

**MINUTES OF THE TOURISM FRAMEWORK FOR CHANGE  
MARKETING IMPLEMENTATION GROUP MEETING,  
THURSDAY, 13 MARCH 2008, 10.30-12.00  
SEEL, APEX HOUSE, 99 HAYMARKET TERRACE, EDINBURGH**

**Present:**

|                                   |                                    |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Ian Gardner ( <b>Chair</b> )      | National Trust for Scotland        |
| Marco Truffelli ( <b>MT</b> )     | visitscotland.com                  |
| Stuart Ward ( <b>SW</b> )         | Scottish Development International |
| Caroline Packman ( <b>CP</b> )    | VisitScotland                      |
| Lesley Williams ( <b>LW</b> )     | Aviemore Highland Resort           |
| Iain Herbert ( <b>IH</b> )        | Scottish Tourism Forum             |
| Chris Taylor ( <b>CT</b> )        | ) Scottish Government              |
| Kay Macfarlane ( <b>minutes</b> ) | ) Scottish Government              |

**Apologies:**

|                       |                                  |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Eddie Brogan          | Scottish Enterprise              |
| Glen Bennett          | EAE                              |
| Ian Limond            | JAC Travel                       |
| Lynda Dalgleish       | Scottish Seabird Centre          |
| Rebecca Hamilton      | Historic Scotland                |
| Helen Campbell        | VisitScotland                    |
| Nesta Gilliland       | Scottish Equestrian Association  |
| Roger Edwards         | Highlands and Islands Enterprise |
| Linda Mellis          | Diageo                           |
| Glen Bennett          | EAE                              |
| Pierre Masson         | Moray Council / SLAED            |
| Julie Trevisan-Hunter | Scotch Whisky Heritage Centre    |
| Kenneth Clark         | Scottish Enterprise              |

**1. Welcome / Introductions**

1.1 The Chair welcomed CP from VisitScotland, IH from Scottish Tourism Forum and Lesley Williams of Aviemore Highland Resort to the group. Apologies were received from those listed above.

**2. Minutes of Last Meeting**

2.1 The Chair asked that any changes to the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 16 January 2008 be passed to Scottish Government Tourism Unit by Friday 21 March 2008.

2.2 The Chair explained that the meetings focus on a different aspect of tourism, for example, overseas, domestic, web. Today the main theme of the meeting is business tourism.

### **3. Matters Arising**

3.1 There were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

### **4. Presentations**

4.1 Marketing of Business Tourism by Caroline Packman. CP gave a presentation to the meeting.

4.2 The Chair suggested further discussion about

- clarity and roles and
- collaboration.

4.3 VisitScotland work closely with Edinburgh Convention Bureau (ECB) on how to get people to stay longer when they visit Scotland. Association delegates are more likely to extend their stay. They make their own way and are more likely to bring a partner with them and make it a short holiday. There is a high percentage who could be targeted to extend their stay.

4.4 VisitScotland are trying to get conference information on to the ECB website. With corporate delegates attending conferences there is some difficulty in extending their stay. Usually there are lot of people travelling together (usually not with an accompanying person) but we can still promote the idea to them. Conference hotels could, for example, reduce rates for additional people travelling with the delegates.

4.5 SW confirmed there are a number of links between SDI and VisitScotland. Glasgow and Edinburgh are favourite venues for conferences and also Aberdeen. Inverness and Aberdeen are growing as cities hosting conferences. Historically organisations holding conferences prefer to hold the them within a one hour travelling radius.

4.6 VisitScotland, SDI and Continental Airlines also collaborated during Scotland Week in the United States.

4.7 LW commented that information is being put out and people should be encouraged to engage. Unfortunately a large percentage of newsletters sent out by e-mail are not read by the recipients. VisitScotland estimated that around 18% of people do not read these e-mails.

4.8 There was some general discussion about marketing business tourism.

4.9 IH highlighted that there was a noticeable decline in some of the figures given in CP's presentation. He gave an example of someone who had been trying to find decent quality accommodation in Aberdeen, had difficulty in finding something suitable and finally found what they were looking for in Glasgow. We want to stem this decline.

4.10 IH asked about the Indian market which CP indicated was at the moment on a small scale. The cost of travelling from India to Scotland is an issue for some people although the country is becoming more affluent. Journey time is possibly an issue as well.

4.11 There appears to be a negative perception sometimes that Scotland is a long way away and travelling there takes a long time. There are some misconceptions which need to be addressed to try and encourage more visitors to Scotland.

4.12 Business visitors obviously require facilities such as internet access, for example.

4.13 SW thought that perhaps tourism organisations could do more together to improve the situation regarding extending business stays in Scotland. If the information is available earlier this would be helpful.

4.14 MT advised the meeting of the launch of the new events guide on [visitscotland.com](http://visitscotland.com). The plan would be to integrate National Box Office, business tourism, Local Authorities etc so there would be one cohesive engine that everyone could feed into. The launch of the new site is 2 April and the Visitors Guide will signpost this integration. MT outlined this integration in some detail. The aim of Local Authorities would be to feed through all the local offices to encourage conference delegates to extend their stay. Ultimately delegates would have an electronic link through the IT system to enable them to access information on local events. We need to ensure that all organisation are not targeting the same people with the same message. There is a need for a co-ordinated national strategy and to identify marketing schemes.

4.15 The Chair enquired whether Scottish Tourism Forum and Pride & Passion could perhaps do more to target business tourism events. CD did say their research shows people do comment about how helpful staff are in Scotland. The largest percentage of complaints are about owner attitudes.

4.16 There are a number of schemes for ancestral tourism, for example and wondered what available training options there might be for staff. Scottish Enterprise do run some course on conference organising. This training ideally would be filtered down through the organisation of the course attendee. If organisations can see the financial rewards which would accrue from such training opportunities they may be more amenable to sending people on these courses.

4.17 Green Business Scheme. CP advised the meeting that only 10-20 conference venues in Scotland are green. To make people more aware of these green issues we could put out a green message through newsletters and mention consistently. IH will look into this.

4.18 We are not promoting enough good ideas to encourage organisations to come to Scotland.

## **5. Action Plan Update**

5.1 There was no Action Plan update.

**6. Any Other Business**

6.1 There was no other business.

**7. Summary / Forward Look**

7.1 The Chair summarised the points which had been discussed at the meeting:-

- Members of industries – offer special rates to keep conference delegates longer
- Working with SDI
- STF to get message out and rates? Awareness issue
- Planning – if business business tourism suffering needs to be addressed
- Change of perception in connection with travel time
- Linking VisitScotland with visitscotland.com – integrate
- Customer service levels (Price & Passion ?? here)
- Emerging importance of green venues 0
- Business reasons to come to Scotland
- Some concern about some organisation being asked not to use 5 star hotels

**8. Date of Next meeting**

8.1 The Chair suggested that the next meeting should be held in May.