

**Minutes STA Board Meeting
15 September 2015
*Scottish Enterprise, Stirling***

Present:

Stephen Leckie (SL), Henk Berits (HB), David Lonsdale (DL), Alison McRae (AM), Gordon Dewar (GD), James Withers (JW), Marina Huggett (MH)

Apologies

Calum Ross (CR), Martin Bennett (MB), Rebecca Brooks (RB)

In attendance

Marc Crothall (MC), Mhairi Clarke (MC) – minute taker

Notes of last meeting – action

- Agreement by all to make provision for increase in number of STA Board to 12 should it be felt needed at a future date. **Action taken**
Marc confirmed that a motion is going to be put forward at the AGM to seek approval to that the board can be up to a max 12 thus affording opportunity to increase the current number on the board by 2 should at any time it be felt this would be good to do (one place will allow to be co-opted by the Chair – the other by nomination)
- STA Board to Board meet / dinner with VisitScotland was believed to be worthwhile – agreement by both parties it should be an annual event – Likewise to do similar Scotland Food & Drink Board – **Action: MC to agree dates with Lynne Raeside (VS) & James W. (Scot Food & Drink).**

STA Core Team Structure update

- Update on existing and new members to the team. MC advised of the Sustainability role funded by ZWS. Updated on the Marine Tourism role. Informed all of Tara Copic & Graham M now in post - Update on the role of Taste Communications – project by project basis and Stephen Jardine will host STA events. (see update organization chart)
- Grayling – Marc outlined the way we work with Grayling. He advised we get the headlines of activity in Parliament on a weekly basis from Ross Laird and if Ross felt it appropriate (i.e. if comment was made in the house on matters that related to Tourism) he would forward the information on a daily basis. This has provided us with the opportunity to have a proactive approach to reacting and passing on information. Marc happy to provide the Board with the weekly update (one pager). **Action: MCL taken action to contact Ross at Grayling to arrange for Board to be on distribution list**

AGM & YEAR END FINANCIALS

- Year- end accounts still to be shared with membership and the Director's report for inclusion with accounts being drafted by Marc for sign off by Stephen at end of week. Stephen makes point that

we should highlight outcome of work done with Virginia's in report, and in agreement that we provide copies of the Strategic Review booklet

- All Board in agreement with the financials, it was however discussed and agreed that answers to a suite of possible questions that could be asked by stakeholders should be prepared in advance of the AGM Marc confirmed that our auditors French Duncan who have now become STA Patrons will be in attendance at the AGM. **Action: James and Stephen will go through the financials prior to the AGM to prepare answer questions**
- Marc provided update on the October Conference numbers and running programme /speakers – advised on target to get 250 (numbers currently 180).

THE LIVING WAGE

- It was agreed that the STA has a key role to play on the issue of the Living Wage whilst needing to stay neutral on its position the organization should not cease from continuing to highlight to all the significant implications it will have on many of its stakeholders. Marc advised that this is captured as part of our Manifesto document by way of needing the future govt. to work with industry to find ways of removing the burden of regulation to compensate for such increases to cost. It also was agreed that the headline Removing Burden of Regulation should be tweaked to be more definitive. He advised to that he had re-emphasised the Importance to Council member reps to make their own members better aware – Still inviting feedback from more to enable amplification to others. **Action Marc to reflect change in final draft**
- It was discussed whether STA should be commenting when in dialogue with MSP's ,MP's and others within the industry along the lines of that “changes in last budget will bring about profound changes in all industries that have a high reliance on frontline team members. The ambition of government to incentivise those able to work to get out to work by squeezing benefits on the one hand and the introducing the living wage on the other will take a number of years to settle in. It will without doubt cause difficulty for many in service sector. Although individual businesses will understandably be concerned about cost implication in the short term, they adjust but many will be at risk of folding so have an urgent need for support. This change however presents an opportunity for the hospitality industry to use the commercial imperatives this will dictate to help us break away from some of the longstanding perceptions surrounding working in our industry and at the same time accelerate the quality of the service we deliver to customers using hospitality and tourism services across Scotland.
- HB asked AMc what Glasgow Chamber stance is on the Living Wage is? AMc advised they have to be fairly neutral. Marc asks if the paper which Glasgow Chamber of Commerce produced on the Living Wage can be shared. AMc advised Happy to share as now public. (see attached)
- MC advised in our October Conference Q Time session one will be posed to the panel re what the impact of the Living Wage will be on future training and team profiles.
- All agree we should have some soundbites in our statement that we do recognise that in certain parts of the industry this will be an issue and it will be tough; **Action MCI & MC to draft by end of month**

Scottish Tourism Week 2016 update

- Marc summarised the plan for STW, the theme (Connecting 2020) and the activity around the launch of the roadshow and the events which will become part of the overall Scottish Tourism Week Programme.
- A rundown of the Signature Programme 17-18. The Signature Conference on 18th speaker / session line up continues sessions being considered (with some to also be linked to SCDI conf.) – Political (Policy / Tourism) – Finance /Investment (Banks) – Digital (VS.COM/ GOOGLE/TRIP) – International (focus on China)- Travel Trends (Shift) – Leadership/ Innovation
- Our objective over the week is to engage more businesses directly with national and local tourism bodies /messages, encouraging business to link in with destination conferences
- Marc will go out to Board for availability to be at one or more events- aim being STA presence at each Roadshow event throughout the week.
- No Parliamentary reception. Will have a reception in the EICC on Thurs.17th which will double up with The Dinner with a Difference
- Q asked by SL Is there potential for anyone to say ‘you ignored us’ – MC response advised there is access to events across all parts
- Board agree that the event is very well distributed

Mid-term review

- Update – meeting held last Thursday, papers distributed to the group to review
- No questions from Board about what’s been distributed to date
- James – should we be looking for a wider level of business engagement in the mid-term review? Marc advised that much of this has been captured through the FSB report and feedback to date from Council group and DMO’s
- Alison agrees with Stephen’s point that it may be a good idea to engage Bob Downie with the mid-term review – Action Marc to advise Sub group and recommend he be included as part of the consultation being conducted by the independent to be appointed consultant. He also advised that Bob has removed himself from the process so not a 100% sure as to how in touch he is with what has been going on.

CPG

- We had seven MSPs attend. We had seven. The Minister will be attending the next CPG
- Will be an opportunity to talk about competitiveness
- David Lonsdale suggests that we ask for a CPG to be dedicated to the Manifesto

Communications Strategy presentation

Update on where we are with our comms strategy- Well received by the Board. Suggestion that a one pager is distributed to the Board which explains how we measure success **Action: Mhairi Clark to provide**

Charity support

Refugee Council appeal – all felt good idea with watch out we need to be clear that this is a one off to avoid lots of ‘knocks on door’ from charities in the future. Marc informed our primary charities are the industry HIT & SPRINGBOARD and we will also continue to signpost the STV Appeal for remainder of year: **Action: Mhairi/ Gillian to make clear on STA website**

STA submission paper to influence Political Party Manifesto's

The five headlines – feedback from the Board

- 2. Removing the burden of regulation to businesses - we will never remove the burden of regulation to businesses. Should be worded differently.
- Marina – how do we weave the quality word into the document? Marc suggests that it used point 4. Headline
- Point 4 needs to be shortened and more concise
- Henk – The headline at front of doc should be state “what we want to achieve” and behind that the want / need from the Govt. to help deliver.
- Suggestion from James that in the intro, we should be writing about what the industry will do (i.e. our pledge) and then our asks. David agrees we talk about our contribution in the introduction.
- David asks for clarification on the timeline. Marc outlines – we will present to parties end of October. Political parties want their info before Christmas.
- Stephen suggested we remove ‘transport’ from this headline – Board discusses and agrees that transport should remain as the points are about this headline.
- James suggested that where we talk about investment in skills etc., we need to quantify the amount of investment we’re looking for if possible.
- David recommended that we produce a secondary paper which deals with issues which are not devolved and send to Chancellor. All Agreed

Marc advised next steps will be to make amends to reflect feedback from working sub group, STA Board and Council – and issue a further draft for sign off next week prior to print.

Action: Marc / Mhairi/ David L

Patrons and Business Leader's Dinner

(CEO's & Chairs of organisations) re scheduled for 3/12 – Marc advised hopeful that RBS will host in Gogarburn and contribute to cost. Awaiting for RBS to confirm this week. **Action: Board asked to consider list of proposed invitees and recommend any others that may be good to approach.** (Note numbers will need to be restricted to c60-70 max

Suggestions on possible after dinner speaker were welcome. Marc advised he has been talking to Mark Beaumont, about his possible involvement in Scottish Tourism Week, (cycling from location to location) and could be one. **Action: Board asked to make additional suggestions to Marc**

Date & Time of next meeting: Thursday Dec. 3rd 15.30-17.30 Edinburgh

Note the TS2020 Strategy Group meeting will take place before the Board meet 11.30-15.00hrs and the Patrons & Business Leaders Dinner will follow on after.