

MINUTES OF TOURISM MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING Held 5 September 2007

Present:

Paul Hemphill, President	ONE North East
Cathy Guthrie, Hon. Secretary	TMI
Peter Colling, Hon. Treasurer	Tourism South East
Kairen Kellard, Head of Events	Kennet District Council
Jackie Ellis	Tourism Angles
Andrew Daines, TMI Co-optee	VisitBritain
Colette Walker	TMI Communications Services
Malcolm Connor, Membership Support	TMI
Roger Platt, Vice President	Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council
Amanda Shepherd, Immediate Past President	Blue Sail
Colin Potts, Head of Policy and Advocacy	Chester City Council
Phil Evans, London Regional Representative	Greater London Authority
Martin Boulton, North East Representative	Durham City
Seb Craig - Observer	Hon. Member
Simon McCloy, West Midlands Representative	Shropshire Tourism
Jayne Stocks, HE Affiliate Co-optee	Sheffield Hallam University

Apologies:

Andrew Bateman, DP:UK Co-optee	Hampshire County Council
Peter Hampson, BRADA Co-optee	British Resorts and Destinations Association
Peter Lane, ISPAL Co-optee	Planning, Leisure and Tourism Consultant
Alison Cryer, Tourism Society Co-optee	Tourism Society
Marion Nixon, East Midlands Representative	Derby City Council
Janet Deacon, Yorkshire Representative	Scarborough Borough Council
Crispian Emberson, East Region Representative	VisitNorfolk
Nell Barrington, South West Representative	Nell Barrington Associates
Bob Carter, Commercial Affiliate Co-optee	Carrier Direct Marketing
Paul Murphy, Wales Representative	Denbighshire Council
Ann Butler, Scotland Representative	Destination Dundee
Jim Trotman, North West Representative	Lancaster City Council

1.0 Welcome and Introduction

1.1 The President welcomed everyone, thanked them for attending and explained the format of the meeting. As everyone present had also attended the AGM immediately beforehand, at which he had explained the role of the National Council, proposed to move straight to the first Working Group report.

2.0 Policy and Advocacy Group Report

2.1 A progress report had been circulated in advance of the meeting. CP explained that the Policy and Advocacy Group functioned largely as a virtual group, apart from its initial meeting in February. The Group consisted of himself, Andrew Bateman (Hampshire County Council), Jim Trotman (Lancaster City Council), Sarah Osborne (consultant), Bruce Hanson (Broads Authority) and Simon Curtis (Medway Council).

2.2 The Group had concentrated on the first of its aims in the Corporate Plan, i.e. responding to consultations. However, it wanted to become more proactive, identifying the views of TMI members, setting the agenda rather than reacting to other organisations' agendas. This could be achieved as simply as having a yes/no question at the end of the weekly newsletter.

2.3 House of Commons Tourism Inquiry: The deadline for local authorities to comment on the inquiry had been extended, so CP would be circulating TMI's response to members again in

the hope that it might encourage more local authorities to comment direct to the Inquiry.

- 2.4 Place Making Charter: The latest draft had been circulated with the report. CP rehearsed some of the background to Partners for England, which had been set up as a group of key players and organisations within English tourism to examine key issues, and particularly co-ordination and joined up thinking. Partners for England looked at four key areas, one of which was communications and co-ordination between local authorities. It became clear that any protocol to be developed should be across all organisations involved in tourism, rather than being simply a local authority charter. The current version was almost the final draft, and the charter would be launched in November. The document set the local authority dimension in the context of other organisations. The hope was that the charter would act as useful guidance and would be backed up by more detailed information in the revised Destination Management Handbook, for example. The next Place Making charter meeting would be in Chester on 4 October. The TMI Executive supported the charter and would be encouraging members to support it. CP would be happy to feed any further comments to the meeting on 4 October.
- 2.5 The other two matters dealt with by the Group had been the consultation on sustainable tourism in Europe, and the Tourism Alliance manifesto. Andrew Bateman had led on the response to the former, which had been signed off by the Head of Policy. The Tourism Alliance had requested limited circulation of their manifesto, and a response had been fed back to Kurt Janson.
- 2.6 The Hon. Treasurer noted the importance of trying to keep local authorities engaged in tourism. There was a particular issue in the South East region of local authorities threatening to withdraw from tourism service provision, and he felt the Charter did not at present stipulate that local authorities should ensure marketing of destination brands as well as place making. For example the ruling party on the Isle of Wight were hoping to save £1.5 million by withdrawing from marketing, information provision etc. in order to use the money for infrastructure works such as painting bus shelters. Apparently they were expecting the local private sector to take on the marketing and information provision. He was concerned that the Charter did not make the connection between marketing and product quality.
- 2.7 CP noted that elsewhere may local authorities were being encouraged to think in the same way, particularly where they were being encouraged to support regional sub organisations as carrying out marketing whilst the local authorities concentrated on place making. He agreed that the Charter should make it explicit that local authorities should not move out of marketing unless there was some other arrangement in place.
- 2.8 The Immediate Past President agreed there were different models in each region. In the South East, little money was going to sub regional organisations. Elsewhere, new sub regional organisations were mainly funded by the local authorities, and yet others where they were mainly funded by Regional Development Agencies (RDAs). She felt that the importance was in the responsibility to fund destination marketing and ensuring quality standards. PC agreed it was to do with ownership of the brand.
- 2.9 The Hon. Secretary suggested that perhaps this could be implied by using place shaping rather than place making, as this carried a wider connotation including shaping the place in potential visitors' minds through marketing and branding. The Hon. Treasurer suggested it was important to spell this out, as not all destinations had a recognised brand, so there was need for some flexibility.
- 2.10 The President noted that the lack of mention of DMOs was a significant omission. MB asked how DMOs would be involved. In the North East there was much work in hand to persuade local authorities not to carry out fragmented marketing. CP noted that DMO's should be involved throughout the process, albeit that the different parts of the country were t different stages of development. He felt it might be better to use the phrase sub regional organisation rather than DMO. He agreed that it was important to recognise the existence of sub regional organisations and work out their role in the place making process. He confirmed that the process from this point was for a launch by the LGA on 1 November. Thereafter all DMOs,

local authorities and RDAs would be given the opportunity to sign the Charter. The TMI Executive had already agreed to encourage members to support the Charter. However, CP would be happy to take further comments by e-mail before the document was launched. The President thanked the Policy and Advocacy Group for their work on this and other issues.

3.0 CPD Group Report

- 3.1 Philip Long having sent his apologies, the CPD report was presented by the Hon Secretary in her role as Acting CPD Co-ordinator. The report had been circulated with the meeting papers, and she drew attention to the main points, in particular the development of the CPD Business Plan which was currently with NWDA for informal comment before the final draft was presented to the Executive Board in November and from there formally submitted as a funding bid to the RDAs. The key elements of the Business Plan were the development of TMI Professional Postgraduate qualifications in partnership with universities, the pilot of a number of short courses and facilitated workshops over the next nine months, and the continuing development of TMI's CPD Online system. She reported that the online newsletter, Destination Matters had been well received as well.
- 3.2 The Hon. Secretary reported that she and the President would be attending a meeting on 10 September to present TMI's online CPD recording system and discuss with People 1st whether and how it might be incorporated into the UK Skills Passport. However, the report outlined a number of requirements before any such move could take place, to ensure that TMI's investment over the past year was suitably rewarded in any potential merger of the two systems.
- 3.3 The President noted that it was an exciting time for the Institute, and CPD would be a large part of the next phase of the Institute's development. CP agreed that CPD was the key tool in realising the mission statement of supporting professionals in destination management. The President said that the Business Plan, although not finished, was a very strong document. He thanked the CPD Group for their work thus far.

4.0 Events Group Report

- 4.1 JE presented the Events Working Group report. She noted that the Group was small, consisting of just five members. They had already recruited the destination manager from the next Annual Convention destination, and he would also shortly be admitted into membership of TMI.
- 4.2 The Events Group was the one which was least able to work virtually, as it was important to be able to bounce ideas around for topics, themes and speakers. As a result, the group had already met six times, and had meetings arranged for just before the Fringe event at the Annual Convention and again in November. She was able to say that VisitBritain were very encouraged by the success of the Hot Topic event and the way it had pushed some delegates beyond their traditional comfort zones in terms of content and presentation. JE stressed that the Group deliberately set out to make TMI Events cutting edge, which sometimes entailed taking decisions on expenditure in order to improve the quality of the event. They were nevertheless conscious of TMI's need to be able to invest elsewhere in the Institute's work.
- 4.3 The current budget position was that at the end of the Hot Topic event, profit at £13,500 was ahead of target. However, this included income from some sponsorships which ran over both events. There was good news in that some first time exhibitors at the hot Topic event were now in active negotiations to come into the Annual Convention. As of the previous day, 65 delegates had booked for the Annual Convention, and it had been decided to extend the Early Bird discount period to 10 September. A request would be sent to Regional Representatives to encourage them to promote bookings in their region. JE was able to report that the discounts offered for 3rd and 4th delegates booking from the same organisation were doing well.
- 4.4 Planning for the Fringe Event on 9 October was going well. Although it had been

disappointing to see a clash with a Tourism Society event on the same date and same subject, JE had been able to confirm that the two events were addressing different audiences. The TMI Fringe Debate would hear from 5 speakers for and 5 against the contention that the public sector is pushing for quality policies with which the private sector were unhappy. Ruth Watson (TV's Hotel inspector) had been secured as a guest speaker. The event would last two hours and be followed by wine and networking. Tourism South East would be dealing with the VIP invitations and e-mailing an invitation to TMI delegates by the end of the week.

- 4.5 Asked if she was happy with the booking level at this stage, JE replied she would also welcome higher levels, especially as it impacted on booking supplementary items such as delegate bags and so on. JE noted also that the Annual Convention was big recruitment opportunity, and the Group were considering ways to add a call to action, such as different colour badges for non members, perhaps. Lastly, an attendance certificate would be given to each delegate attending the Annual Convention.
- 4.6 JE said that negotiations for the 2008 Annual Convention had begun. She made a formal request that decisions about TMI event dates and timings should be left as the responsibility of the Events Group. Attempting to fit in with other events staged by Tourism Together partners and other organisations made negotiating with potential suppliers difficult. She said that the Events Group hoped to have dates and venues for both 2008 and 2009 finalised at their November meeting so as to avoid these issues in future by getting TMI's event dates in diaries early. There was also some discussion to be had with regard to the 2008 Hot Topic, which would be a joint event with BACD, as to the extent of any profit share.
- 4.7 As incoming Head of Events, KK had been investigating event cancellation insurance. Quotations suggested the cost would be in the region of £150 for the size and style of events which TMI organised. However, it might be possible to get a better deal by wrapping the event insurance in with the current review of TMI's over all insurance policy.
- 4.8 The President thanked JE for her chairing of the Events Group, welcomed KK as the new Head of Events and thanked the Group for their hard work in delivering such excellent events on behalf of MTI.

5.0 Communications Group Report

- 5.1 The Immediate Past President had been chairing the Communications Group in a care taker role for the past few months and she was very pleased that DH had stepped forward to be the first Head of Communications. The Group had met once to brainstorm objectives and TMI needs, which they had then costed and prioritised. The twin priorities were clearly to contract a person to provide communications support and to get the institute's online communications right. Without good communications, TMI would not succeed in other areas.
- 5.2 Colette Walker had been appointed in July to provide communication support services with an official start date of 1 October, although there would be a handover period during September. Members would start to see a difference in TMI communications more or less straightaway, as CW was tasked with circulating a weekly news bulletin.
- 5.3 Getting TMI Online right would take a little longer. CW would be project managing the contracting and implementation of the redeveloped TMI web site and online services. This a major project and it would take some months for members to see results. The Immediate Past President thanked Peter Varlow, Malcolm Connor and Bb Carter for their work to date, and reported that Peter Varlow would continue to lead a small advisory group. There would be a closed tender involving nine companies. There was a very tight timetable for handover in March, but the development would be modular so could be broken down into chunks if necessary. The Invitation to Tender would state the budget available.
- 5.4 CW was of the opinion that it should be possible to obtain everything TMI was looking for well within the current budget of £15,000, so it might be appropriate to give a lower figure in the tender document and keep the remainder in reserve for negotiation.

5.5 The President thanked the Immediate Past President for looking after the Communications group over the past few months, and welcomed DH as the new Head of Communications.

6.0 Efficiency and Viability

6.1 The Hon. Treasurer said that the individual Working Groups were responsible for managing their budgets. However, it was vital that these were kept up to date and there was good communication between each Group and the Hon. Treasurer. The budget for the current year, as well as projections for 2008-09, would be a major item at the Executive Board meeting on 22 November.

7.0 Any Other Business

7.1 There being no other business, the President thanked everyone for attending and looked forward to seeing them all at the next meeting in March.

8.0 Dates of Next Meetings

8.1 Wednesday 5 March 2008 – National Council
Wednesday 3 September 2008 – AGM and National Council
Venues to be confirmed.