

VISIT WALES

Mid Wales Regional Forum

16th June 2017 10:30am

Welsh Government Office, Aberystwyth

Present:

Name		Representing
Steve Hughson (Chair)	SH	Royal Welsh Agricultural Society
Gareth Price	GP	Twristiaeth Ceredigion Tourism
Ann Eleri Jones	AEJ	Ceredigion CC / Ceredigion Destination Management Partnership
Andy Rowland	AR	Eco Dyfi / Dyfi Biosphere
Rowland Rees Evans	RRE	Penrhos Golf Club
Rhiain Williams	RhW	National Library of Wales
Hazel Thomas	HT	National Library of Wales
Bev Dimmock	BD	RSPB
Roz Owen	RO	Natural Resources Wales
Wendy Abel	WA	Mid North Powys Tourism Network
Rhodri Llwyd Morgan	RhLIM	Aberystwyth University
Val Hawkins	VH	Mid Wales Tourism
Julie Lewis	JL	Powys County council
Gwenno Griffiths	GG	National Trust
Rob Holt	RH	Deputy Director Tourism Development & Major Events
Gerwyn Evans	GE	Head of Tourism Development, VW
Helen Jones	HJ/REM	Regional Engagement Manager, VW
Gwawr Price	GP/REM	Regional Engagement Manager, VW
Beth Wicks	BW	Content Editor, VW

Apologies

Richard Tyler	RT	Brecon Beacons National Park Authority
Roz Owen	RO	Natural Resources Wales
Eirlys Lloyd	ELI	RDP Ceredigion CC
Arwyn Watkins	AW	Cambrian Training
Ed Parsons (Vice Chair)	EP	Elan Valley Visitor Centre/Welsh Water
Elizabeth Jeffreys	EJ	Brecon Beacons Sustainable Tourism Destination Partnership

Minutes:

<p>Welcome</p> <p>Opening comments – Steve Hughson</p> <p>Following his selection in the last meeting, SH formally accepted the role of Chair and thanked Forum members for the opportunity to be part of such an important regional organisation. He then thanked GP for his valuable services as the previous Chair and hoped that he would continue to support the Forum. He asked members to introduce themselves, explain their contribution and what they hoped to get out of their attendance and membership of the Forum</p> <p>SH thanked Visit Wales for organising the Tourism Summit held on 18th May at The Metropole, Llandrindod Wells. It was a well attended, informative and positive event. GE agreed that the event was very successful and noted that VW would examine the feedback, and report the findings at the next Forum.</p> <p>ACTION – Report on Tourism Summit to be given at the next Forum meeting.</p> <p>Minutes / actions from last meeting The Minutes from the last meeting were approved by GP and seconded by RhLIM.</p> <p>Amendment – SH asked for a copy of the written report by Jane Lewis regarding skills to be looked into and feedback to be presented at an appropriate Forum meeting.</p> <p>ACTION – Jane Lewis to be invited to present at next Forum meeting.</p> <p>ACTION - The Wales Way Pro forma to be recirculated to members.</p>	<p></p> <p>GE</p> <p>REMs</p> <p>REMs</p>
<p>Matters arising from the Regional Updates</p> <p>No issues arising</p>	<p></p>
<p>TAB update</p> <p>Note of the Tourism Advisory Board Meeting</p> <p>16 May 2017</p>	<p></p>

Historic Wales

The Board received a paper on Historic Wales. The steering group had recommended that Cadw become an outside agency yet, as visitor numbers and commercial income are now both performing extremely well. The Cabinet Secretary has asked for further work (including a full business case to be prepared by the end of September) to be undertaken before a decision is made on whether he accepts the recommendation. A formal merger with the National Museum had been rejected. The Board discussed the Cadw model of delivery and whether Visit Wales could move to a similar model or consider adopting some operational elements of the Cadw model.

Wylfa Newydd

There was some frustration that meetings had been rearranged or cancelled at short notice and concerns that legacy projects were being curtailed by Horizon as a cost cutting measure. The Board expressed concern that this could impact on jobs and be compounded by Brexit employment issues and made clear the need for Tourism to feed into PAC3 when it is published. Officials confirmed that tourism would be feeding in strongly via the Welsh Government response to PAC3. On a wider issue, the Board was concerned that Tourism was not being discussed on the North Wales Economic Ambition Board or on other boards (e.g. City Regions) – this was a concern given the Welsh Government’s move to a regional approach for development and support. Officials would take this up with appropriate officials/bodies to reflect the views and concerns of the industry.

Cruise Wales

The Board was given a presentation on the latest developments in Cruise Wales. The Board discussed the announcement that Liverpool would be investing £350m on a new cruise terminal. As vessels are getting larger there is a need for improved port facilities at Holyhead. The project to achieve this has now commenced with expected opening date 2020.

Social Tourism

The Board heard a summary of the round table meeting on social tourism held in Swansea during April. The Board was very supportive of the policy and felt that if this was to be taken forward a small pilot project (similar to Scotland) would be the best way forward. It was agreed, given other priorities that there needed to be a discussion about how to facilitate the development of a social tourism policy with other Welsh Government departments – and see what they may already be doing in this area.

Regional Funding

The Board were given an overview of the regional funding budget - £2.5m over the next 2 financial years to drive innovation and quality. The

Chair asked about audit reassurance – grant recipients had to show that the money had been spent before any claim was paid. There had been a number of audits carried out on the revenue scheme in previous years and had received a very good “reasonable assurance” rating. There would be a further tranche of funding in the autumn. The Chair asked to see the projects earlier in the application process next time.

Fora Updates

The Board was informed that new Chairs had been appointed to the regional tourism fora: Stephen Leeke in the South East; Stephen Hughson in Mid; Nic Beggs in the South West. Phil Scott would remain as Chair for the North Wales forum.

Other matters discussed at the meeting:

- The Board was given an update on developments on business events. They discussed the role of the private sector in terms of sustaining business events beyond year two of Welsh Government funding. There was also some discussion on the Convention Centre development relating to potential markets, size and scale of events to go for, and the current role of Cardiff Council.
- The Board discussed the issue of displacement and how levels of potential displacement were made in TISS investment decisions. Officials confirmed that jobs, value for money and displacement were all part of the due diligence process carried out by officials and a key part of the investment review process.
- Following the paper tabled at the March meeting, the Board asked about marketing funding for the Irish market. Budgets for this financial year had been agreed and included Ireland. The budget for 2018/19 was not agreed and delivery would depend on that with a focus on digital if budgets reduced as previously agreed by the Board. The Board asked the marketing team to carry out an assessment of work within the Irish market in the light of the 2018/19 budget and consider if it could be more targeted.
- The Chair told the Board that she had written to VisitBritain about the contract for collection of the GBTS data. The Board were reassured that the figures which had been published had been reviewed and were robust but there were ongoing concerns about spend figures and the contractor’s performance which officials would continue to monitor.

RH asked the members what key topics would the Mid Wales Forum like

<p>to see discussed at TAB.</p> <p>RRE suggested that Digital and transport Infrastructure and their impact on running a business in Mid Wales and asked if a presentation on “Broadband” could be included at a future Forum meeting</p> <p>VH agreed and felt that for Mid Wales, East-West transport infrastructure routes were crucial and suggested that an appropriate contact, such as Gareth Hall (lead on the National Development Plan) could be invited to a future Forum meeting</p> <p>Action – Digital Infrastructure to be topic at the next Forum meeting</p> <p>Action – Invite a representative to present on their National Development Framework</p> <p>GP asked if the LAs fully appreciate the economic impact of tourism on our region. What is Mid Wales’ USP?</p> <p>RRE commented that Ceredigion Council supported tourism and had retained the county’s TICs.</p> <p>RH suggested that VW meet with the local authority Regeneration and tourism officers.</p> <p>SH asked members to think about the region and how potential could be maximised. He asked all members to come up with three words that best described Mid Wales. These could be used to define a clear identity for the region and would be considered at the next meeting.</p> <p>ACTION - All Forum members to consider 3 key words/themes for discussion at next meeting</p>	<p>REMs</p> <p>REMs</p> <p>ALL</p>
<p>Marketing Update – Beth Wicks</p> <p>BW gave a presentation on VW’s Marketing activities.</p>	
<p>UK Industry Strategy-Tourism Sector</p> <p>Scene setting: The Industry is being challenged to work together to identify 4-5 big asks for the UK Government to fund over the next 5 year period e.g. how to face risk pro-actively in regards to Brexit.</p> <p>The 4 main areas for consideration by the industry via the Forum are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Industry of Choice (for young people) – how do we make the sector the employer of the future and more resilient to the los of foreign labour post Brexit. 2) Connectivity – from big infrastructure projects to simplifying Visa applications. 	

<p>3) Industry of the future – how will industry adapt to challenges such as digital, seasonality.</p> <p>4) Regulation – what’s in what’s out, what role do you want to government to play?</p> <p>ACTION – REMs to send out questions to the Forum members in order for the Chair to give a collective Mid Wales view at the next TAB meeting.</p>	<p>REMs</p>
<p>Funding - Gerwyn Evans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Tourism Engagement Fund (RTEF) • Tourism Product Innovation Fund (TPIF) • Tourism Investment Support Scheme (TISS) • Micro Small Business Fund (MSBF) • Tourism Amenity Investment Support scheme (TAIS) <p>ACTION - Send link to funding pages to the Forum.</p>	<p>REMs</p>
<p>RTEF Project Example</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative Press and PR – Mid Wales Tourism <p>VH gave a presentation on the regional 2016-17 RTEF funded Collaborative Press and PR project (included as an additional attachment). Mid Wales themed videos had been produced as part of the project and were shown to members. All six videos can be viewed on Visit Mid Wales You Tube channel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid Wales legends - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BOKOnqwNwwI • Views to Wake up to - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-YSHYAWBCcM • Family Holidays - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=txv86z2UJyI • Explorer - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xkAZQkOueyw • Adventure Holidays - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gPe3pF_GkuE • Health & Well-being - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wTruw-lxGyw <p>ACTION – members to circulate link to videos to their contacts.</p>	<p>ALL</p>
<p>8 AOB/Closing remarks</p> <p>Growing Mid Wales (GMW) – It was agreed that a Forum representative should sit on the GMW Partnership, to ensure that tourism features as a priority.</p> <p>ACTION – Ask GMW to present at an appropriate future Forum meeting.</p>	<p>REMs</p>

<p>ACTION - All Forum members to submit the REMs with updates prior to the next meeting (max 200 -300 words).</p> <p>N.B. Date of next meeting: Next Forum meeting to be held on September 21st, Foyles, Glasbury-on-Wye.</p>	<p>ALL</p>
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