

VISIT WALES

South East Wales Regional Tourism Forum

25th September 2019

Llechwen Hall Hotel

Present:

Name		Representing
Philippa George	PG	Heritage Tourism & Events Ltd (Chair)
Alyson Tippings	AT	Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
Ieuan Sherwood	IS	Bridgend County Borough Council
Vicky Jones	VJ	Bridgend County Borough Council
Stephen Leeke	SL	Vale Resort
Lyndsey Handley	LH	Merthyr County Borough Council
Nicola Edwards	NE	Monmouthshire County Council
Paul Williams	PW	Celtic Manor/ ICC Wales
Mary Rogers	MR	The Royal Mint Experience
Paul Brandwood	PB	The Royal Mint Experience
Kevin Burt	KB	Dwr Cymru Welsh Water
Joanne Davies	JD	Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council
Paul Rees	PR	Coleg y Cymoedd
Sarah Higgs	SH	Parkway Hotel
Nicole Landsdown	NL	Llechwen Hall Hotel
Dermot Keegan	DK	Holiday Inn Newport
Kate Rees	KR	National Trust
Kevin Hire	KH	Chepstow Racecourse
Alice Wymer	AW	RSPB
Julian Hitchcock	JH	Town and Country Collective
Phil Chappell	PC	Vale of Glamorgan Council
Karen Matthews	KM	Cardiff Hoteliers
Hugh Murray	HM	Porthcawl Surf School
Charles Fountain	CH	Nantgarw Chinaworks
Jo Nugent	JN	Angel Hotel, Abergavenny
Nikki Gronow	NG	Gwynt y Ddraig Cider
Visit Wales		
Kate Clark	KC	Deputy Director, Culture, Sport & Tourism
Gerwyn Evans	GE	Head of Tourism Development, VW
Peter Francombe	PF	Tourism Industry Support Manager, VW
Rob Holt	RH	Deputy Director, Tourism Development, VW
Louisa Giles	LG	Regional Engagement Manager, VW
Alan Samuel	AS	Regional Engagement Assistant, VW

Apologies:

Anthony Bolter	Caerphilly County Borough Council
Gaynor Thomas	Visit Cardiff / Meet Cardiff
Lynne Richards	Newport City Council
Cerys Davey	ICC Wales
Nia Elias	Wales Millennium Centre
Stephen Davies	Penderyn Distillery
Louise Jones-Williams	Llantarnum Arts Centre
Paul Donovan	Wales Activity Tourism Organisation

<p><u>Welcome & Introductions</u> The Chair (PG) welcomed everyone to the meeting, particularly new members and invited all to introduce themselves by way of round-the-table introductions.</p> <p>Minutes & Actions: Minutes were agreed and actions discussed with no actions carried forward.</p>	
<p><u>Visit Wales Tourism Development Update – Gerwyn Evans</u> GE reported positive news since the previous Forum; having secured further capital funds, with Micro Small Business Fund (MSBF) reopening for applications. GE highlighted Llechwen Hall Hotel as a regional success story with their recent £409k capital investment from the scheme.</p> <p>The Welsh Tourism Investment Fund in collaboration with the Development Bank of Wales (20% grant and 80% commercial loan) is also open for applications. The £50m fund launched in March and the first two deals are currently underway.</p> <p>Members are invited to get in touch with the team with any investment and event ideas. For more information on investment schemes visit: https://businesswales.gov.wales/tourism/finance</p>	
<p><u>Partnership for Growth Review – Draft Action Plan</u> GE introduced the draft Action Plan and invited members to challenge ideas and provide constructive feedback. GE shared the development journey of the Action Plan, from the consultation to draft.</p> <p>Action – send members Wavehill Consultation Report and Summary of Findings documents.</p> <p>KC explained the ‘page on a plan’ is a summary of a 30-page document, led by consultation and due to be presented to the Deputy Minister on October 22nd. GE provided further details of the draft Action Plan’s key features:</p> <p><u>Measuring the plan’s success:</u> The Action Plans targets will see a move from solely volume of visitors targets, towards the value added in</p>	VW

people's lives with clear linkages to the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act.

Zero hours contracts: GE highlighted Welsh Government's commitment lies with promoting the living wages and casual worker contracts; not zero hour contracts. Projects financially supported by WG funding are expected not to use zero hour contracts and projects would be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Action: Members were encouraged to write into VW to understand the industry issues relating to zero hours contacts.

ALL

Accessibility: Accessibility considerations are becoming the norm for visitors. Likewise the move to drive value over volume is a key objective, spend per head in Wales is lower than other home nations.

Market intelligence: Efforts to improve market statistics including using [video](#) to deliver results. RH highlighted the importance of meaningful and current marketing intelligence and invited members to let VW know what information is most useful to them, and how best to deliver it.

GE remarked about the success of the 'Years Of' campaigns and announced these would now change to biannually. GE also commented on the need to strengthen the campaign's links with food and accommodation.

Investments and the basics: GE shared a VW ambition; to develop Government owned visitor accommodation similar to the Spanish Paradores model. GE championed the TAIS fund in helping improve the basics and announced aims to secure a fund to continue improving amenities (e.g. toilets and signage). VW are also currently investigating the practicalities of a proposed move from grants system to a procurement model for revenue funding currently provided through the RTEF/TPIF funds.

Product led approach: Plans include the development of a product led strategy with several different strands. PG asked if water sports will be added to product list with HM suggesting 'Adventure Sports' would be a more suitable product title to encompass wider markets (as it was felt cycling alone didn't attract a large spend per head). In promoting these products, RH spoke about the importance of key partners in delivering success e.g. Mountain Bike Wales and Cruise Wales.

Regional approach: KC explained through consultation, which demonstrated the importance of the regional approach, especially the Fora. However, KC continue to explain a single industry voice would be more powerful when approaching governments. GE proposed that the Fora schedule would include one open Forum per year.

<p>Major Events: RH announced the name change of ‘Major Events’ to ‘Events Wales’ which would incorporate the current Major Events and Business events teams. The team were successful in attracting Nitro World Games to Cardiff next year through a competitive process.</p> <p>Destination Management: The Action Plan highlights a commitment to Destination Management. VW acknowledges the budgetary pressures; however, the importance of Destination Management needs to be paramount to ensure capital investment opportunities exist.</p>	
<p>Cardiff Capital Region City Deal Update PG announced Kellie Beirne, Cardiff City Deal presentation had been postponed to a future meeting.</p> <p>Action – IS / other members involved in City Deal to circulate relevant information for all members</p>	<p>ALL</p>
<p>Any other business PW reported on the opening of the International Convention Centre Wales (ICCW). The venue has already held three, varied events over a very busy week with 1800 people arriving to stay in the area.</p> <p>PG invited views on Brexit. RH found 90% of businesses have told WG they have not done any preparations. A weekly conversation with operators sees trade down, and with mixed reviews about staycations improving. RH reminded members of the Resilience Fund available to support businesses.</p> <p>PF updated members about the South East Regional Tourism Awards, which will now be managed by Visit Wales with the support of Mid Wales Tourism. Dates for the diary – nominations open 1st November, which then close 1st December. Judging commences week commencing 13th January with the top 2/3 scored applicants selected as winners. There will be no awards dinner but possibly an awards lunch for the winners and media opportunities. GE expressed disappointment of VW having to arrange the awards. PG also expressed some disappointment however, was hopeful about improving this for future awards opportunities.</p> <p>Action – South East Judging Panel members to meet the week commencing 13th January.</p> <p>All members were encouraged to sign up to Industry newsletter for regular updates: https://businesswales.gov.wales/tourism/tourism-newsletterbulletin</p>	<p>VW</p> <p>ALL</p>
<p>Chair / Closing Remarks PG thanked for all for their presentations and for Llechwen Hall Hotel for their hospitality.</p>	
<p>Date of next meeting: 13th February 2020, St Fagans National History Museum</p>	