



Visit Isle of Man Executive Agency Agenda

Date: Thursday 7th December 2023 9:30-12:30 & Lunch

Venue: Comis Hotel

Board Attendees:-

Agency Chair: Ranald Caldwell (RC)
Agency CEO: Deborah Heather (DH)
Political Member: Minister Johnston (TJ)

Board Members: David Curtis- Brignell (DCB), Richard Fletcher (RF), John Keggin (JK),

Connie Lovel (CL), Brett Martin (BM), Leigh Morris (LM), Brian Thomson

(BT), Gary Cobb (GC),

In attendance: Mark Lewin (ML), Lukman Alhassan (Secretariat) (LA)

	Agenda Item	Papers	Owner	Action
VM-38-23	Standing Items:		J.,	
	 Apologies – Leigh Morris, Minister Johnston, Brett Martin, Mark Lewin Conflicts of Interest - DH/JK referenced that Island Escapes had been successful in 		DH	
	being awarded the Homestay Contract – The Board were supportive providing the contract award was published early in the new year carefully. Also add to the Visit conflicts record.			
	Hospitality / Gifts (by exception) - None			
	Previous Minutes- approved			
	Outstanding Actions – update required RC to advise LA			
	Updates: Chair Warm greetings and Merry Christmas from the Chair and a thank you to all for the effort put in during the year.		RC	
	 Congratulations to Island Escapes and the Steam Packets for their awards at the Isle of Man Awards for Excellence. 			
	 Congratulations to DCB re new role as Chair of Isle of Wight. No confusions or conflicts as of now but will be monitored. 			
	 Congratulations to Deborah & the team for an outstanding on Destination Day and engaging with the businesses. DCB enquired when the slido questions & answers will be shared with stakeholders. LA confirmed by year end 			
	 Great to see the collaboration with Business Agency regarding the formulation of a strategy for retail and hospitality. 			
	We have received a request from DfE to include a decision log in report			
	/isit CEO			
	 Expressed gratitude to everyone for their support and collaboration in making Destination Day so successful. Would have hoped for more hoteliers to have been present at the event. Team event held on Monday (4/12/2023) during which targets for the upcoming the year were discussed, focusing on areas such as seasonality, digitalisation and marketing. 		DH	

Highlighting the current status of the island not being fully prepared for travel trade and emphasising the plan to assist hoteliers in readiness through training in the upcoming year. Expressed the need to receive schedules and pricing in a timely manner from Steam Packet, MNH and Heritage Railways to effectively plan for the upcoming year, at least, given other destinations would be working now on 2025. CL- Highlighted the challenge of committing to opening schedules. BT – Highlighted that setting timetables is dependent on various factors and is complex DH- Emphasised that achieving the targeted visitor numbers is contingent on the availability of essential services therefore the component parts need to be working efficiently. JK- Suggestion was made to enhance the information available on the Steam Packet's sites to better assist customers and address potential issues effectively. BT-BT suggested that DH & RC should attend the DOI/Liverpool Terminal meetings. RC - Suggested that we collect potential passenger numbers for the upcoming year from Steam Packet to better plan and address the needs of our customers. Airport CB- Pleased to announce the addition of three new non-executive GC airport directors to the team. The airport's operating plan for the future will be presented at the Tynwald meeting on the 24th of March 2024. There are challenges with the Belfast numbers, with travelers opting for Dublin instead. Loganair's numbers are expected to remain constant, while EasyJet is going to experience an increase in passengers.

Expressed optimism about meeting close to the targets for the current year, the plan for the 2024 is to achieve growth in the range of 10 to 15%. DH suggested this should be included in the Visit

CL – Acknowledged the potential impact of negative media coverage, there is concern that such negativity may deter individuals from off the island who are considering visiting.

targets by year end

Discussion followed.

M 40-23	Visit Performance Review (Standing item) & Passenger Survey	LA	
	Despite being on track to surpass both visitor numbers and spending targets, the performance of the MGP has been disappointing		
	CB - Prompting the suggestion to explore the possibility of changing dates to enhance its success in the future and that a displacement exercise should be undertaken.		
	BT -Suggested we also review the Southern 100 performance		
	CL – The Manx Heritage has experienced an increase of 8k more visitors through the end of October compared to the same period last year.		
M 41-23	CEO Visit Board Report & 2024 targets	DH	
	To present the 2024 targets and submit them to the board for consideration. Target note yet to be firmed up and will be circulated shortly. Initial team discussions were 327 passengers, 4138 jobs, average spend of £588 and £191.4 visitor spend.		
	GC - Suggested breaking down the targets further, with specific investment requests aligned to specific targets. DH will focus on this once there is a more comprehensive understanding of the ROIs.		
	JK - November proved to be a highly successful month for Island Escapes, witnessing an increase in bookings of 120% compared to the previous year. This surge in demand is likely attributed to the additional efforts in public relations (PR) and marketing, JK surveying bookers currently. Notably, visitors are expressing satisfaction with the overall experience, encompassing ferry travel, accommodations, and the atmosphere of the island itself.		
	DCB - Consider exploring the opportunity to attract more visitors by creating a content calendar specifically tailored for March and April, coinciding with the Easter period. Develop targeted messaging that highlights the unique appeal of the island during this time, aiming to captivate potential visitors and encourage their interest in experiencing the island's offerings.		
	RC - expressed that the Board needed to ensure that DH had support and suggested reviewing staffing requirements with temporary contracts to address the volume of projects coming Visits way.		
	GC – recommended that we should build resource around output, not the other way round.		
	RC - requested the status of the Marketing & Communications Director and recruitment after pointing out the activity that had taken place was despite the role being vacant		
ı	GC/CL -		

VM 42-23	Service Excellence Board	
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	To address the existing lack of empowerment within the current	DH/RC
	Visit First Committee, the objective is to elevate the initiative to	
	executive level by actively involving Politicians and Department	
	heads and members of the public	
	A separate board will be established by March, distinct from the	
	VIoM Board	
	RC – Clearly delineate the Terms of Reference and articulate the	
	structural framework for the department entrusted with these	
	responsibilities. Proposal to Department in January	
VM 43-23	Visit Infrastructure – Focus on Accommodation pipeline	DH
	Paper was not discuss due to time pressures	
VM 44-23	Board membership review & potential members	
	Board membership review & potential members	
	Two proposed Board candidates were considered by the Board	DH
	Claire McColgan,	
	DH – Provided an overview on candidates,	
	Claire McColgan's strong connections as Director of	
	Culture for Liverpool City Council, particularly in	
	relationship-building was seen as a strategic partnership to	
	grow our relationship with Liverpool City Council and the	
	wider North West region of England.	
	The board provided unanimous support for inviting Claire to join the	
	board.	
		RC
VBA 45 00		
VM 45-23	Events Update	DCB
	Event workshop was conducted in November	
	To establish a focus group to engage with event organisations, and	
	MD has been tasked with organising and overseeing this initiative.	
	Progress is being made smoothly on all fronts.	
	Emphasised the importance of obtaining visitor feedback to	
	strengthen guidelines for event organizers seeking support.	RF
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	Expect to have the plans in place by March.	
VM 46-23	Tourism Levy	
	The terminal leaves and the state of the sta	DU DU
	The tourism levy paper was circulated, but no definitive conclusion	DH
	has been reached. Given the complexity and numerous issues identified, a revisit via a focus groups is deemed necessary to	
	gather additional information. There is a recognition that further	
	extensive work/consultation is required on this matter.	
	·	
	CC It is improvative to compare to union toyon with similar	
	GC – It is imperative to compare tourism taxes with similar	
	locations as potential visitors may be deterred from coming to the	
	locations as potential visitors may be deterred from coming to the island if they perceive additional financial burdens. Easyjet are	
	locations as potential visitors may be deterred from coming to the	

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	OH – Suggested that a workshop approach should be organised in the New Year to discuss the issues and opportunities of a levy.			
M 47-23	A revised Visit Agency TOR was circulated and unanimously approved at the meeting		ALL	
	 Welcome Centre paper and update provided by DH with unanimous approval received 		ALL	
	FC Isle of Man			
s p v	Additionally, the Visit Agency Board consider that the support should be granted with conditions connected, including the club broactively attracting away fans form all relevant league clubs with which Visit Isle of Man would support, and with a view to the club becoming financially independent			
_	OB Manx Heritage			
s F	GC re the potential Manx Nautical Museum in Castletown uggested a statement "The board is supportive of Manx National deritage and have faith in their ability to deliver against plan and budget."			
c s tl	RC requested an updated copy of the Nautical Museum proposal to ome to the Board, pointing out that the Board could only broadly upport what was presented in terms of design, but had no view of ne numbers in the proposal. CL suggested this would now go to the Department.		RC	
e L o	CL – Currently MNH in discussions with Barry Gibb from the Bee Gees, establishing direct contact to secure a collection for xhibition. Additionally, exploring the potential collaboration with iverpool for exhibits featuring the Beatles and Bee Gees on the Isle f Man. While it is still in the early stages, available space is being onsidered for the exhibition setup.			
	Next Meeting Date: 9.30 – 12.30 Thursday 21st March 2024. Conflict for board members DH to circulate doodle poll for dates.			
	Proposed Future Dates: TBC			
	Close			
	01000			

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Ref	Description	Owner	Due Date	Status
Brought for				
VM-33-22-4	Engaged in conversations with Barry from the Bee	CL	MAR 2024	ongoing
	Gees to explore the possibility of obtaining collections			
X	for an exhibition on the island.			
New				
VM-25-23-1	The Public Rights of Way Group are currently preparing	AB	STATE THE STATE OF	ongoing
	a paper in response to the Select Committee of		FEB 24	
	Tynwald Recommendations to Tynwald in February			
	2024. It is hoped that once the paper is finalised and			
	approved by DOI, MUA, DEFA, AGs and DfE that it will			
	be shared with the Visit Board.			
New			101	**
VM-34-23-1	Meeting cancelled due to Heysham sailing getting	RC/DH	JAN 2024	ongoing
a	cancelled. Plans to reschedule.			
VM 36-23-1	LA reached out to BT who assigned Richard Hird to	BT/LA	JAN 2024	ongoing
	provide additional data on more passenger information.			
VM-38-23-1	DH fed into the Departmental review. Post political	DH/BT	JAN 2024	ongoing
	direction (COMIN/Tynwald), discussions will take place			
	with Steam Packet.			
WS-2	The Board reviewed the booking curves/potential gap	LA	MAR 2024	ongoing
	analysis to 100% occupancy provided by Brett and the	540,000	Habite de Rocció de Colonia de Rocció de Restricti	2700
	equivalent availability from the occupancy report.			
	Request to create a graph similar to the ones shown in			
	the meeting to show the curve for types of visitor			
	including groups. NB please note segmentation will be			
	varied across the industry.			
VM-39-23	Board members are requested to provide their input on	RC	MAR 24	
	what the desired autonomy should entail.			
VM-39-23-1	Respond to the Slido questions and share feedback	DH/LA	YE 2023	
	from Destination Day.			
VM-39-23-2	DH/RC to schedule a meeting with BT and CL1	DH/RC	JAN 24	
			The second section of the sect	
VM-39-23-3	BT to provide a marketing plan for Steam Packet	BT	DEC 23	
VM-40-23-1	·	MD		
VM-40-23-2		DH		