



**ACTION POINTS
OF THE SHROPSHIRE TOURISM (UK) LTD BOARD MEETING**

TUESDAY 6th DECEMBER 2011 at 10am

LORD HILL HOTEL, ABBEY FOREGATE, SHREWSBURY

Directors present:

GL, JC, LD, GB, DC, TH, PM

Company Officers present:

Rod Hughes – Finance Director, Simon McCloy – Chief Executive,
Jodie Stephen – Senior Business Support Officer

Observer:

Geoff Grimes

Glen welcomed Geoff Grimes to the meeting. Geoff introduced himself and gave the board some information on his background in tourism, his B&B and work with Bishop's Castle Tourism Group and the Walking with Offa project.

1.0 Apologies
JM

2.0 Minutes of the last meeting held on 17th October 2011 at the Lion Hotel, Shrewsbury

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record

3.0 Matters arising

Simon said he had now spoken with Tim King at Shropshire Council with regards to training budgets and been told that there were none available.

4.0 Chairman's Report

Glen reported on a roadshow he had attended at the Birmingham Hippodrome promoting the 2012 Olympics. He mentioned that Visit Britain had money for the Top 10 attractions in the country, however there were none in Shropshire. He also mentioned the 20.12% discount scheme where attractions could offer discounts and be featured on the website. Information had been emailed out to Shropshire Tourism members to participate in the scheme.

Glen also informed the board he had met with Louise Cross from Shropshire Council and had a positive open discussion on tourism. He and Simon had also met with Edward Goddard from Destination Shrewsbury and the draft DDP marketing strategy Shropshire Tourism had been commissioned to produce for Shrewsbury had been submitted to the Council. The basic premise of the strategy was the sell of the independent shops, but backed up with funding from the large shopping centres. A marketing group of 5 people was to be set up.

A discussion took place on the marketing strategies Shropshire Tourism were working on for the other two DDP's, North Shropshire and Ludlow & the Shropshire Hills. Simon stated they had offered to instigate the set up of a Severn Valley DDP as this was currently not being actioned by the two councils involved, Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin. Simon also pointed out the Telford & Shropshire Marketing Partnership had now just become Telford Marketing Partnership, and Telford & Shropshire Conferences had become Telford Conferences.

5.0 Company Secretary Update – Deborah Clough

Deborah did not have a report to deliver.

6.0 Finance Directors Report – Rod Hughes

- i. 2011/2012 Monitoring update**
- ii. 2012/13 Budget discussions**

Rod had previously circulated his report. There had been two budgets set for the 2012/13 year.

Glen commented that taking out the rental income there were quite low returns on the tourism based activities.

Rod commented that when he started in the role of Finance Director, the company had made a loss, now there was a profit of £18,000 predicted.

It was commented that income needed to be made this year in the IT department, Simon explained with the recent changeover in staff he hoped the new IT team would be able to deliver what was predicted by the old team, this would be discussed once the two new team members had settled in.

Simon reported that they planned to increase the membership fee for 2012 by £2, making it £192 (inc VAT), and the brochure income was set at a target of £50,000. There had been a big drop out of advertisers this year, so there needed to be an advert fee increase in order to counteract this.

With regards to the SLA from Shropshire Council, there was a prediction of £20,000, however this is not certain.

DTS assessments were to include Walkers, Cyclists and Pets Friendly awards as add-ons to the main assessment.

The board accepted the 2012/13 draft budget proposals.

7.0 Chief Executive Report

Simon had previously circulated his report to the board, so briefly ran through certain points.

The priority was to get the new IT team up and running as a month with just one IT person had caused a delay in some clients websites. Also a lot of the hosting invoices go out in the last quarter of the year.

Simon also informed the board of the tender they had submitted to Shropshire Council for a Travel Shropshire, map driven website. The tender was worth £52,000 and was funded by public transport money. There was also a tender for a destination website for Brecon that had been submitted. Simon made the point that these tender opportunities were important in order to grow the company, as the membership businesses were not a high spend sector.

With regards to the brochure contracts, Simon said these were always reliant on the district tourist associations producing them. Deborah stated that they were thinking whether it would be viable to produce the Shrewsbury brochure in 2013.

The Shropshire brochure was discussed. It was suggested that the brochure needed added value, and to be a more complete guide to the county. Simon stated that in order to include all businesses in the county, someone would have to pay. Other counties have funding in order to produce such big directory based publications.

Simon pointed out that with Places to Visit this year there would be a whole new design tied in with the Attractions/Group Travel package, which would include vouchers and web entries.

Business & Marketing tenders that had been submitted recently included the two aforementioned ones and one based in Mid Wales that they did not get, however were told there may be additional work to tender for in the future.

8.0 DTS Assessments

Lesley reported that there had been 13 drop outs from the scheme, 10 of which had also dropped out of membership and the other 3 had gone with agencies.

She also reported on the new Walkers, Cyclists and Pets Friendly awards and also the Gold award which would be launched early next year.

There had also been a change in the national scoring criteria, this would need to be amended on the excel sheets used by the assessors by the IT team.

Action: Jodie to ask the IT team to look at the assessment scoring excel sheet.

Lesley was also producing a hints and tips sheet for people wishing to improve their grading.

9.0 AGM

The date of the 2012 AGM was agreed for the week commencing 19th March. Deborah suggested the South of the county would be a good location for a change. Tom offered the Ludlow Food Centre as a venue free of charge. Jodie said she would liaise with Tom on a suitable day.

Action: Jodie to liaise with Tom on a date for the AGM at the Food Centre.

10.0 Any other business

Tom suggested making promotion videos of the county could be a new revenue stream. He said he uses a local college student make films for the Food Centre.

Geoff commented on how he was finding Visit England inefficient and how he had decided to switch to DTS for his assessment

10.0 Date of next meeting

Tuesday 21st February 2012 10am, The Lion Hotel, Wyle Cop, Shrewsbury

NOTE: AGM date is set for Tuesday 20th March 2012 at the Ludlow Food Centre.