

## VisitEngland

### MINUTES OF THE 431<sup>st</sup> MEETING OF VISITENGLAND ADVISORY BOARD (VEAB) HELD AT 10.30AM ON WEDNESDAY, 13<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2017 AT VISITENGLAND, SANCTUARY BUILDINGS, GREAT SMITH STREET, LONDON SW1P 3BT

**Present:** Denis Wormwell (Chairman)  
Nigel Halkes  
John Hoy  
Sarah Stewart, OBE  
Suzanne Bond

**In Attendance:** Stephen Darke, DCMS  
Hazel Cunningham, Business Services Director  
Andrew Stokes, England Director  
Ross Calladine, for item 6 Head of Business Support  
Lola Moses, Secretary to the Board

#### **Agenda item 1: Chairman's Update and Introduction**

1. The Chairman welcomed the Board to the meeting. There were no apologies. The Board noted that Hazel Cunningham was deputising for Sally Balcombe.
2. The Chairman updated members on the latest developments impacting the VEAB and tourism in England since the last Board meeting. The following points were noted:-
  - (i) Brexit negotiations had commenced.
  - (ii) Following the General Elections it was noted that there was a new Minister for Tourism, John Glen MP.
  - (iii) The Chairman had met with several stakeholders across the tourism industry recently as part of his induction to the VEAB in his capacity as Chairman, this included (but was not limited to), DMO's, LEP's, Transport and BV & E operators.
  - (iv) The VEAB non-executive vacancies had been advertised on the website for public appointments. Members were reminded that there were three vacancies with the closing date of 29th September 2017
  - (v) There would be a joint strategy day for the VEAB and BTA Board members scheduled for 19th October 2017.
  - (vi) Members noted that forthcoming Board dates for 2018 would be circulated soon.

## **Agenda Item 2: Minutes of the Last Meeting**

3. Clarification was sought on the minuting of the DEF platform from the previous meeting in the context of VEAB decisions. The Chairman confirmed the status of the VEAB as an advisory Board, explaining that decisions would need to be approved by the BTA, DCMS and the Government Digital Service ("GDS").
4. The Minutes of the meeting held on 24th May 2017 were approved to be signed by the Chairman.
5. There was one matter arising not on the substantive agenda, this related to an action from the previous Board. Andrew Stokes tabled a paper which set out the funding profile for the £40m profiled across the next three years. The Board discussed the various categories of funding and made suggestions for improvements to the categories.

## **Agenda item 4: Declarations of interest/Conflict**

6. Suzanne Bond declared a potential conflict of interest due to her appointment on the Independent Advisory Panel for the UK City of Culture 2021.

## **England Action Plan (EAP)**

### **Agenda Item 5: Update on 2017/18 Action Plan**

7. Andrew Stokes updated the Board on the progress of the Action Plan. The Board noted that status of various objectives for the Discover England Fund as set out in the paper for this item. It was observed that the RAG status of some items had been impacted due to Purdah which mean that some decisions would be taken later than anticipated.

**Action: for future Boards, it was agreed that the areas where members were required to give advice on would be highlighted.**

8. Andrew Stokes updated the Board on changes within the England team. Following Chis Foy's move to VisitAberdeenshire as chief executive, it was noted that Kerrin MacPhie has been appointed as the Head of Business Visits and Events commencing in November 2017.

## **Discover England Platform**

9. Andrew Stokes appraised the Board on the progress of the digital platform. Board members noted the key deadlines and the procedural steps necessary in order to approve the project. The VEAB members provided recommendations on the paper. It was agreed that the paper would be enhanced prior to being presented to the September BTA Board for approval to proceed with the alpha phase.

## **Agenda Item 6: Business Support**

10. Andrew Stokes introduced Ross Calladine, Head of Business Support. The Board received an update on the strategic review of business support. The Board noted the challenges which will come about as part of the Business Support Project. The importance of curation and working with partners was noted as a cost effective measure for achieving the strategic principles.

## **Agenda Item 7: AA Contract Update**

11. Hazel Cunningham provide a verbal update on the progress with the quality schemes. It was noted that that the KPI's were being monitored carefully.

**Action:** It was agreed that the Board would receive a further update on the Quality Schemes, following the quarterly project board meeting with the AA.

**Any Other Business**

There being no other business the Chairman called the meeting to a close.

**Date of Next Meeting**

Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2017