

**Runcorn & Widnes Tourism Business Network**  
**9.30am Everglades Hotel, Widnes**  
**19<sup>th</sup> January 2010**

**Present**

S. Bullen (SB), I. Bisset (IB), S. Garnett (SG), K. Jones (KJ), P. Bentham, J. Burgess-Wilson (JBW), J. Doyle (JD), P. Fernay (PF), B. Horabin (BH), C. Houghton (CH), D. Nowell (DN), I. Rutter (IR), A. Terry (AT), S. Jones (SJ)

**Apologies**

C. Colquhoun, A. Munday, C. McDade, L. McGarry, J. Chadwick, J. Maher, R. Maher, P. Audoire, T. Booth, S. Rimmer, Y Rice

**Minutes from Previous Meeting**

- Please note the dates for the 2010 Vintage Rally will be **25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> September** not 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> as previously stated.

**Business Update**

- Catalyst – Numbers have fallen slightly although public visits have increased.
- Daresbury – Visitor numbers are static. Expecting drop off as the year progresses due to work on new Visitor Centre. Advising visitors that they may be best delaying their visit until after works are complete.
- St Luke's – Looking to develop Farnmouth area. Working with Barbara Mothershaw.
- Kingsway Leisure – Visits are up, swimming especially. Weather has kept some people away.
- Everglades – January has been bad with the weather. 2 functions booked in for late in the month and conference enquiries are up. Wedding bookings have doubled. Reduced rates to try to increase occupancy.
- Selwyns – Sales last year were the same as previous. So far this year they are down badly due to the weather.
- Ski Centre – Snow meant people couldn't get to the centre. People coming but not spending money on secondary spend. 'Donuts' now being introduced which has created lots of interest.
- Diane Nowell – No coach work at all. Doing fewer slide shows due to less income.
- Brindley – New season starting next weekend (30<sup>th</sup> & 31<sup>st</sup> Jan) New brochure now available. Panto season just finished. Overall attendance way over 70%.

**HBC Update (IB)**

- Unsure of the HBC's tourism future. IB & SB no confirmed future jobs as yet. Jobs do appear in the structure related to tourism but there are no guarantees as to who will do them.
- Promotions & Tourism Team is being split. SG and Amy Covington moving to Community Services to plan events such as Vintage Rally.
- Roles based within Marketing will likely not be solely related to Tourism. Things like websites will be maintained but others like Tourism Talk may stop.
- Unsure as to HBC's future role in the TBN

- Blogsite address, [www.rwtbn.blogspot.com](http://www.rwtbn.blogspot.com)
- JBW thanked Tourism Team for their work and asked whether there was anything she could do to help change the decision.
- IB, SB & CH all suggested that the TBN should continue as it is important to the businesses.
- IB suggested that the secretariat for the TBN could be split into 2 roles: one to chase people up to attend meetings and one to take and send out minutes.

### **Souvenirs/Tourism Awards (SB)**

- Great Days Out Fair taking place on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> February. Bolton Arena.
- Looking to buy souvenirs such as pens etc. Would like to know who the businesses use at present. Info to go to SB to collate a list that might be useful to the businesses, particularly non-corporate ones.
- If there is a group of people interested in attending event Great Days Out event organisers will sort out transport and tours of the local area. Anyone interested can call 0161 235 5224
- SJ offered free coach to event if enough people were interested.
- Tourism Awards, 26<sup>th</sup> February, De Vere Hotel, Daresbury Park.
- Shortlisting has taken place (details on blog). Bit disappointed with the response from some businesses given the amount of time people were given.
- Tickets are the same price as last year £45. Guests are best approaching the businesses themselves to order tickets as they can claim the VAT back.
- Money for the Tourism Awards will still be available for next year despite Council uncertainty.

### **Training (SB)**

- Loyal or Lost customers Workshop next Tuesday at Norton Priory (12.30pm-16.30pm).
- There are now enough bookings to ensure training goes ahead but there are still a number of places available.
- The cost is £20 for SME's and £30 otherwise. If interested contact Karen Illingworth at TMP.
- SB handed out leaflets for Success Through People course.
- SB starting work on the Tourism Talk next week. If anyone wants something to go in let SB know this week. PB to send electronic version of new programme to SB.

### **TMP Round Up (CH)**

- Nominations are now open for TMP awards in June.
- Halton winner in the Customer Service section will go through to TMP Awards., If successful there they can go further to North West and even national awards.
- 22<sup>nd</sup> February is the closing date for nominations and all the info is on TMP's website.
- Awards Workshop available to provide help with applications. Halton's will be held at The Brindley. CH to confirm date asap.
- Visitor guide will be out in the next couple of weeks. CH to check why neither IB nor SB have seen a proof of Halton's section.
- [www.visitliverpool.com](http://www.visitliverpool.com) going through revamp. Should be online sometime in March.
- Advertising campaign to take place for region in February. Targeted mainly in

London and South West around high footfall areas should as tube stations.

- New Director of Tourism will be announced soon. Hopefully in time to attend the TMP's members meeting which will take place at the end of March.

### **AOB**

- Lanes will be closed overnight on the bridge in March and April.
- Stephen Rimmer may attend future meetings to discuss how best to get information on road works to the businesses.
- Road Race, Easter Sunday (4<sup>th</sup> April). Bridge will be closed for 20 minutes, approx 09:20-09:40.
- [www.visithalton.com](http://www.visithalton.com) has viewing figures rising around 2,000 per month. Event Calendar also increasing in viewing figures.
- Kiosks currently being installed and will be up and running by end of March.
- [www.visitliverpool.com](http://www.visitliverpool.com) causing some problems on kiosks due to size of images loading on the website..
- Norton Priory appearing on History of the World, BBC programme.
- Ian Munro is one of HBC's contacts regarding brown tourist signs. If he is unable to help, he will know who to point to for the right direction.

### **Next Meeting TBC**

Either Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> March or Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> March. HBC to arrange venue