

**TOURISM FRAMEWORK FOR CHANGE  
CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE IMPLEMENTATION GROUP**

**MEETING 2 – FRIDAY 18 MAY AT 10AM, HARBOUR ARTS CENTRE, IRVINE**

**Present:**

Fiona Colley, Glasgow Science Centre (Chair)  
Marie Blackwood, Harbour Arts Centre  
Marlyn Howitt, Springboard Scotland  
Stevie Williamson, Scottish Enterprise  
Sandi Hellowell, VisitScotland  
Liz Buchanan, Tourist Board Training  
Rob Cullen, VisitScotland  
David Duncan, People 1<sup>st</sup>  
Kirsten Foubister, Scottish Executive

**Apologies:**

Audrey Maclellan, Highlands and Islands Enterprise  
Gillian Stirton, Pride and Passion  
Jane Grimley, Dewar's World of Whisky  
Jeanette Montgomery, Mar Hall Hotel  
Mark Gallagher, City Inn  
Tish Houston, Pride and Passion, Dingwall  
Penny George, Scottish Executive  
Andrew Macartney, Scottish Executive  
Ronnie Bamberry, Pride & Passion, Linlithgow  
Mike Callaghan, COSLA

**Update on TFFC Matters**

1. Fiona reminded those present that the role of the implementation group was to ensure that the customer experience-related actions and targets in the TFFC were being met, and to take action if they were not. Most of the work in relation to these actions and targets would be taken forward outwith the group, but the group had an important role in co-ordinating this work, and ensuring that it was communicated effectively to the industry. Fiona and the other industry chairs would be meeting shortly to discuss the communications strategy.
2. The Group was also updated on the new political situation. Jim Mather MSP had now been announced as the new Tourism Minister (with responsibility for Enterprise, Energy and Tourism).
3. Fiona explained that the purpose of this meeting was to look more closely at the work being taken forward in relation to recruitment, retention, skills and training in the tourism industry. By way of background, Fiona explained that there are already a large number of courses available, but that the demand is lacking, as many people simply do not consider

tourism as a career choice. Scottish Enterprise were currently looking at the skills Glasgow was likely to need in the coming years, particularly in relation to the Commonwealth Games in 2014.

### **Presentation from Marlyn Howitt about Springboard**

4. Marlyn explained the background to Springboard Scotland, and provided details on its current work.

5. Although Springboard is part of a UK organisation, Springboard Scotland has a Scottish Advisory Board to ensure that the organisation meets Scottish priorities. Its objectives are to work with young people; unemployed and disadvantaged people; and businesses to promote tourism jobs. Springboard Scotland is a charitable organisation, and its structures and staffing are restricted to the amount of funding it gets. There are currently 7 members of staff in the Highlands and Islands, as a result of 3 year funding from Highlands and Islands Enterprise and European Funding. Scottish Enterprise provides project funding for work in its area, and this – as well as funding from other business partners – provides for 4 members of staff in this area.

6. Springboard works with young people to provide vocational programmes, tourism taster days, career resources, customer care training, and a young managers programme, amongst other things. It also provides teacher training days, in partnership with Careers Scotland, to ensure that teachers have the opportunity to experience the industry for themselves.

7. It does not run programmes for unemployed and disadvantaged people, but links in with other organisations for people in this category who express an interest in the tourism sector.

8. Springboard's work with businesses includes promoting tourism businesses as a career choice, as well as work with individual businesses in relation to recruitment and retention, 'Right Staff' workshops and handbooks, and best practice exchange visits etc. It is also carrying out an employment satisfaction survey, and Marlyn undertook to report back on this to the Group.

9. The following points were made in discussion:

- Marlyn confirmed that the biggest barrier to growth was funding, and that she was currently putting together a lottery application. Fiona advised that funding might be available from Glasgow City Council.
- Liz expressed concern that while the various organisations working on this were very joined up in some areas, that was not always the case. For example, it was important that VisitScotland's Business Relationship Managers were aware of Springboard's work so that they could advocate it to the businesses they speak to. It was suggested that a one-stop-shop was needed for all of this kind of information, and that the TFFC website which was currently being considered might be useful for this.
- Marlyn explained that businesses were willing to buy-in to Springboard's work because it demonstrated that it was fulfilling a real need. Many of Springboard's

former clients keep in touch with them as they go through their career, thus demonstrating the successful outcome first hand. Marlyn acknowledged, though, that it was difficult to demonstrate which organisation was responsible for success in any particular case. Stevie agreed that this was the case for all the organisations working in this area, and suggested that what was important was not simply each organisation's individual work, but the partnership working between them all, and that this should be reflected in the outcomes of the TFFC actions and targets.

### **Presentation from David Duncan about People 1<sup>st</sup>**

10. David provided the group with information about the new UK Skills Passport. The Passport has a number of features:

- tourism employees can record their skills and training on the Passport, which allows them to demonstrate their skills to future employers;
- tourism employees can use the Skills Passport website to find out the additional skills and qualifications they need to get the job they'd like, where they might get these qualifications, and which are the good employers in that particular field;
- businesses can use the Passport to get a strategic overview of the skills held in their business, and where the gaps are;
- at a national level, if take-up of the Skills Passport is high enough, we can use the Passport to get a strategic overview of the skills people have in the tourism industry, and where the gaps are.

11. David's presentation provided still pictures from the Skills Passport website, but he recommended that group members go on to the website to see it for themselves: [www.people1st.co.uk](http://www.people1st.co.uk).

12. The Skills Passport is about to be piloted by businesses in the HIE area, as well as by the Edinburgh International Conference Centre. People 1<sup>st</sup> hope that the Passport can then be rolled out later in the year.

13. The following points were made in discussion about the Skills Passport:

- Skills and qualifications on the passport must be verified, by an authorised verifier. This might be a training provider, an employer etc. Earlier qualifications can be added by bringing certificates to a verifier. David acknowledged that it would be more difficult to have previous informal training verified and added to the Passport.
- Although the Skills Passport website includes a self-assessment section, these skills and qualifications would still have to be verified before being added on to the Passport.
- It was vital that the Skills Passport is not delivered in isolation from all the other initiatives that are happening in this area. For example, it would be important that businesses using the Skills Passport were given support in relation to retention of

staff, otherwise they were unlikely to be prepared to spend £10 on a Skills Passport for them.

- The Group agreed that it was important that businesses were given guidance on using the Skills Passport to maximise their business. David confirmed that a 'help' section was being put together for the website.

14. Stevie asked about the Training Action Plan, mentioned in the TFFC, and how this fits in with the Skills Passport. In particular, Stevie asked how management and leadership, and customer care skills, might be developed. David explained that People 1<sup>st</sup> were currently working with stakeholders on a National Skills Strategy which would provide the building blocks for the Training Action Plan. (Stakeholders include Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Scottish Funding Council, Learn Direct Scotland, VisitScotland, Careers Scotland, Springboard, the Scottish Executive, etc. as well as the tourism industry) The Skills Passport would then provide the measure of success.

15. Some concern was expressed about the timing of the Training Action Plan, which was vital to delivering success in this area. David reported that People 1<sup>st</sup> expected the National Skills Strategy to be signed off by 19 June, and that the Training Action Plan would follow from that, with the timescale being partly dependent on delivery partners. The Skills Passport should be fully up and running by autumn, subject to the success of the pilots.

### **Next Meeting**

16. Sandi offered to host the next meeting at the VisitScotland office in Selkirk. The date for the next meeting was agreed as 23 August.

17. It was agreed that it would be useful to have a presentation from Pride and Passion at the next meeting, as well as having a more general catch up on progress. Sandi suggested it might be useful to discuss how the group's progress might be communicated back to Area Tourism Partnership, Business Relationship Managers etc. Fiona undertook to report back on discussions with the other industry champions in relation to the communications strategy.

**Scottish Executive Tourism Unit  
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