

# Cross-Party Group on Tourism

Monday 25 October 2021, 3pm Online

Draft Minute for Approval

Present

MSPs

Evelyn Tweed  
Paul McLennan  
Rachael Hamilton  
Stuart McMillan  
Colin Smyth  
Siobhian Brown

Non-MSP Group Members

Alasdair Smart, ScotRail  
Carol Matthews, Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority  
Cathy Craig, Wild About Argyll  
Chloe Forbes, Scottish Country Sports Tourism Group  
Ross Cunningham, Scottish Parliament  
David Smythe, Perthshire Tourism Partnership  
David Weston, Scottish BandB Association  
Diarmid Hearn, National Trust for Scotland  
Gary Atkinson,  
Sheila Gilmore, VisitArran  
Ian McCall, Path for All  
Jean-Philippe Monod, Expedia  
John Erskine, Scottish Chambers of Commerce  
Ken Higgins, Elfenheim Park  
Lawrence Durden, Skills Development Scotland  
Marc Crothall, Scottish Tourism Alliance  
Marie Lorimer, AirBnB  
Matthew Niblett, UK Short Term Accommodation Association  
Scott McMurray, Scottish Parliament  
Orchid Liu, UK Chinese Times  
Peter Ovenstone, Heritage Railway Association  
Ross Pollock, Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority  
Sarah Cameron, SENScot  
Shomik Panda, UK Short Term Accommodation Association  
Simon Ovenden, Scottish Land & Estates  
Susanne Cameron-Neilsen, The Scotch Whisky Association

# Apologies

Alexander Burnette MSP

Murdo Fraser MSP

Jenni Minto MSP

Foysol Choudhury MSP

Fiona Campbell, Association of Scotland's Self Caterers

Victoria Brooks, Wild Scotland

Douglas McAdam, Wild Scotland

Kenneth Bramham, STGA

## 1- Welcome and Introductions

Welcome and introductions from Evelyn Tweed MSP.

## 2- Election of Office Bearers

Racheal Hamilton MSP proposed Evelyn Tweed MSP as Convener, seconded by Stuart McMillan MSP. Evelyn Tweed elected as Convener. Evelyn Tweed MSP proposed Paul McLennan as Co-Convener, seconded by Siobhian Brown MSP.

Racheal Hamilton MSP enquired to the need for a Co-Convener, Evelyn Tweed MSP cited need to have more MSPs involved in the Group, and also noted a preference to also have another Deputy Convener. It was noted normally Co-Conveners would be from cross-party representation, but that no objection was made to Paul McLennan MSP taking the role.

Evelyn Tweed MSP proposed Gavin Mowat of VisitScotland as Secretary which was Seconded by David Smythe. Evelyn Tweed MSP proposed Scott McMurray Office Manager to become Treasurer, Siobhian Brown seconded.

Deputy Convener(s) to be confirmed.

## 3- Open Discussion on Group Priorities

Evelyn Tweed

- In reconsidering the aims & activity of the CPG for this session, what is important to sector?
  - o Recovery from COVID
  - o Hospitality recruitment and retention – UK wide
  - o Given COP, sustainable tourism what that means for Scotland
- Year of Stories – themed years – would this be an area of interest?

Marc Crothall

- Been disappointed with the attendance and engagement from MSPs
- Aims of group should reflect 2030 strategy
- Sustainability; recruitment- already have projects under recovery funding but important issues

- Policy and identifying the constraints on industry will be important
- MSPs to be champions of tourism
- Use the CPG as less a forum for presentations and existing activity; use it more for pushing forward agendas that will support businesses / lobbying
- Step-change compared to where we were before.

Evelyn Tweed

- Be good to identify the actions we can work on together to help industry

Stuart McMillan

- Absolutely agree with focus on recovery
- Sustainable tourism – environment- as well as accessible tourism
- Year of Stories – themed years have been a success. But need stories outwith honeypot destinations

Rachael Hamilton

- Change timing – not clash with members business
- Issues not touched on last session included mental wellbeing for industry
- Short term let licensing scheme
- Support for NetZero – there are orgs who are supporting but businesses still unsure how to achieve when finances are stretched

Colin Smyth

- How we get people to go to non-honeypot destinations. Use opportunity from covid for inclusive growth across all of Scotland
- Most successful CPGs have clear actions – e.g. enquiries leading to recommendations
  - o About taking topics and having actions to take forward as MSPs and wider group
  - o Add value and not duplicate existing fora
- Better to schedule to avoid clashes with events in parliament or other CPGs

Simon Ovenden

- Important area for consideration is how we move people around without vehicles (CNP considering this)
- There are severe pressure points in national parks and NC500
- Significant (c25%) Rural Self Catering could close if the licencing legislations come through – massive loss to rural communities
- 14% of SMEs in rural areas in Scotland rely on hospitality and tourism

David Weston (SB&BA)

- Supportive of Marc's point– start with 2030 strategy
- Recovery plan with industry support
- Infrastructure – amenities are very important to visitor experience
- It's the role of the group and MSPs to champion tourism
- Comms & education piece around explaining value of tourism

Marc Crothall

- STL resolution won't resolve affordable housing issue – affordable housing is in turn a barrier to the workforce question

- Overlap with policy areas
- Asking MSPs to align and work at national level and across policy areas e.g in other CPGs
- Issue of transport is huge for the sector
- Supply chain needs to function

Matthew Niblett

- SG planning control zones
- Supportive of staffing and sustainability issues being a focus

Evelyn Tweed

- Doing a bit of proactive PR and activity around the CPG – try to get more MSPs engaged

## 4- Date of Next Meeting

Evelyn Tweed

- Next meeting to take place fairly soon after cop 26

Marc Crothall

- Tourism industry conference 24/25 Nov, would like to avoid this date
- Tourism Industry Council meets four times a year, suggest a 2-part agenda with the industry council first followed by CPG agenda.