

**VISIT WALES**  
**North Wales Regional Tourism Forum**  
**21<sup>st</sup> June 2017 – 9:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.**  
**Dylan's Restaurant, Llandudno**

**Present**

<b>Name</b>		<b>Organisation</b>
1. Phil Scott	PS	Chair/Rib Ride /DAP
2. Neil Rowlands	NR	TAB
3. Catherine Williams	CW	Snowdonia Active
4. Jim Jones	JJ	North Wales Tourism
5. Richard Jones	RJ	Flintshire CC
6. Nicola Williams	NW	Denbighshire CC
7. Ashley Rogers	AR	NW Business Council
8. Dafydd Roberts	DR	Museums Wales
9. Catrin Elis	CE	CADW
10. Joe Bickerton	JB	Wrexham CBC
11. William Green	WG	National Trust
12. Deborah Wood	DW	National Trust
13. John Merrick	JM	Conwy CBC
14. Roland Evans	RE	Cyngor Gwynedd
15. John Lloyd	JL	Gwynedd DMP
16. Mike Thomas	MT	IOA CC
17. Rob Holt	RH	Visit Wales
18. Gerwyn Evans	GE	Visit Wales
19. Andrew Forfar	AF	Visit Wales
20. Chelsea Crowther	CC	Visit Wales
21. Clare Dwight	CD	Visit Wales
22. Beth Wickes	BW	Visit Wales
23.		

**Apologies**

Adrian Barsby	AB	Flintshire DMP
Sian Jones	SJ	Cyngor Gwynedd/PEG
Peter McGivern	PMcG	Destination Wrexham
Jane Richardson	JR	Conwy CBC
Anwen Jones	AJ	Gwynedd DMP
Chris Owen	CO	Conwy DMP
Naomi Jones	NJ	SNP

**Notes**

	<p><b>1. Welcome</b>            PS welcomed all to the meeting and invited David Evans – Director of Dylan's to give a short welcome to the group.</p> <p><b>2. Minutes from last meeting</b>            The previous minutes were agreed.</p>	
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### **3. Matters arising**

No matters arising.

### **4. Election of Vice Chair**

It was suggested that this be discussed at the September forum meeting – there were no objections to this.

### **5. TAB Update**

There have been 2 TAB meetings held since the February 2017 forum. The March meeting focussed on business events and the ICC in Newport. There is to be a dedicated team to be put together to focus on promoting business events and conferences in Wales.

There is also a Policy Assurance review taking place in relation to inspections. NR stated that Visit England now work with the AA in relation to their quality inspections.

There were a number of presentations in the May meeting from CADW – Historic Wales, Cruise Wales and also a Social Tourism Presentation. Discussions are taking place regarding a pilot scheme in certain regions focussing on Social Tourism.

There is no news on the TAB restructure.

### **6. Regional Update**

GE confirmed that the TPIF/RTEF funding for this year has been awarded and that there are some excellent projects for the North Wales region. GE stated that North Wales work well collaboratively as region and other regions need to improve on this aspect when submitting bids.

There is to be a new window of TPIF/RTEF funding in Sept/Oct 2017 and the projects are encouraged to focus on the Year of the Sea, the Year of Discovery and Routes of Wales.

The new TAIS funding scheme window has also now closed and a large number of applications were received for this. The sift is now underway.

GE encouraged the group to spread the message to the industry that there is funding available and that they should take advantage of this.

	<p>CW raised the issue that some activity tourism businesses have approached her regarding the minimum £25,000 cap on funding and that it was not feasible for them. CW asked if there would be negotiations on the amount of funding available.</p> <p>GE confirmed that discussions are underway on how these businesses can be supported and how advice can be given even if no funding is awarded.</p> <p>ACTION: add all funded projects to website when agreed</p> <p><b>7. Regional Priorities</b></p> <p>AF has compiled a table of regional priorities and this was provided to the group for discussion.</p> <p>One of the main themes raised was the shortage of skills in the tourism sector and how this could be improved.</p> <p>NR informed group that the Anglesey Enterprise Fund are working on a pilot scheme 'Act on Excellence', which will follow the STEM model and work on promoting skills in the area.</p> <p>GE informed the group that there is a cross party tourism meeting being held in the coming weeks and skills is a main agenda item.</p> <p>It was AGREED to focus on skills at the next Regional Tourism Forum. Whilst FE and HE were working to increase uptake of tourism sector jobs many felt that the message needs to be taken to secondary school age children.</p> <p>AF informed group of a regional headmaster's group and that it may be beneficial for the chair of that group to attend the next forum meeting in September.</p> <p>GE informed the group that the Partnership for Growth strategy is due to come to an end in 2020 and consideration needs to be given as to how well the DMPs are working, if they can be improved and if they are to continue. GE believes that they are working well in the North Wales Region.</p> <p>The group discussed target markets and how the decision is made regarding which markets to focus on. RH confirmed that target markets are constantly under review but that the decision is tailored based on industry feedback and if a decision is made regarding a new target market then we must be committed to</p>	
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this.

**Action:** The group agreed that it would be beneficial to have someone from the skills or regional learning departments to attend the next forum meeting in September.

### **8. NW Growth Plan**

AR provided a presentation to the group regarding the North Wales Growth Deal. This is still at quite an early stage and AR will keep the group informed of how this is progressing and provide an update at the next forum meeting in September.

### **9. Wylfa**

RV provided presentation to the group regarding the Wylfa project. The public consultation is now closed however they are eager for interaction to continue and would welcome any contact.

The presentation focussed on the provision of accommodation for workers at the site with RV stating that they were waiting to see how the tourism industry and accommodation providers responded to the need for accommodation for workers. He confirmed that Horizon do have the capacity to build extra accommodation on site if needed.

### **10. Business Tourism update on VW activity**

CD provided presentation on business tourism. There is a brand new approach to business tourism with Visit Wales working on attracting large events, conferences and meetings to Wales and showcase it's event venues. There is to be a small, dedicated team within VW which is to focus on business events.

CD encouraged the group to look out for any venues in area that would be suitable for this or that already cater well for events as they will need case studies to show best practice.

### **11. Marketing Update Visit Wales**

BW gave marketing update on VW activity around Year of Legends and how this is going but also on the planned focus for Year of the Sea in 2018.

The Routes of Wales campaign is to be launched later in the year at World Travel Market and BW provided a brief update as to what the Routes of Campaign was about and the aims of the

campaign.

BW confirmed that industry guidance for the YoS will be available in the coming weeks and encouraged the group to contact her if they had any questions.

## **12. UK Industry Strategy**

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.

The 4 main areas for consideration by the industry via the Forum are:

- Industry of Choice (for young people) – how do we make the sector the employer of the future and more resilient to the loss of foreign labour post Brexit.
- Connectivity – from big infrastructure projects to simplifying Visa applications.
- Industry of the future – how will industry adapt to challenges such as digital, seasonality.
- Regulation – what's in what's out, what role do you want to government to play?

The group are to consider these points and feedback at the next meeting in September.

## **13. AOB**

The group raised some questions about the Wales brand and how this could be used. Due to a lack of time in the forum BW stated that she would be happy to answer any of these questions either after the meeting or if any of the group wanted to contact her via email.

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