
VISIT TEES VALLEY BOARD

**Meeting held at Saltholme Nature Reserve, at 10.00am on Thursday, 15th
October 2009**

ATTENDEES

| | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|-------|
| David Kelly (DK) | visitTeesvalley | Chair |
| Nick Dolan (ND) | National Trust Ormesby | |
| Stuart Green (SG) | Hartlepool BC | |
| Bryn Hughes (BH) | HMS Trincomalee | |
| Juliet Farrer (JFa) | Middlesbrough BC | |
| Julia Frater (JFr) | visitTeesvalley | |
| Michael Henderson (MH) | Stockton on Tees BC | |

APOLOGIES

| | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Maria Wilcock (MW) | Argument Cottage |
| Councillor Bob Cook (BC) | Stockton on Tees BC |
| Mark Clayton (MC) | Crathorne Hall Hotel |
| Krimo Bouabda (KB) | Cream Restaurants Ltd |
| Patrick Green (PG) | Wild Hop Brewery Ltd |
| Linda Edworthy (LE) | JSU |
| John Lowther (JL) | JSU |

Saltholme Nature Reserve

David Braithwaite provided the Board with an overview of the Nature Reserve and associated issues:-

- The Centre had targets of 100,000 visitors by year 5 of operation, but since opening had had 77,000 visitors to date with 20% coming from outside the region.
- The Centre was trying to engage with new audiences, encourage families and younger people to come along and 'get them out of the virtual world and into the real world'. The Centre's Adventure Play Area had been very popular. The Centre had good access for the disabled
- Spend – the Board was informed, confidentially, of spend per visit and noted that it was close to that identified in the Business Case. Areas of spend included the gift shop and a successful café.
- Membership – The Centre had hoped to encourage 150 new RSPB members per annum – 550 had already signed up
- There was potential for sites in other urban and industrial sites in the Tees Valley and the RSPB was looking into the development of a Regional Nature Park in partnership with Teesside Environmental Trust /SBC/HBC. It was considered that the area offered considerable connectivity between existing and potential attractions and this would encourage people to visit.
- JFa referred to an Audio Visual Festival that was being organised by MBC and suggested that the Centre may wish to be involved. JFa to pass on contact details.

JFa

1 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The Board noted the Conflicts of Interest Procedure. No conflicts of interest were declared.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

2 NOTES OF THE MEETING ON 9TH JULY 2009

The minutes of the meeting held on 9th July 2009 were agreed as a correct record.

3 MATTERS ARISING

Finance Report

The Board was informed that the Chairman and JFr had met with Linda Edworthy to discuss changes to the reporting of financial information. The Board would consider a finance paper later on in the agenda for this meeting

Eaglescliffe Station/ London Service

The Board noted that work at Eaglescliffe Station was planned for February. It would be re staffed and improved. There were plans to develop bespoke information boards that would detail points of interest within the Tees Valley and would include links to vTv web site. Agreed that information should link with the signage and signage should be in a consistent form.

Noted that Grand Central appeared very positive about the service it was running to London. It was suggested that there were branding opportunities for the Tees Valley.

Resolved that vTv would investigate with JSU Transport possible ways of helping Grand Central to raise the profile of the service.

JFr

Durham/Tees Valley - Heathrow Service

A feasibility study had concluded that this service was not viable. Lobbying of MPs and Ministers was on going.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

4 STRATEGY AND RELATIONSHIP

Tees Valley Unlimited

The Board was reminded that a seminar had been held on 9th October focusing on the economy. The Chairman felt it had been useful and noted that lots of similar thoughts to those

previously expressed by this Board, surrounding image and branding had arisen. Other events relating to each Board's work would be held over the coming months and the Chairman and JFr would be attending one on 5th November relating to Housing and Regeneration.

CEOs Group had agreed that a separate session on Culture and Tourism would be held and this would hopefully take place end Nov/Dec. Speakers on issues such as Tall Ships, Creative Industries would be invited. If any Board Members had any thoughts on possible speakers they were asked to let JFr know. All

It was suggested that Tees Valley image should be discussed at the event. There was a need to consolidate the brand across the Tees Valley. The Board briefly discussed the 'Do something different ad'. It was agreed that the image/branding issue needed consideration by the Leadership Board.

The Board discussed its role and relationship with the Leadership Board. It was explained that Governance issues were due to be looked at.

ATMaP - revised

The Board considered a report on the Area Tourism Management Plan (ATMaP).

It was explained that in June the ATMaP Steering Group consisting of representatives from the 5 LAs began the process of reviewing the first ATMaP to assess what had been achieved so far, the effect of the recession and whether the priority themes were still appropriate for the vision for Tees Valley. It was noted that the ATMaP would identify the priorities for the Tees Valley to achieve the vision for the visitor economy. It would also assist in identifying those priorities to be considered for the Tees Valley Investment Plan.

The Board was presented with a draft revised ATMaP for approval, prior to being submitted to ONE to feed into the new NE Visitor Economy Strategy. It was noted that the latter would be circulated for 3 months consultation in October and approved Spring 2010.

There was some concern about the ATMaP process and a feeling that approval/prioritisation of projects could be bogged down by procedures. The Board noted that Ailisa Anderson from ONE had attended an ATMaP Steering Group. It was considered that Ailisa's approach had been extremely positive and the Board was encouraged by this. It was suggested that she be invited to attend a future Board meeting.

RESOLVED that the Tees Valley ATMaP be approved and JFr

submitted to ONE. Future revisions will be led by the ATMaP Steering Group and brought back to DoRs and vTv Board when appropriate.

North East Visitor Economy Strategy – consultation process

The Board discussed the North East Visitors Economy Strategy. A draft of the document had been presented to the Board's previous meeting by Chris Little and the Board had been unhappy about a number of aspects including dispersal.

There were still lots of questions surrounding how, in practice, the dispersal policy would work. The chair expressed concern that in the absence of firm ONE instruction to ATPs that the Tees Valley might be sold short. He would pursue the issue through other avenues if necessary.

DK

RESOLVED that the information be noted. JFr to ask Chris Little for clarification on what the public consultation of the Strategy would consist of.

JFr

Festivals and Events Development Plan (FEDP)

The Board considered a report on the Festivals and Events Development Plan (FEDP). The report sought endorsement of the FEDP. The plan would be submitted to ONE as the FEDP for the Tees Valley sub region.

The Boards endorsement was sought on the following 3 principal areas of the report –

- developing a common set of processes for Festival and Event delivery
- the importance of Festivals and Events in helping drive regeneration and
- support for greater destination awareness and cohesion via Tees valley branding.

Noted that the Directors of Regeneration had been very enthusiastic and supportive of the Plan. It was suggested that mima should be referred to in the Plan.

During consideration of the plan discussion took place on the forthcoming Tall Ships event. It was suggested that Hartlepool may be able to learn lessons from Stockton's experience in hosting SIRF particularly in relation to alcohol management.

The Board felt that the Plan should refer more fully to the role of vtv and the added value it provided, not only as a co

ordinator but as a deliverer of activity and marketing, and central to a joined up approach. It was important that the Tees Valley brand was visible at Festivals and Events.

The Board considered the clustering of events around the Tall Ship Race dates. It was agreed that this would be beneficial and should be used for other events throughout the year. A focused message to visitors 'When you are at this event why not take a look at...'. Details of transport would be helpful.

It was suggested that the plan should identify the role of the private sector and events such as the Ormesby Concert should be signposted at appropriate events, demonstrating the joined up approach of private and public sectors.

JFr provided information surrounding elements of the planned advertising campaign for the Tall Ships involving broadsheet newspapers and Smooth Radio – work was being undertaken relating to a competition.

It was noted that Section 2 of the FEDP would showcase selected events and how they would be measured.

RESOLVED that the first draft of the Tees Valley Festival and Event Development Plan be endorsed for submission to ONE.

Tees Valley Hotel Futures

The Board considered a report that outlined the conclusions of an independently produced report into the future potential of the hotel and visitor accommodation sector in the Tees Valley.

It was explained that last year Visit Tees Valley, in partnership with the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit, the Tees Valley local authorities, Tees Valley Regeneration, and One NorthEast commissioned a study of the future potential for hotel development in the Tees Valley over the next 15 to 20 years..

The study had provided an independent and thoroughly researched market perspective on the opportunities for new hotel development, and could be used by the Tees Valley partners to:

- Develop and inform planning policy;
- Inform plans for major redevelopment and regeneration schemes;
- Facilitate and support discussions with developers and operators to attract new hotel investment;

- Allow effective monitoring of future performance;
- Help to develop the corporate market and attract major events, and
- Inform the Area Tourism Management Plan (ATMaP) which sets out Tees Valley's tourism economic priorities, and identifies action needed by public sector agencies to support the development of the hotel sector.

It was noted that ONE had agreed to host a half day Workshop with representatives from ONE tourism, Culture, Regeneration Strategy Teams, LA Economic Development, Tourism and Planning Teams and others This was likely to take place in the Spring and consultants Hotel Solutions would be invited to give a presentation

RESOLVED that the content of the Hotel Futures study be noted and future activity be developed and monitored through the ATMaP Steering Group every six months.

Tees Valley Branding

The Board discussed branding issues.

vTv Update – July - September 2009 Activities

The Board was provided with a summary of activities for July to September 2009.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

5 BUSINESS SUPPORT AND SKILLS

vTv Autumn B2B conference 21st October

The Board was provided with details of what the B2B Conference would include.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

Business Engagement – Future Activities

The Board was presented with information on the Business Engagement activity for quarter two, July – September 2009, detailing all business activity including events, one-one's and other activity. The Board was also given details of Business Engagement for quarter three which would be concentrated on promoting the marketing opportunities, both online and the It's Happening guide for 2010. It was noted that a sales target of £20,000 had been set to be achieved by December 2009.

It was suggested that a meeting be held with appropriate economic dev officers at Middlesbrough Borough Council to

ensure alignment of activities and no duplication.

RESOLVED that visitTeesvalley be directed to continue with the Business Engagement activity for 2009/10.

6 MARKETING

Campaign/Marketing – Future Activities

The Board was presented with a report on current and future marketing activity. Details of activity from June 09 and planned activity for the next 6 months was provided to the Board.

RESOLVED that visitTeesvalley be directed to continue with delivering the 'Do Something Different' campaign as per the campaign plans for the next 6months.

E-Tourism Update

The Board was provided with an update on the delivery of key activities relating the E tourism strategy activity for quarter one and a briefing on planned future activity.

The Board noted that there were a number of issues surrounding the maintenance agreement that needed clarification.

RESOLVED that visitTeesvalley be directed to continue with delivering the action plan outlined within the E Tourism Strategy.

7 FINANCE

Finance Report

The Board was presented with an update of the 2009/10 current financial position based on information available to date and showed that vTv expected to end the year on target and within budget.

Noted that funding was anticipated to be less next year. Chair and JFa had looked at possible savings from this year with a view to carrying forward if possible.

The Board discussed the value of the 'IT's Happening Guide' and considered alternatives that may provide savings including changes to its production, printing, distribution etc. Noted that vTv was committed to producing a Guide to fulfill ONE funding agreement.

Agreed that this issue required further consideration.

RESOLVED that the information be noted and the Chair and

JFa continue to consider potential savings.

8 TALL SHIPS 2010

SG, HBC, provided the Board with information relating to the Tall Ships Races 2010.

SG explained some of the issues associated with the event e.g Traffic Management, Event Programming, Marketing Strategy.

It was noted that sponsorship was moving forward very positively and there had been an up turn in income. The Board discussed other potential major.

JFr explained that other authorities had completed a matrix indicating what they would be contributing to publicising the event.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Board discussed:-

- Heritage Open day held in Middlesbrough which had been a success. Particular reference was made to a Industrial Heritage Walk and the opportunity to extend Discover M'boro to the rest of Tees Valley
- The possibility of an Artists open weekend/week across the TV was discussed.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

10.00am, 21st January 2010 – Rockcliffe Park, Hurworth, Darlington.