

Visit Wales

South West Wales Regional Forum

Minutes from Thursday, 25th January 2018 held at Llety Cynin, St Clears

Present

Lucy Good (LG)	Bluestone Resorts Ltd
Nia Ball (NBa)	Carmarthenshire Tourism Association
George Reid (GR)	Carmarthenshire Tourism Association
Jacqui Davies (JDa)	Clydey Cottages
Tim Brace (TB)	FBM Holidays and Pembrokeshire Tourism Association
Zoe Wright(ZW)	Head of Marketing, Folly Farm
Kevin Davies (KD)	Gwesty'r Emlyn Hotel
Nic Beggs (NB)	Group Sales Manager, Bay Leisure Ltd, LC
Alex Moss (AM)	National Trust
Hannah Worrall (HW)	Sales and Marketing Manager, Oakwood Theme Park
James Parkin (JP)	Director of Delivery and Discovery, PCNPA
Jane Lewis (JL)	Regional Learning Partnership
Paula Ellis (PE)	Group General Manager, Retreats Group
Mark Bulson (MB)	Director, Scamperholidays Ltd
Neil Kedward (NK)	The Grove and Seren Collection
Matthew Evans (ME)	Tourism Marketing Group
Andrew Campbell (AC)	
Adam Smith (AS)	Village Hotel Club
Paul Renfro (PR)	WATO / POCG
Gina Gavigan (GG)	WTSWW
Huw Parsons (HP)	Marketing and Tourism Manager - CCC
Steven Hopkins (SH)	Tourism & Marketing Manager - CCS
Alan Turner (AT)	Tourism Marketing & Development Manager- PCC
Gerwyn Evans (GE)	Head of Programme Development, VW
Philip Abraham (PA)	Regional Engagement Manager, VW
Claire Chappell	Head of Brand Performance, Visit Wales
Helen Butler	Event Communications Manager, VW
Sue Thomas (ST)	Head of Cruise Wales, VW
Peter Francombe (PF)	Tourism Industry Support Manager, VW
Jane Donald (JD)	Regional Engagement Team, VW

Apologies

Neil Jenkins	Milford Haven Port Authority
Nigel Morgan	Swansea University
Stephen Crocker	Tourism Swansea Bay
Deina Hockenhuil	Carmarthenshire County Council
Karleigh Davies	Neath Port Talbot CBC
Martin White	Pembrokeshire County Council

1 Chair Introduction

NB welcomed attendees to venue and meeting and clarified agenda items namely that Claire Chappell, Head of Brand Performance at Visit Wales was attending to present item 3 and that Stephen Crocker had offered apologies and asked that his item at no. 5 be re-scheduled to the Agenda for the May / June meeting.

2 VW Regional update and WG Economic Action Plan

GE explained the position regarding the Tourism Advisory Board (TAB) and the review of Advisory Boards across all sectors in Welsh Government (WG) with the Cabinet Secretary planning to

<p>introduce a Super Board (not with that title) from where he will take advice.</p> <p>Jason Thomas, the new Director Culture, Sport and Tourism is looking to establish an internal management board made up of Visit Wales (VW) and other WG department officers. He, and the new Minister for Culture, Tourism and Sport Lord Dafydd Elis Thomas AM, aim to secure a meeting with the four Regional Chairs to ensure Forum views are taken into account.</p> <p>ACTION: consider inviting Minister to future meeting (would need to be co-ordinated with other Fora)</p> <p>The new Economic Action Plan, launched 12th December 2017, suggests changes to the sectors currently defined within WG - Tourism has been defined as a foundational economy. Further details can be found at: http://gov.wales/topics/businessandconomy/welsh-economy/economic-action-plan/?lang=en</p> <p>The new Regional framework consists of 3 regions North, South West and Mid and South East. However, it has been agreed that Visit Wales can (for the time being) operate using the currently established footprint ie the 4.</p> <p>He mentioned the letter forwarded re the proposed Tourism Tax which had been echoed by both the Wales Tourism Alliance (WTA) and the British Hospitality Association (BHA) and stated that the 4 new Tax schemes are being presented at Cabinet next week. There followed discussion on time-scales for introduction and impact on region.</p> <p>ACTION: forward taxation decision – as soon as available</p> <p>GE mentioned the National Development Plan - which will be the planning document for the whole of Wales and encouraged Forum feedback on the consultation when it is released, probably April.</p> <p>ACTION: forward National Development Plan consultation - when available</p> <p>GE reiterated that Visit Britain (VB) continue to lead for the tourism sector on UK discussion re the Industrial Strategy and asked that, if timing allows (with current timescales being unknown), the Forum feedback.</p> <p>Discussion followed re grading schemes and engagement from VW with other governing bodies with WASCO and s/c agency bodies having debated changes recently – views to be passed back to VW.</p> <p>ACTION: suggest grading as topic for future Forum meeting</p> <p>GE stated that the new major investment projects at Pendine had been approved, and its was hoped that the projects at Lllys y Fran and Saundersfoot Harbour would be approved shortly. Capital investment continues to be supported and further revenue schemes for 2018-19 are at full application stage with successful parties invited to submit applications by March.</p>	<p>VW</p> <p>VW / GE</p> <p>VW / GE</p> <p>NB / VW</p>
<p>3 VW Marketing update</p> <p>Claire Chappell, Head of Brand Performance, briefly explained her role as lead on tourism marketing and the themed year approach creating a strong proposition and opportunity for re-layering up to and beyond 2020. She stated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> that the themes are already starting to influence with a marked reputation being gained for Adventure the Year of Sea industry guide is available (digitally, on the Tourism Zone) the advert (shown over the Christmas break) has been withdrawn due to the sea plane tragedy but TV slots have been re-booked for Spring there is a major showcase event planned for Waterloo Station 26.2 to 11.3 celebrating our epic seascapes and the Qatar Airways campaign leading with Tenby <p>There was some discussion on the themed years and the time scales and their changing annually,</p>	

<p>suggestions included that they should take place over a few years to allow for recognition to build before 'moving on'. CC did allow that, for 2020 there may be some overlap or repeat ie Year of Adventure and Sea or an umbrella theme focussing on the best of each of the previous themed years. She stated that Mari Stevens, Deputy Director Marketing is keen to engage at regional level and would like the opportunity to discuss at the next Forum meeting.</p> <p>ACTION: invite Mari Stevens to next Forum meeting</p> <p>CC briefed the group on progress on the new Digital Gateway and the regional content approach with the Gateway encompassing the current VisitWales.com, Wales.com and the TradeandInvest.Wales sites with stakeholder engagement to take place as the project moves forward. She suggested that we consider what we can do to contribute to and enhance the SW Wales content.</p> <p>A discussion took place around the recent event held in Pembrokeshire to outline opportunities afforded by the new Qatar airlines routes from Cardiff Airport. Although the event was not specific to Tourism the Forum members felt more information was required and it was agreed to invite a representative from Cardiff Airport to the next Forum. CC confirmed a representative from the SWW Forum would be invited to the official launch of the route.</p> <p>ACTION: invite a representative from Cardiff airport to the next Forum to discuss opportunities related to the new Qatar airlines routes</p>	<p>VW</p> <p>VW</p>
<p>4 Volvo Ocean Race</p> <p>Helen Butler (HB), Event Communications Manager, gave a presentation on the Volvo Ocean Race and its global following, its impact and the opportunities it offers outside of its Cardiff base.</p> <p>This event, held once every 3yrs, is the focal point for the Year of Sea 2018. This is the only time the UK has hosted the event in over 10yrs and a first for Wales which is the final destination for the Trans Atlantic leg (leaves Newport, Rhode Island). The race-goers will travel 46,000 nautical miles in total across four oceans touching six continents and only 12 landmark host cities.</p> <p>Race competitors could arrive on 27th May / 28th May but will definitely leave at 16:00hrs on Sunday, 10th June. The 'Race Village' will be open from the 27th May and VW hopes to secure a presence there with up to 200,000 visitors expected to visit during the race stopover. The race is putting sustainability on the world agenda focussing on plastics pollution in the oceans, with the event site being single plastic use free. One of the boats 'Turn the Tide on Plastic' carries a welsh sailor Bleddyn Mon.</p> <p>The race has compelling on-line content both at www.volvooceanrace.com and www.volvooceanrace/Cardiff.com with opportunities for digital engagement with race followers keen to be involved and actively sharing via social media. She restated the global following this event has and the exposure created including the legacy for Wales as a sailing destination.</p> <p>HB went on to thank those involved in the successful horizon scanning event that the Major Events Unit (MEU) had hosted in Parc y Scarlets.</p>	
<p>5 Workforce & Skills update and discussion</p> <p>Jane Lewis (JL) of the Regional Learning and Skills Partnership (RLSP) began by explaining that they are working with a range of employers across seven Industry Cluster Groups to establish what the key skills issues are in the region and to gather Labour Market Intelligence (LMI) on the data to inform the next Employment and Skills Plan that is being written by the RLSP on behalf of Welsh Government. This data is being collected via face to face interviews; Cluster Group Forums and through an Online questionnaire. All tourism forum members were encouraged to complete the survey and to circulate the information to the wider membership to ensure that the voice of the Industry was represented within the 2018 Employment and Skills Plan.</p>	

<p>Lucy Good (LG), chairperson of the Tourism, Leisure and Retail Cluster group gave a detailed presentation referring to the priorities set out for the sector within the 2017 Employment and Skills Plan and in particular key areas where it was difficult to recruit into the posts. She detailed some of the key issues including young people not being work ready; having a poor perception of the sector; the lack of training opportunities for the sector in local colleges and the recommendation to establish an industry training facility in West Wales to support the Industry. Lucy also outlined the work that had been undertaken with local schools to raise the profile of the opportunities within the sector and to give opportunities for work experience within Bluestone and other tourism businesses in the region. Lucy encouraged the forum members to get involved with the process to ensure that funds were made available for the development of the right skills for the Industry in the South West Wales region.</p> <p>ACTION: to forward link to survey (open now until June) to share link to Education Business Exchange and Big Hospitality Conversation presentation available on request</p>	<p>JL / LG / VW</p>
<p>6 TA Regional updates</p> <p>Andrew Campbell: Pembrokeshire Tourism (PT) The Association continues to run a successful events programme. Their Awards nominations close next Monday with the award event on Saturday, 21st April, this follows on from the new Dog Friendly Awards of last year. Cruise activity is positive and increasing and there is an EOI in (first stage) for revenue funding and two further bids for Interreg funds with which PT are involved. ST expanded on the Cruise activity: Fishguard having had 32 calls with 9,000 passengers and Milford Haven x9 with 5,000 passengers (plus crew).</p> <p>GE queried the progression on activity for DPP following previous meetings with the new cabinet member for Tourism in the Local Authority, although no report has been provided to the Cabinet Member, JP stated that the DPP is coming together and the feel is positive for renewed activity going forward.</p> <p>Nia Ball: Carmarthenshire Tourism Association (CTA) Also running training and networking events with upwards of 200 attending the Tourism Summit. Working on the final phase (ending July) of the training and skills project - jointly with the other two Associations - with over 500 persons having undertaken training to date. They are engaged in fruitful sector meetings each facilitated by a different Director. The next seminar is taking place 1st February where they will showcase activity for 2018 including YoS, the Wales Way, Hwyl Events and the Celtic Routes project. Membership has plateaued but they are now actively focussing resource on attracting new members.</p> <p>Steven Hopkins: Destination Swansea Bay (DMP) Cathy Lewis of Tourism Swansea Bay has stepped down from her post - he thanked her for her work in the Association. There are currently 300 members. The DMP continues to function with a draft memorandum of understanding – outlining roles and responsibilities for both the Association and the Council – being drawn up. There is a Conference in May (15th – 16th) being planned jointly by the University, the TA and CCS. The Tourism Awards were extremely successful held in November with 28 categories and over 500 attendees. The County are currently engaged in positive discussion to bring the Skyline to Swansea with significant investment – this would be a key attraction for the city and the region. CCS are also looking to begin build on the proposed arena starting September.</p>	
<p>7 Previous Minutes and Actions</p> <p>Set aside due to time over-run</p>	
<p>8 AOB</p>	

There was short discussion on the timing of the Forum meetings going forward, suggestion that the meetings are aligned to key decisions or engagement – that may not be practical as timescales are often unknown or short. Next meeting agreed as beginning May (as opposed to June).

NB referred to the detail forwarded last week relating to the Adventure Smart project. PR added that the projects focus is about safety in the outdoors, giving responsible and safe information, having confidence in the message working throughout the customer journey helping create a better customer experience. The presentation has already been shared and PR is keen to encourage trade engagement – he offered to present if the opportunity arises.

Please note: item (not presented due to over-run) included for your attention and dissemination to your stakeholders and key contacts. **Local Toilets Strategies – Consultation Document on Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities.** You can access the consultation document and supporting papers at the following link: <https://consultations.gov.wales/consultations/local-toilets-strategies-statutory-guidance-local-authorities> The consultation period on the draft statutory guidance will end on 4 April 2018.

Note: Wales Tourism Week begins 14th May. Blue Flag Day is 17th May.

Date of next meeting: morning of Thursday, 3rd May 2018 (venue and timings tbc)