



Scottish Tourism Alliance (STA) Policy Working Group – Terms of Reference (Last reviewed 16 January 2024)

Purpose

The STA Policy Working Group will help to shape and drive forward the overarching policy agenda for the STA.

The group will work with STA's Policy Lead to develop an updated policy agenda/manifesto to be reviewed and endorsed by the STA Council, Destination Forum and Board.

It will act as a forum for discussing emerging policy matters, policy priorities and developing a coordinated policy approach, which amplifies the voice of the sector.

The policy objectives will focus on supporting the creation of the right conditions of success to deliver on the National Tourism Strategy, Scotland Outlook 2030, alongside aligning with other key strategies like the National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET) and other policy priorities.

The role of the STA Policy Working Group

The STA Policy Working Group will work in partnership with STA's Policy Lead to shape and drive forward the overarching policy agenda for the STA.

It will support the STA's proactive policy approach, which will include its policy activity in the lead up to the UK and Scottish government elections, and be reactive to specific policy issues as they arise.

The STA Policy Working Group will work alongside STA's Policy Lead to develop the policy narrative to communicate to both governments how more investment and support for the tourism and hospitality sector can help them deliver on their own policy agendas.

Chair of the STA Policy Working Group

The STA Policy Working Group will be chaired by STA's CEO, with a Vice Chair selected from the Board membership on the group.

In their role, they will work with the STA Policy Lead to bring forward recommendations and updates on policy-related activity to the Board at their scheduled meetings and also submit copy for the annual STA report.

Membership

The STA Policy Working Group will comprise of up to 15 named members, which represent a range of cross-sector interests in the tourism and hospitality sector.

Membership of STA's Policy Working Group will be formed from within the STA Council and Destination Forum membership, alongside Board members with a specialism in policy.

The STA CEO may elect who is invited to join the STA Policy Working Group.

In addition, STA's CEO and the STA Policy Working Group may elect to invite other representatives to join the group for a fixed or limited period, if it is felt their input would add value concerning a specific policy area.

The STA Policy Working Group may also set up sub-groups to respond to specific policy issues and priorities. These sub-groups would report to the STA CEO, Policy Lead and Policy Working Group

The membership of STA's Policy Working Group will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that the group is continuing to work effectively to inform STA's policy agenda and best represent the interests of the sector.

Commitment by Members of the STA Policy Working Group

- Attend at least 75% of STA Policy Working Group meetings each year. Failure to attend meetings may result in the member being replaced.
- Aim to attend in-person, although a virtual option will be made available, when possible.
- Provide direct feedback to STA's Policy Lead to help inform the STA's policy response or representation.
- Gather feedback answers from their membership on specific questions to help inform the STA's policy response or representation.
- Highlight and emphasise to their members the agreed STA Policy agenda and the benefits this will bring to their organisation. Other national tourism strategy related documents should also be highlighted.
- Attend engagements with politicians and civil servants, STA's Parliamentary Reception, and Cross-Party Group meetings.

STA Commitment to STA Policy Working Group Members

- Consult with the STA Policy Working Group on STA's proactive policy agenda/manifesto.

- Provide updates to group members on actions taken by the STA to address the policy agenda and deliver the work plan as and when appropriate.
- Identify opportunities for the STA Policy Working Group to engage with the Scottish and UK governments on policy.
- Continue to consult with the wider STA Council, Board and Destination Forum concerning their input on major policy areas and communicate the work of the STA Policy Working Group at the quarterly meetings of these groups.

Code of Conduct

- STA Working group members will make every effort to come to a unanimous agreement, however, it will be accepted, agreed and understood by all group members that this may not always be the case.
- When a unanimous agreement cannot be reached on a specific policy position, or other matters that should arise out with the agreed policy agenda, then any representation by the STA back to government or other parties in response to such matters will state the views of the STA Policy Working Group membership verbatim as recorded.
- Matters that fall out with the previously agreed STA Policy Working Group agenda and work plan will only be discussed at the meetings if there is sufficient time available and a majority agreement to do so.
- In the spirit of partnership and collaboration, all members will seek to offer support to all other members of the STA Working Group and STA Executive and at no time look to publicly criticise another member organisation.
- Constructive debate is welcomed. However, STA Policy Working Group members will not attempt to disrupt meeting agendas or flow of discussion with comments or otherwise about matters that not all may agree with.

Meeting Frequency

- The STA Policy Working Group will meet formally at least three times a year and meets will last no longer than 2 hours max.
- Members of the Policy Working Group may need to attend the meeting longer if it coincides with an opportunity to engage with Scottish and UK government politicians and civil servants on policy.
- Meetings will usually be held in-person, although where possible a virtual option will be provided.
- Where possible, the meeting will be held on the same day as other opportunities to engage with politicians or civil servants.
- Dates for the meetings will be sent out electronically in advance and members will be expected to accept or decline on receipt of the invite. The STA will aim to give as much notice as possible.
- The STA Policy Lead will issue the STA Policy Working Group agenda at least one week in advance of the meeting to allow for consultation and preparation as required.