

Minutes of Visitor Economy Board Meeting

14th January – 2pm

Exhibition Centre Liverpool

PRESENT

Laura Pye (Chair)

Bob Prattey (BP)

Bill Addy (BA)

Claire McColgan (CM)

Stephen Roberts (SR)

John Irving (JI)

Marcus McGee (MMc)

IN ATTENDANCE

Peter Sandman (PS)

Gary Evans (GE)

Chris Brown (CBr)

APOLOGIES

Mark Basnett (MB)

Peter Hampson (PH)

Steven Connolly (SC)

Edward Perry (EP)

Lynn Ben-Yousef (LB)

Paul Askew (PA)

Liz Chandler (LC)

1. Welcome and apologies

Actions

1.1 Welcome and apologies noted as above.

2. VE Sector Skills Presentation

2.1 The presentation is attached to the minutes and PS provided an overview of the work currently being progressed to implement the CA Skills for Growth agreement. This included Visitor Economy Week, the Skills Passport initiative and the Global Hospitality Pilot being delivered in conjunction with City and Guilds.

2.2 Among the key issues discussed was the need for greater central resource to develop the partnerships necessary to sustain and progress the raft of initiatives that have been established over the last 3 years. There is a need to build on the current working arrangements with the FE Colleges, employers and skills providers to increase the level of dedicated resource for actioning the skills for growth implementation plan.

2.3 PS advised that work is ongoing with the skills providers and the employers through the VE Skills Strategy Group Chaired by Steven Hesketh.

PS

2.4 PS will keep the board updated with progress. LP agreed to highlight some

of the challenges discussed with the LEP Board.

LP

3. Place Making Bid

3.1 CM outlined proposals currently being progressed with the CA to support cultural activity and events across the LCR. The proposal is still under development with the overall project being £5m. Its focus will be on generating content that help establish the City Region's sense of place, with the regeneration of Prescot being a good example of culturally led regeneration.

3.2 The project would also be closely aligned with the Destination Marketing SIF Bid in terms of using these activities to attract new visitors to the City Region.

3.3 CMc agreed to provide further updates and share the project proposal with the board.

CM

4. Business Event Update

4.1 PS to provide further information at the next meeting. PS confirmed that the project board and delivery group had met and the initial options regarding the subvention model had been proposed.

4.2 Best practice and venue surveys were in the process of being completed and work was ongoing with the Liverpool Hospitality Association to increase the participation of the hoteliers.

4.3 The current focus of activity is establishing the pipeline of conferences to inform the 5 years business strategy and the net subvention requirement.

PS

5. Tourism/Visitor Levy

5.1 The presentation given by PS and BA is attached to the minutes.

5.2 The presentation outlined the opportunity of using BID legislation to collect revenue in different ways. This follows initial business modelling showing that the introduction of a visitor levy in Liverpool has the potential to generate in the region of £3.5m per annum.

5.3 The approach will form part of the Liverpool BID Company's proposals to establish a city-wide bid. Whilst consultation is ongoing, the proposal is for serviced accommodation falling within the extended BID area to be levied based the level of occupancy, while other qualifying businesses would be charged through supplementary business rates.

5.4 As part of the BID's manifesto commitment, the revenue will be ring fenced for core funding visitor economy and cultural initiatives including destination marketing and conference subvention. Similarly, it would use the governance structures being put in place for the SIF business events and destination marketing projects (once confirmed).

5.5 PS/BA advised that more detailed business planning is now required on the accommodation element and to support the launch of the business plan for

the City-wide BID in September 2020. BA advised that the ballot would be being held in spring 2021 to coincide with the renewal of the existing Retail and Commercial BIDS. To succeed, a vote of 50% or above in favour of the proposal would be required. If successful, the city wide BID would be launched in Summer 2021.

- 5.6 It is also important to note that in the development of the outline business case for the accommodation levy element of the proposal, a survey involving 100 of Liverpool's hoteliers indicated that 50% were in favour of the levy, 10% were indifferent and 40% were against.
- 5.7 The board agreed that given the current funding situation, this option had to be progressed and the development of the full business case (in conjunction with the DMO) for the accommodation element was needed to inform consultation and decision making. The importance of the Business Events and Destination Marketing SIF Projects were also acknowledged as being fundamental in terms of providing the transition funding during this period.
- 5.8 Follow up meetings will be arranged to progress the business planning element and to further engage key stakeholders including the LHA and Liverpool ONE. BA/PS/
CB

6. District Updates and Feedback

- 6.1 Due to apologies, there were no district VEN's represented at the VEB.
- 6.2 BA updated that LVEN had commissioned a communications strategy and that the group was actively engaged with Liverpool City Council with regards to hotel development and access.

7. AOB

- 7.1 LP/CB/PS/BP updated on the visit to Liverpool of the Tourism Minister on 10th January. The main points were as follows :-
- 7.2 In terms of business events, discussion focussed on improving input/engagement from DMOs (including venues) into the international business events action plan, particularly around co ordinating/prioritising destination bids for large-scale international business events.
- 7.3 Discussion around the sector deal related to the ongoing commitment of government to the initiative and the creation of tourism zones. In terms of the potential level of investment that might be forth coming from government to make tourism zones a reality, partners agreed to do some high-level work to help inform the minister's discussions with Treasury.
- 7.4 In terms of central funding, the budget is planned for March and the planned spending review will commence in June. The minister reaffirmed her commitment to using these opportunities to secure funding to support DMO's progress the sector deal and tourism zones.
- 7.5 PS advised that Visitor Economy Week would take place between 3rd – 6th February with board members invited to the launch event at the Liverpool Maritime Museum on 3rd February commencing 8.30am.

8. **Date & Time of Next Meeting**
21st April 2pm
Venue tbc