

## AITC BOARD MEETING 24<sup>th</sup> October 2022

**Venue:** Online

**Attendees:** **Chair:** Iain Jurgensen (IJ)  
**Vice Chair;** Emma Clark (EC)  
Cathy Craig (CC/CEO)  
Fiona McPhail (FM)  
Robert Kidd (RK)  
Ewan Colville (EC)  
Graeme McFall (GM)  
Andy Roger (AR)

**Apologies:** Calum Ross (CR)

**Agenda:**

1. **Chair Open**
  - a. **Chair opening remarks**
  - b. **Declarations of interest**
  - c. **Minutes of the last meeting** – to be agreed
  - d. **Record of Board Actions** – outstanding items / updates
2. **Finance, Assurance & Risk – (CEO in lieu of Calum Ross)**
  - a. **Findings from RAC 05/10/22**
  - b. **Update on current risk register** – Board to agree
  - c. **Current cash flow** – CEO to add commentary
3. **CEO Report – CC**
  - a. **CEO report** – Board opportunity for questions
4. **Membership fees increase proposal**
5. **Memorandum of Association changes update** - CEO
6. **Ferry actions** – Chair
7. **AOB** – no additional points of AOB were raised to be discussed.

**Minutes:**

**1. Chair Open**

- Apologies were noted for CR.
- The Chair asked for declarations of interest. No declarations of personal interest were offered.
- The minutes of the last meeting 28.07.22 were approved by the Board with no amendments.

***NEW ACTION(S):***

- CEO has added new actions from Ferries subgroup. No comments were offered additional to the actions proposed.

**2. Finance, Assurance & Risk – (CEO in lieu of Calum Ross)**

- CEO outlined key challenge is that we are now operating predominantly on member fees and ABC funding for marketing as other grant monies (for marketing) are now spent.

## AITC BOARD MEETING

24<sup>th</sup> October 2022

- CEO confirmed that funding from 'private projects' was being successfully secured however the quantum of funding work is becoming the bulk of her CEO role.
- RK raised the point that without a funding guarantee beyond March '25, this is a matter the board should be addressing now.
- The Chair suggested a subgroup should be formed to look at funding in general terms and asked for volunteers. Fiona & Graeme volunteered to take part in a subgroup looking at this matter.
- GM suggested we might need to look at the problem differently e.g., how can we be sustainable rather than rely on funding. CEO confirmed that a HIE event for supported DMOs was taking place this week and that she would have more information on what others are doing after that event.

### 3. CEO Report – Cathy Craig

The CEO gave her report verbally as below.

#### Key highlights:

- We have passed the first hurdle for UK Levelling up funding and have now been asked to submit detailed costed proposals by 4<sup>th</sup> November
  - CEO confirmed to board the funding being applied for is for economic benefit and is in three tranches (Y1-65k, Y2-65K, Y3-70k)
  - CEO informed the board that ABC funding is likely to be higher for 23/24 but ABC has indicated no funding beyond 24/25 is likely as things stand currently
- Caroline has now been onboarded as Membership Services Manager and has already signed up her first member. Her transition is being supported by CEO & Lara.
- With Lara now focused solely on social media, we have a solid content planner developed and better records for when members businesses are featured.
- We have lots of strong KPIs to report on for AGM in November; Team will be drawing this information together over the next few weeks.
- No pushback from first communication regarding articles; some confusion regarding voting rights of associate members – now cleared up.
- EC updated board on set-up of Facebook tracking pixel on WAA site and creation of new retargeting audiences, which are populating and some looking healthy, i.e., WAA 'Facebook' Engagers = 17,000 | WAA Video Engagers = 14,000 – this enables re-targeting of groups of visitors to the WAA website.

#### Challenges:

- Carron Tobin has now full stepped back from the campaign management role. We do not have sufficient funds for a marketing manager and so CEO is performing both roles currently which is very challenging.
- With time spent interviewing and recruiting and onboarding, sales have taken a back seat and memberships have slowed over the last couple of months. CEO is hoping we will be back upto speed by end October.

## AITC BOARD MEETING 24<sup>th</sup> October 2022

### Website platform upgrade:

- CEO screen shared and showed Board graphical mockup of refreshed WAA website. Board were invited to comment and ask questions via Board Teams channel. CEO highlighted:
  - More emphasis on mobile responsiveness (the majority of web visitors access in this way)
  - Option of video in hero image slot
  - More usable mobile menu format
  - Cathy will share graphics with AITC board for further feedback
  - Discussion around custom interactive maps (showing AITC member businesses and trail way points) vs google maps
  - Discussion for 'Food from Argyll' kitemark to be more prevalent

The following points were raised following CEO report.

- GM asked Q about quality of imagery for use on updated site: CEO confirmed AITC has a decent inventory of good images but that there are gaps for certain destinations and activity types.
- EC asked about content gaps covering segments other than 'adventure', i.e., gourmet, built heritage, ancestry etc. CEO said continued leveraging of UGC (User Gen Content) would hopefully yield more content across these segments even if content funding wasn't supporting this.
- Board expressed agreement to the general direction of new visuals and said it was an improvement.

### 4. Membership fees increase proposal

- CEO proposed no increase to membership fees given the current financial constraints facing tourism businesses but did confirm that STA are looking to increase their membership fees this year.
- GM asked if we should be improving benefits to members. CEO responded that we were not resourced to do so and that she believes the membership fees are good value for services provided and that we must do a better job of recording all the opportunities and 'proof points' and then communicating them. This is work that is ongoing.
- The Board approved the decision not to increase membership fee in November.

### 5. Memorandum of Association Changes

- CEO confirmed that the first communication had gone out to members with no questions or objections and that the second communication was due out this week putting forward the resolution to be voted on.
- CEO confirmed the process will be as follows:
  - Members will receive a formal invite to AGM together with the proposed resolution and instructions on voting on the day at the AGM or by proxy (email to the Chair)
  - During the AGM the electronic votes will be counted and put together with proxy votes and a decision made during the meeting. If the resolution is passed, we will update the memorandum accordingly. If the resolution is not passed, CEO and Board will reconvene to determine next steps.
  - CEO confirmed Board will need to meet immediately after the AGM to re-constitute the Board – this meeting (online) is already in the Board's diary

## AITC BOARD MEETING 24<sup>th</sup> October 2022

### 6. Ferry actions

- Chair confirmed that the Ferries subgroup meeting had taken place and the actions agreed have been added to the Action Tracker. The Board discussed the primary issues.
  - Members encouraged to join ferry community boards/groups
  - Emma agreed to be AITC spokesperson on ferry matters
- EC explained methodology/approach to estimating economic impact of cancelled and delayed ferry service (this was done for Islay using blend of CalMac and VS data)
- RK asked why there is no dedicated freight sailing to Islay. EC reported that CMal saying there's no crew and ferry capacity despite the economic model for freight-only being positive

### AOB

- No matters of AOB were raised. CEO reminded Board of upcoming dates for their diaries.

**END**