

VisitEngland

MINUTES OF THE 433rd MEETING OF VISITENGLAND ADVISORY BOARD ("VEAB") HELD AT 10.30AM ON THURSDAY, 22 FEBRUARY 2018 AT VISITENGLAND 1 VICTORIA STREET ST, WESTMINSTER, LONDON SW1H 0ET

Present:

Denis Wormwell, Chairman
Nigel Halkes, Vice-Chairman
John Hoy
Sarah Stewart, OBE
Fiona Pollard
Allan Lambert
Suzanne Bond

In Attendance:

Stephen Darke, DCMS
Hazel Cunningham, Business Services Director
Andrew Stokes, England Director
Carol Dray, Commercial Director
Patricia Yates, Strategy & Communications Director
Lola Moses, Secretary to the Board
Lyndsey Turner-Swift for agenda item 8
Tim Holt for agenda item 6(iii)

Agenda item 1: Chair's Update and Introduction

1. The Chairman welcomed the Board to the meeting.
2. The Chairman updated the Board on the following matters:-
 - (i) Members welcomed Fiona Pollard and Allan Lambert as new Board members. The DCMS official appointment letters were currently with the new Minister and the public announcement was expected to be issued imminently.
 - (ii) Nigel Halkes had been re-appointed for a term of four years commencing January 2018.
 - (iii) The Chairman updated on the current domestic activities impacting tourism. Members noted that there was a VisitEngland whole team away day which took place in January 2018.
 - (iv) Nigel Halkes had been appointed Vice-Chairman to the Board and would be chairing the meetings in Denis Wormwell's absence.

Agenda Item 2: Minutes of the Last Meeting

3. The Minutes of the meeting held on 21 November 2017 were approved.

Agenda Item 3: Apologies

4. Apologies noted from Sally Balcombe (as she was on business overseas)

Agenda Item 4: Declarations of interest

5. New declaration of interest from Sarah Stewart had been submitted to the Company Secretary ahead of the Board meeting.

Agenda item 5: Political/Tourism Affairs

6. Patricia Yates provided the Board with a verbal update on the Industrial Strategy and noted the following:
 - a. There were challenges as to what the tourism industry as a whole would deliver and the financial commitments that would be set in place.
 - b. Bids or proposals were still being submitted from other industries, it was estimated that only 5-10 sector deals would be signed off.
 - c. Much interest had been expressed for Tourism Action Zones and consultation on what these might look like was ongoing. Tourism Action Zones could possibly still be negotiated separately from any sector deal however, members noted the tactical advantages of combining the two.
 - d. The new Minister had been appointed and was very supportive of VEAB's initiatives to date and good early engagement had been reported.

Agenda item 6: England Action Plan (EAP) – Update DEF (Discover England Fund)

7. Andrew Stokes and Carol Dray updated the board on the progress of the 2017/2018 Action Plan. The board referred to the paper circulated prior to the meeting, the following main points were noted:
 - a. Following the BTA Board's approval of the tender for the Alpha Stage of the DEF pilot platform, a supplier had been selected. VEAB members would be updated on how the pilot is progressing at the next VEAB meeting in May.
 - b. DCMS and the VE/VB executive had met in December 2017 to scope the political direction and priorities for DEF 2 if further DEF funding can be secured. Further considerations of what a DEF 2 might look like is expected to take place and this shall include the VEAB reviewing the approach to DEF 2. Further discussion on DEF 2 would take place at the VEAB meeting in May.
 - c. A draft business visits strategy had been prepared which received positive feedback.
 - d. It was noted that VisitEngland Awards for Excellence were subject to a strategic review.
 - e. A DEF Budget update paper was presented to the Board.
8. BV&E Update
 - a. The main business events DEF Projects included:

- i. A Core Cities application which was expected for "Smart Bureaux".
- ii. Venue Capacity Mapping and Availability.
- iii. Incentive England (Year 2) which is progressing to 1-2-1 training with key products that are ready for market.

- b. The Board was updated on major events that had taken place, most notably IMEX America, IBTM World and PCMA.
- c. It was also noted that the key markets for international activity focus would be Europe and North America.

9. Business Support Update

- a. The Business Advice HUB paper was discussed. It was noted that a new approach was required to better connect businesses with key insights, guidance and support.

10. Marketing Update

- a. Tim Holt presented the "Join the World Discover the UK" paper circulated to the Board and provided the Board with background information on the GREAT Campaign as well as interim results for the campaign's performance in December 2017.

Agenda item 7: Quality Scheme Updates

- 11. Hazel Cunningham provided the Board with a verbal update and noted that reporting from AA was up to date. Members noted that future meetings and report dates were set and agreed up to the end of Q1 of 2018/2019. The current results against the KPI's were challenging, however, it was noted that the AA had recently changed the management structure and new interim MD appointed.

Agenda item 8: Draft VE Business Plan 18/19

- 12. Andrew Stokes and Lyndsey Turner-Swift circulated the VisitEngland 2018-19 Business Plan ahead of the meeting, the following points were noted:-
 - a. The Board discussed both VisitBritain and VisitEngland's objectives to consider the distinct activities across each of the two organisations.
 - b. VisitEngland's core capabilities were discussed, with a particular focus on the English tourism week, destination engagement and reaching the consumer.
 - c. The Board focused on key elements of the 'Voice of England' and strands of activity which could help to strengthen it.

Any Other Business

- 13. There was no other business.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting.

Date of Next Meeting

1st May 2018 (10:30 to 14:30)