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**VISIT TEES VALLEY BOARD**

**Meeting held at Joint Strategy Unit, Melrose House, Middlesbrough at  
1.30pm on Thursday, 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2009**

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ATTENDEES

David Kelly (DK)	visitTeesvalley	Chair
Krimo Bouabda (KB)	Cream Restaurants Ltd	
Councillor Bob Cook (BC)	Stockton on Tees BC	
Bryn Hughes (BH)	HMS Trincomalee	
Mark Clayton (MC)	Crathorne Hall Hotel	
Nick Dolan (ND)	National Trust Ormesby	
Patrick Green (PG)	Wild Hop Brewery Ltd	
Juliet Farrer (JFa)	Middlesbrough BC	
Stuart Green (SG)	Hartlepool BC	
Julia Frater (JFr)	visitTeesvalley	
Linda Edworthy (LE)	Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit (Part of meeting)	
Sarah Johnson (SJ)	Stockton on Tees BC	

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APOLOGIES

Maria Wilcock (MW)	Argument Cottage
John Lowther (JL)	JSU

**1 CHAIRS WELCOME**

The Chairman (DK) welcomed attendees to the meeting and in particular, Mark Clayton who was a new co-optee to the Board.

**1 NOTES OF THE MEETING ON 15<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2009**

The minutes of the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2009 were agreed as a true record.

**2 MATTERS ARISING**

The Board was informed that a visitTeesvalley (vTv) officer had now been appointed to the Captain Cook Tourism Association. vTv would be presenting information to a meeting of the Association on the Tall Ships and other vTv activities.

Governance Arrangements – It was noted that Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council had indicated that they would like a representative on the Board. They had been informed that they could have an observer until a review of the arrangements had taken place. It was also noted that 2 members of the private sector in Hartlepool had expressed an interest in sitting on the Board.

ONE Marketing Framework - A letter had been sent to ONE and a meeting had been arranged for mid May 2009 to discuss the marketing framework.

Finance Report – LE informed the Board that TVJSU was undertaking, with SBC, a full financial review of the systems and processes which could lead to changes.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

**3 HEAD OF VISIT TEES VALLEY VERBAL REPORT**

The Head of vTv, JFr, informed the Board of changes to staffing at vTv as a result of a review of activity and business generated. The consultation report had been circulated to all Board Members. It was considered that Business Tourism and Group Travel were being tackled at the regional level and as a result of this one post was currently in the process of being made redundant. It was also considered that employing an agency to carry out PR activity was costly, therefore a PR post within vTv had been job evaluated and would be advertised in the next month. It was noted that Alcazar might still be required for some activity.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

#### **4 STRATEGY AND RELATIONSHIP**

##### **Tees Valley Unlimited**

LE discussed the announcement that Tees Valley had not been chosen as a City Region Forerunner with the Board. It was explained that Manchester and Leeds had been chosen as the Government considered that they could have a bigger impact on the national economy in the current circumstances. LE explained that they were disappointed with the decision and had requested a ministerial visit and would be having various discussions on the way forward. In terms of the Governance arrangements for TVU it was noted that amendments were still necessary and a report would be brought back to the next meeting of the Board.

In terms of the communication strategy for TVU the Board was informed that it was the intention to ensure that there was a good understanding across all the Sub Boards of the range of activities being undertaken. Board Members were already receiving Quarterly Newsletters and there would be 2 meetings a year for all Board Members. It was also intended to have a session for all of the Boards' Chairs to meet and discuss the annual TVU Conference. Currently, an ICT review was being undertaken and all websites were being looked at to ensure they were up to date. It was intended that briefing notes would be circulated to all Board Members and would not be confidential allowing for wider circulation.

The withdrawal of the BMI Teesside to Heathrow flight was discussed. LE informed the Board that a delegation had met with the Minister for Aviation in March to discuss this issue. The Minister had been supportive and they had received the backing of all of the regions MP's. ONE and Durham Tees Valley Airport were currently investigating a public service obligation order and the airport was also looking at the option of another provider.

##### **North East Visitor Economy Strategy**

The Board was provided with a NE Visitor Economy Strategy timetable. It would be discussed at the next AtMap Steering Group on 21st May. A staff away day for all 4 ATPs staff had also been arranged for 6<sup>th</sup> May to go through the visitor economy strategy.

##### **vTv Update – January – March 2009 Activities**

The Board was provided with a summary of activities for January to March 2009. The Tall Ships Race 2010 was discussed. Concerns were raised over the current lack of

sponsorship and the Board offered its assistance in the form of knowledge, skills or contacts. It was also suggested that the Attractions Forum could be of assistance. Board Members agreed that it was important to ensure that visitors to the Tall Ships were aware of other events or attraction happening that week. SG agreed to provide an update to a future meeting of the Board on the Tall Ships Race 2010.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

## **5 BUSINESS SUPPORT AND SKILLS**

### **Passionate About Skills (PAS) Update**

The Board was presented with a report that summarised the work undertaken, key challenges and the way forward for the PAS Pilot. Visit Tees Valley had secured funding for one year in 2008/09 to implement the project and it had now been extended for a further two years due to its success as part of the REF.

RESOLVED that the considerable progress made with PAS and the extension of the project for a further two years be noted.

### **Cultural Volunteering Project**

The Board considered a report that highlighted the work of Tees Valleys Cultural Volunteering pilot project led by visitTeesvalley. Information was provided on the key achievements and future activity. JFa commented that it was possible that volunteers that already existed through the Events and Festivals Forum were being missed. It was suggested that it be an item at the next meeting of the Forum.

RESOLVED that vTv continue to lead on the project and carry out the identified 'future actions'.

### **Business Engagement**

The Board was presented with information on the Business Engagement activities undertaken during 2008/09 and the activity planned for 2009/10.

The Board discussed 'in kind' contributions from LAs. It was noted that although it appeared that contributions were diminishing, the figures had been analysed and they suggested that the total value of contributions from the 5 LAs had increased significantly based on the data submitted. A number of public sector board members advised against too much reliance on this data and its relevance and drew attention to other ways in which the contributions needed to be assessed. It was informed that the ATP Chairs would be

meeting on 2 June to discuss the financial sustainability of the network and the ATPs. JFa suggested that vTv should meet with LAs at the beginning of the Financial Year in order to plan the work required for the year ahead. Representatives to sit on a Sub Group to look at income generation were sought. KB and PG agreed to sit on the Sub Group.

RESOLVED that:-

1. vTv continue with the Business Engagement activity for 2009/10.
2. KB and PG be appointed as vTv representatives to the Income Generation Sub Group.

## **6 MARKETING**

### **visitTeesvalley Marketing Campaign**

The Board was presented with a report that highlighted visitTeesvalley's activity to date with regard to marketing and also outlined the consumer campaign for 2009/10. It was noted that the new website for vTv would be ready by the beginning of June.

The Board congratulated officers on the proposed 'Do Something Different' consumer marketing campaign for 2009/10.

RESOLVED that the proposed campaign activity and evaluation be approved.

### **Marketing Framework**

The Board considered a report that gave an outline of the One NorthEast's Marketing Framework. The Framework was currently awaiting sign-off from the four ATP Chief Executives in July 2009.

RESOLVED that the current position be noted and the Marketing Manager be directed to pursue dispersal products that will support the TV product, business and brand.

### **Festivals and Events Development Plan (FEDP)**

The Board was presented with a report that highlighted vTv's response to the recommendations of the RDA's Regional Festivals and Events Sub Group for the Single Programme of funding of Festivals and Events from 2010/11 onwards and production of a FEDP. The proposal to submit an expression of interest in undertaking the regional co-ordination role was discussed with vTv in partnership with the University of Teesside, Events International and Gecko Ltd.

RESOLVED that vTv be directed to bring together a collaboration of key partners to produce a FEDP and look at submitting expression of interest.

## **7 FINANCE**

### **Finance Report**

The Board was presented with an estimate of the 2008/09 outturn based on information available to date and showed that vTv expected to end the year with a surplus.

LE informed the Board that TVJSU was currently undergoing a financial audit with Stockton Council and that changes to processes would be likely.

### **Income Generation**

The Board considered information in relation to income generation. It was noted that on behalf of Tourism Network North East (TNNE) vTv would develop a sales strategy that would aim to deliver income generation opportunities for vTv and TNNE whilst also providing private sector businesses with a tool that identified how vTv and TNNE could increase profitability. A discussion paper would be prepared for consideration at the next joint NE Tourism Advisory Board and Chairs meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> June.

### **Tees Valley Top 10**

The Board discussed the 'Top 10' and was informed that two businesses had declined the second year of the programme but others were still considering their position. The Board acknowledged that the economic climate had changed dramatically and this would be a major factor for businesses.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

## **8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

In terms of the 'How's Business' survey responses had been low. The Board was informed that vTv and Northumberland had indicated that they would be happy for ONE to circulate the survey. It would take the form of 3 questions on a 3 monthly basis.

JFr referred to an update report for the north east on tourism and the recession that had been largely drawn from verbal reports made by the ATP Business Engagement Officers at

the Tourism Network Business & Skills Working Group meeting on 21 April 2009. It appeared that it was a relatively mixed picture for all areas. In the Tees Valley it was noted that the opening of Saltholme Nature Reserve had been successful. It had seen approximately 25,000 visitors in the first 3 months. In Northumberland, January and February visitor numbers and occupancy levels were reported as being excellent for the time of year. March was a bit slower but early reports were that Easter had been very good. For Durham the leisure market was performing well in both the city and rural areas. In Tyne and Wear occupancy in March in Newcastle/Gateshead hotels had been at its highest level for 5 years which was considered to be an achievement during a recession, but probably one that had been bought by extremely heavy discounting.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

**9 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

9 July 2009 – venue tbc