



Minutes of the Twenty Fourth Annual General Meeting of Mid Wales Tourism held at National Library, Aberystwyth on Friday 4th December 2015

Present: Anne Lloyd-Jones, Chairman
Rowland Rees-Evans - Ceredigion
Neil Bale - Powys
William Moeran - Meirionnydd
Valerie Hawkins, MWT Chief Executive
Martin Davies, MWT Accountant
39 Members of Mid Wales Tourism

1.0 Chairman's Welcome and Address

Chairman welcomed all members to the 24th Annual General Meeting of Mid Wales Tourism and extended the wishes of the Board for a successful and prosperous season for the industry. Chairman extended thanks to Directors and members for their support and involvement during the previous year.

Chairman thanked the members for their continuing support throughout the year and outlined the business re-structuring that has been undertaken to ensure MWT is well-placed to support members and the wider tourism business community in future years.

Chairman noted from the annual report that the private and public sector organisations have continued to work closely together. The importance of the continued public and private sector co-operation was highlighted.

Chairman acknowledged the commitment and enthusiasm of Val Hawkins and the small team at MWT and their continued professionalism providing excellent service to members.

2.0 Minutes of the 23rd Annual General Meeting

The minutes of the twenty-third Annual General Meeting of MWT held at Powis Castle, Nr Welshpool were presented. Approval of the minutes as a true record was proposed by Rowland Rees-Evans, seconded by Adrian Greason-Walker and was unanimously accepted by the members present

3.0 Adoption of the Annual Report for the Year 2014/15

Anne Lloyd-Jones briefly summarised the report, acknowledging both the increased public/private sector co-operation and the continued hard work of the staff at MWT.

No questions were presented on the Annual Report for the year 2014/15, therefore adoption of the Annual Report was proposed by Neil Bale, seconded by Rowland Rees-Evans and was unanimously accepted by the members present.

4.0 Adoption of Accounts

Accounts for the year ending 31st July 2015 were presented and Chairman formally thanked the Accountants Patterson, Jones and Evans for their work throughout the year.

Mr Mick Taylor asked why there was a drop in income relating to marketing services. VH explained that the loss of income was due to the reduction in project income following the winding up of the Mid Wales Regional Tourism Partnership. Adoption of the Accounts was proposed by Rowland Rees-Evans, seconded by Adrian Greason-Walker and was unanimously accepted by the members present.

5.0 Appointment of Accountants for Ensuing Year

The appointment of Mr Martin Davies, 8 Bro Nantcellan, Clarach, Nr Aberystwth, SY23 3PH as Accountant for the ensuing year was proposed by Rowland Rees-Evans, seconded by Adrian Greason-Walker and was unanimously accepted by the members present.

6.0 Appointment of Ceredigion Trade Directors

Following nominations for trade directors in Ceredigion, Mr Rowland Rees-Evans was appointed as Trade Director. The confirmation of the appointment was proposed by Neil Bale, seconded by Dylan Roberts and unanimously accepted by the members present.

7.0 Appointment of Mr Paul Boland as Co-opted Director

The appointment of Mr Paul Boland as Co-opted Director was proposed by Rowland Rees-Evans, seconded by Neil Bale and was unanimously accepted by the members present.

MWT Members Forum

8.0 Nurturing Profit Margins - Fairbooking™ Wales

Val Hawkins presented an overview of Fairbooking Wales explaining that the aim is to help businesses improve profit margins and promote business best practice. Overall the campaign is looking to achieve the best deal for the customer, business and the destination.

A broad ranging discussion about the new campaign followed the presentation and members raised the following questions:

- Rowland Rees-Evans - How payments are made to charities?
VH explained that participating businesses do this directly to their nominated charity.
- Louise Lloyd - How do visitors find out about FB businesses?
VH explained that participating businesses were expected to promote this directly to their visitors and also that the FB logos would be added to the businesses online listings which would appear throughout all Guestlink channels. In addition, bookable businesses would be promoted on FairBookingUK.com website
- Neil Bale - What is the relationship with Fairbooking UK?
VH explained that MWT operated the scheme in Wales under licence and in partnership with Cumbria, New Forest and Cornwall
- Jessie Barstow, Fforest Fields - Why only four UK destinations?
VH explained that FairBooking was a new campaign and it was hoped that other destinations would join in the near future.
- Anne Lloyd Jones - Is it possible to expand on the number of charities?
VH explained that MWT have nominated charities but there was no reason why this could not be expanded in future.
- Heather Brown, Barmouth Publicity – Are contributions to a nominated charity expected to include all direct bookings?
VH explained that the idea was to contribute a small amount on all direct bookings.

9.0 MWT Focus for 2016

Val Hawkins, MWT Chief Executive, presented an overview of the opportunities and challenges facing MWT in the year ahead.

Val highlighted a number of achievements during 2014/15 that included completion of the business restructuring, a very successful regional conference held during Wales Tourism Week, review of the MWT membership offer and introduction of additional membership services including web builds, marketing reviews and two new marketing initiatives focusing on transport/travel and Fairbooking Wales.

Val outlined priorities for 2016 to include a focus on activities that would assist businesses maintain or grow their profit margins, support the work of the Wales Tourism Alliance to continue to provide a strong national and independent voice for the tourism industry in Wales, and to build relationships with business networks and destination area groups.

Val also highlighted the importance to growing our membership base and ensuring that our current offer provides added value for our member businesses. MWT benefits and services are reviewed annually and new services include web build options, marketing reviews and one2one support.

MWT's in-house expertise includes support for businesses across both Mid & South Wales providing a specialist helpdesk facility to help all businesses make the most of the Guestlink system, and continues in its role as Visit Wales Data Partner.

Marketing activities in 2016 would include a new look Bedroom Browser and 'tear-off' visitor map, Press and Media support and a focus on the development of the groups and tours market.

10.0 2016 Trends, Opportunities and Challenges - Members & Directors

Members were also given the floor to ask questions where a number of members spoke to the directors and Val about the future plans. Discussion included:

- With Visit Wales introduction of thematic year campaigns – what is MWT doing to align with Year of Adventure?
- VH explained that MWT press & media activity would support Visit Wales campaign and that the new look Bedroom Browser would re-inforce the 'Adventure' message. MWT visitor websites would also focus on developing the adventure theme.
- AGW discussed the transport project – create adventure by leaving the car at home (low impact travel). Travelling adventures.
- AGW raised the importance of political advocacy. VH explained that there was a new Chair and new Vice Chair at WTA

11.0 AOB

National Library offered members a behind the scenes tour of the library.

There were no issues raised under any other business. Chairman thanked members for attending and declared the AGM closed at 11.45 am