism engagement events, ideally to link with STA **SL & MC invited to attend 0212/**

A date has been agreed for the STA to present to HIE senior team SL, MC and CW to attend. Board agreed that STA Board should engage with HIE board direct . Agreed initial approach to be made to Alex Paterson and open up a dialogue. **Action SL/ (MH to also make call as she knows AP)**

MC gave an update on the AGM & Conference; numbers currently stand at 150.

## 2. Finance

### ***Year End Draft account & Directors Report***

The YE accounts were approved by the board.

### ***Cash flow/P&L to end August***

Papers were circulated ahead of the meeting - taken as read.

### ***New Membership / Patron Update***

The following new members have joined since July, generating £4K of income.

MoraySpeyside Tourism  
Lochaber Chamber of Commerce  
Crowne Plaza Edinburgh - The Roxburghe  
Grand Central Hotel  
The George Hotel  
Clyde Coast Tourism Ltd  
Talk Holiday  
Eilean Donan Castle  
Quaich Marketing  
Strathspey Railway Company Ltd  
The Whisky Ambassador  
Forth Valley College  
Eyes on Scotland  
Tricker PR  
Fife Cottages  
Inveraray Castle

Loganair has pledged to continue their Patron contra membership for a further year. Meeting with Ruaridh Macdonald in October to discuss Macdonald Hotels patron membership renewal. **291014 Action SL/MC**

Pitch made to GI Group by MC hopeful that they will soon become a Patron member. **Action MC**

HB asked to be sent a list of Patron members and information on the membership benefits they receive - to be sent to all board members. **Action MC/ET**

Jenny Whyte joined the team on 2 September as Membership Executive.

### **3. Scottish Government & Agency Matters**

#### ***i. VisitScotland Strategy Update***

A VisitScotland workshop will be held in November with a focus on the International market. VisitScotland board - what is the mechanism for getting a STA report on the board agenda? Whose responsibility is it within VS to have information fed back and presented to the board? Strategic Partnership - engagement at different levels to ensure correct facts are relayed. It was decided to invite Malcolm Roughead, VS CE to present to the STA board at a future meeting. And also invite Charlie Smith, the new VS Marketing Director to the next Council meeting.

**Action MC**

#### ***ii. HIE Board Presentation***

Discussed earlier in the meeting - see above.

### **4. STA Business Plan & Funding Proposal - next steps**

There is recognition by SE/VS/Scot Gov that the organisation has been turned around and there is definite clarity around STA Ltd and the Leadership Group. They are now looking at what elements can be fed through the account management process and what through ILG- communications is a priority. There is commitment from all partners to fund, but it's how it is to be split up. All have to feed back to Paul McCafferty by 23 September.

The time lines on some of the actions are to be revisited. **Action MC**

### **5. STA Communications Update**

#### ***i. Draft STA response post referendum for approval***

Approved - good feedback received.

#### ***ii. STW15 & Thistles Update***

STW15 - the following were suggested as potential speakers / topics:

Retail - Sir Charlie Mayfield (John Lewis Partnership Chair) takes over as Chair of BRC next week -

**Action MC to invite**

Digital/Technology, Accessible Tourism, Adventure Tourism, Trip Advisor, Deloitte, Economist, MD Telefonica UK, MD Vodafone UK. **Action board to feedback suggestions for speakers.**

MSPs - David Mundell is keen to engage with the STA. Ruth Davidson and Nicola Sturgeon also suggested.

***Thistles Update*** - The regional judging now completed. Categories to be announced in the next few days . The 3 regional dinner in Glasgow 7th Nov, Edinburgh 5th Nov and Perth 11th Nov are all to be hosted by Stephen Jardine. The main dinner to be held on 5 March 2015.

**6. AOCB**

***Buell Proposal*** - Roddy Watt is keen to use the STA as a vehicle. MC to go back and negotiate.

**Action MC**

**Future Board / Strategy Meeting Dates**

***3rd Dec: Dinner with STA Patrons & Business Leaders - The Bonham Hotel, Edinburgh, 7pm***

***4th Dec: Board meeting (08.30-11.00) & Strategy meeting (11.30 -15.00) - venue TBC***

***20th Jan Board meeting (09.30-12.00) & Strategy meeting (13.00 -16.00) - venue TBC***

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