

Events & Festivals Meeting

Date: 5th June 2015

Venue: Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo, 32 Market Street, Edinburgh

Attendance

- Anna Mackenzie, AECC
- Graeme Cumming, AECC
- Sam Barker, Belladrum Tartan Heart
- Judy Rae, Business Tourism for Scotland
- Marshall Dallas, EICC
- Hamish Miller, EventBase
- Stuart Turner, EventScotland
- Stephen Maclean, EventScotland
- Susan Russell, Festivals Edinburgh
- Stuart Smith, Gleneagles Hotel
- Elaine Miller, Marketing Edinburgh
- David Allfrey, Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo (Chair)
- Nicola Thomson, Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo
- Caroline Warburton, Scottish Tourism Alliance
- Chris Lawson, Scottish Events & Festivals Association
- Jane Ali-Knight, Scottish Events & Festivals Association
- Brendan Miles, The List
- Marc Crothall, Scottish Tourism Alliance
- Roger Goodyear, Scottish Traditional Boat Festival

- Steve Harris, Visit Aberdeen

Apologies

- Michael Grieve, Sub Club
- Ricky Scoular, Sub Club
- Joe Gibb, Belladrum
- John Donnelly / Lesley Williams, Marketing Edinburgh
- Donald Shaw, Celtic Connections
- Colin Rodger, DF Events
- Dominic McKay, Scottish Rugby Union
- Pete Irvine, Unique Events
- David Trotter, Sodexo
- Ian Grieve, Scottish Highland Games Association
- Jaki McDougall, Glasgow Film
- John Langford, SECC
- Robert Hicks, Beyond
- Susan Deighan, Glasgow Life
- Tom Clements, National Outdoor Events Association

1. Welcome & Introductions

DA welcomed everyone to the meeting. The meeting had been called to discuss the opportunities created from two national strategies – Tourism Scotland 2020 and Scotland the Perfect Stage. Through DA's role as 'events & festivals' industry champion on the Tourism Leadership Group (steering group for Tourism Scotland 2020), he has been working with EventScotland on the refresh of their strategy. It therefore seemed appropriate to align the two strategies and bring together leaders in the sector to discuss activities.

2. Scotland – The Perfect Stage

Stuart Turner of EventScotland provided background to the development of the 'refreshed' Scotland - the Perfect Stage strategy and the opportunity for the industry to be involved. The strategy aligns with Tourism Scotland 2020 strategy and the Scottish Government's [Cultural](#), [Economic](#) and [International](#) strategies. The document is shaped around three core themes:

- Developing Events
- Developing the Industry
- Developing Scotland

Within these themes, there is the opportunity for industry to come together to identify (and address) opportunities and challenges and to begin to influence the wider policy agenda.

A copy of the final draft strategy was given to everyone at the meeting, and comments were invited by **Friday 12th June**. It was emphasised that as there had already been extensive consultation, only minor changes would be able to be made.

AP1: ALL to forward comments on Scotland – The Perfect Stage to Stuart Turner by 12th June.

3. Designing & Developing an Operational Framework

The strategy will provide a framework for growing and developing events and festivals across Scotland. However if real growth is to be achieved then there will need to be an operational framework as well. The industry will need to agree the key issues and how they should be addressed and by whom. DA proposed to start the exercise and was given a mandate from the group to proceed.

AP2: DA to prepare draft operational framework.

4. An Evolving Organisation for VisitScotland

Stuart Turner informed the group of new EventScotland structure which reflects the strategy. There are three sections: EventScotland, Industry Development and Business Events.

5. A 'Voice' for the Events & Festivals Sector & Role of Associations

The sector is very disparate and no single association currently represents the entire sector. It was considered unrealistic that one clear voice could be established quickly, therefore it was proposed that this group could be 'a' voice, rather than 'the' voice, and work closely with and draw on the experience of other associations.

6. A Possible Role for an 'Events & Festivals Group'

Mindful of the number of groups and meetings already in existence, DA was reluctant to create another formal group, however he invited those present to be involved in continued dialogue around activity, with a possible meeting once or twice a year. If individuals do not wish to be involved, then they could notify David or Caroline Warburton (STA) at any time.

AP3: Anyone wishing to opt out of being involved with the Events & Festivals group to let David or Caroline know.

7. Principle Challenges for the Sector

Three key challenges for the industry had been put forward with the agenda and other key issues were invited. The following list of topics was put forwards:

- Planning
- Police Charges
- Licencing
- People (in particular skills & training)
- Digitisation
- Accommodation
- Transport
- Measurement

DA invited the group to put forward other significant issues which are not included above. The issue of competition between cities, venues etc was raised, and acknowledgement that different parts of the country need to be allowed to compete and create their own unique identifies. There was support for the principle that the strategy should provide space for competition whilst providing a framework to identify common themes. Other points which were raised included quality ("are we the best we can be?") and technology ("is the industry making the most of it?").

AP4: ALL to forward significant industry issues to David or Caroline Warburton.

8. Any Other Business

Eventbase: Hamish Miller informed everyone of the launch of a new events magazine called Eventbase and an industry showcase to be held in Edinburgh as part of Scottish Tourism Week (March 2016).

Date of Next Meeting: September / October