



## **Board of Directors Meeting - DRAFT**

Tuesday, 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022

Virtual

### **Minutes**

#### **Present:**

Adrienne Carmichael (Chair)

Tara Scott (Vice-Chair)

Barry Burton

Clare Winskill

David Nash

Donald Dunlop

Geraldine Hamilton

Jane Slaughter

Louise Dickins

Nigel Pollard

Noemi Alonso

Simon Allan

Fiona Campbell (Chief Executive)

Eleanor McBain (Membership/Admin)

Joyce Borthwick (Partners & Events / Minutes)

Victoria Brooks (Strategy & Communications)

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### **1. Chair's Introduction & Welcome**

Adrienne Carmichael, Chair, welcomed the Board members to the meeting. Adrienne confirmed that the LGHP Committee had supported the Scottish Government's proposal to delay the date for STL license applications from existing operators this morning.

### **2. Apologies for Absence**

All Board members were in attendance, therefore, no apologies received.

### **3. Minutes of Meeting 25<sup>th</sup> October 2022**

Minutes of meeting approved as distributed.  
Proposed by Tara Scott. Seconded by Nigel Pollard.  
There were no matters arising.

## 4. Membership Subscriptions & Trends

Eleanor spoke to her Membership subscription and trends document – copy below. Membership numbers remain positive probably due to the threats from short term let licensing. Members who did have not renewed have now been removed from the system. Feedback indicates that many of them have or intend to close and sell up.



ASSC%20membersh  
ip%20trends%20201

## 5. Chief Executive's Report

Fiona welcomed Jane Slaughter to her first meeting of the Board of Directors. Fiona circulated her Chief Executive's Report as below. There was a short discussion of items in the report that were not addressed later in the agenda.



Chief Executives  
Report February 202

### 5.1 Resignation of First Minister:

Fiona commented on the resignation of the First Minister and the need to gain traction with leadership contenders re STLs and ensure that lobbying was not diluted by the situation regarding business related issues including the Deposit Return Scheme and Alcohol Advertising ban. The STA are to arrange hustings and Fiona is keen to lead on this to ensure STLs are not pushed off the agenda. The Federation of Small Business are also putting out information on business related issues.

### 5.2 Rates Re-evaluation

There is still significant work to be done on the rates re-valuation with some properties seeing an increase of 300%. Fiona is working with the assessors.

No other questions were asked following Fiona's update.

## 6. Staffing & Restructuring Proposals

Fiona reported that the team are working tirelessly to deal with the extraordinary level of work. In consultation with Adrienne and Johnson Carmichael it has been confirmed we can afford to fill 2 x full time key positions – with Eleanor retiring in April and Joyce proposing to retire this year also. Job descriptions have been worked up with a specialist tourism recruitment agency. Adrienne commented that there is a very tight timescale for recruitment and advised the Board that she may need to convene a recruitment sub-committee at short notice.

**Fiona & Louise** to discuss as Louise found using "Indeed" a very helpful medium for recruitment.

## 7. Website Assets

**7.1 EmbraceScotland:** Fiona reported that the new EmbraceScotland website is working extremely well and Victoria will update in the next item. There was a period of testing and improvements but it is proving invaluable already.

Jane and Simon asked how many owners are booked through EmbraceScotland website? Fiona indicated that it is difficult to know about conversions of views to bookings. Barry suggested looking at "Pretty Links" to track this. **Fiona** to discuss with Bulb.

Many thanks to Noemi who has delivered two EmbraceScotland specific Talks to the membership – both of which were extremely well received.

**7.2 ASSC Website:** Fiona reported that we are working extremely well with Bulb Studios and testing for the new website will commence this week, with a view to launch in the next few weeks. We are having a handover of elements of the website today which will be subject to identifying bugs and vigorous testing as the membership renewal invoices, which have been delayed from 1<sup>st</sup> February because of the impending implementation of the website require to be sent and need to be correct.

Nigel suggested that the Directors could assist to help with the testing.

Many thanks to the team and also Tara for helping with both EmbraceScotland and ASSC websites.

## 8. Marketing Update

Victoria gave an overview of the EmbraceScotland marketing campaign which was launched on the 18<sup>th</sup> January 2023. Comms were shared widely with industry and included a consumer newsletter and press release, including some paid advertising. Press was picked up by The SUN. Victoria indicated that it is a well thought out campaign which will provide a strong foundation for the EmbraceScotland brand. Details of the campaign included the "Jackets optional" film were described. Going forward we will be monitoring very closely to maximise engagement in support of our marketing members.

Fiona indicated that this is a critical asset and an amazing member benefit and will help with upselling, member recruitment and much more.



Embrace Marketing  
and campaign overv

## 9. Strategic Planning Update 2022 - 2026

Victoria presented 2 papers on the Strategic Plan 2022 – 2026 as below – updated versions below



Strategic Plan  
2022-2026 ii.pdf



Strategic Plan  
2022-2026.pdf

The content is self-explanatory with the strategy being split into two parts. Part 1 covers the updated outline Plan previously presented to the Board. The headings in Part 2 are:-

- The Future of the ASSC
- Leadership & Management
- Commitment to Member & Stakeholder Engagement
- The Overarching Strategic Plan
- Action Plan
- Workstreams
- Implementation
- Monitoring & Evaluation
- How Will We Measure Success

We are now looking at an action/activity plan and how to deliver the goals; measurements; evidence; PPIs and a “live” plan/Gantt chart with who is responsible for what actions. **Adrienne** will assist in the development of these plans.

Adrienne thanked Victoria for her tremendous work and was grateful it has now been taken forward so quickly.

No questions were asked following Victoria’s update.

## 10. Tall Projects Litigation Update

The following update report was circulated



Tall Projects Update  
February 2023.pdf

Fiona reported that this issue has been rumbling on since January 2022 but we are in a strong position following the expert witness report from Inspire Digital and input from Iain Clark at Gilson Gray. Fiona and Adrienne had a lengthy meeting with Iain Clark last week who advised there is better than reasonable grounds on breach of contract and negligence.

The case is likely to go to mediation in May, with the hope it does not need to go to full Court proceedings and with a view to claiming all monies previously paid including legal costs and damages. The minimum expected is £95,000 with a potential maximum of £188,900. It was noted that we have no option but to

continue with this claim. Fiona reported that all costs, including Gilson Gray's, are being kept to a minimum with a negotiated reduction in normal costs.

Adrienne advised that Inspire Digital was an ASSC Trade Supplier but have now resigned to negate a potential conflict of interest.

Adrienne indicated that she had emailed Robert, due to his initial involvement, and he had described it as a "nightmare situation". It was fortunate that Tall Projects was insured as, without that, there would have been little chance of recouping our losses.

Fiona apologised for Tall Projects poor project management and for the team's inability to manage them properly due to the workload associated with the pandemic. Fiona highlighted the lessons learned with respect to the difference between working with Tall Projects and Bulb.

Claire asked about cost breakdowns and setting caps on expenditure. Fiona advised that this was under constant review. Adrienne also stressed that she is keeping a very close eye on all the costs relating to both the case and IT spending in general.

## **11. Edinburgh Judicial Review Verbal Update from Louise Dickins**

Louise gave an update on the situation with regard to the Judicial Review v City of Edinburgh Council and the decision pre-Christmas to progress with this, as there was only a 3 month window to challenge.

She explained to colleagues that she is working with a group of 4 petitioners, not including ASSC, and Gilson Gray LLP. Louise is very pleased with the input from Morag Ross, the KC leading the legal team. The cost of bringing a Judicial Review will be circa £200,000 in legal fees. Crowd Justice fund has achieved £125,000 however this potentially falls short of the £325,000 needed if the petitioners lose the case. A meeting has been held with Airbnb asking them to underwrite the potential shortfall in legal costs.

Clare asked about funding from Edinburgh Fringe. Louise confirmed they are in discussion with Edinburgh Festivals about that and also the inclusion of "secondary letting". **Claire and Louise** agreed to discuss the issues involved as Claire is an ex restructuring lawyer although not in this specific area of expertise. Louise also asked any **Board Director** to come forward if they have any experience of Judicial Review/PR/fund-raising, as the petitioners would appreciate help. **David and Louise** also to discuss. Adrienne indicated that ASSC has allocated up to £1,000 to fund a leafleting campaign should it be needed. The design, targets and timing of this is to be agreed.

**Board Directors** are asked to share any comms they see on social media regarding the case.

Fiona thanked Louise for everything she is doing.

## 12. Vote of Thanks to Eleanor On Her Retirement

Adrienne confirmed that Eleanor will be retiring at the end of April. She said that there it is no exaggeration to state that there would be no ASSC without Eleanor's massive contribution over the last 18 years. Her steady and calming influence will be sorely missed. Fiona echoed that sentiment and the Board of Directors also thanked Eleanor, wishing her a healthy and happy retirement.

## 13. Any Other Business

**13.1 Regional Event – 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2023 in Inverness:** Joyce reported that the location was changed due to a SSDA conference taking place in Peebles around the same time. Full details are on the [Regional Events page](#) which is being updated regularly. Board Directors are welcome to attend, in accordance with travel and accommodation rules that were sent out recently.

**13.2 Partner Meeting – 9<sup>th</sup> May:** in person networking event with Partners for Business and Trade Suppliers. Supported by The Cumberland. To be held in either Glasgow or Edinburgh. **Noemi** to send details to Joyce re potential venues.

## 14. Dates for Meetings

- **Board Meeting:** Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> May – 10am to 12 noon - virtual
- **Board Meeting:** Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> August 2023 – 10am to 12 noon – virtual
- **Board Meeting:** Thursday, 9<sup>th</sup> November 2023 – 10am to 12 noon – in person Edinburgh
- **AGM:** Thursday, 9<sup>th</sup> November 2023 – timing to be confirmed – in person Edinburgh

Adrienne thanked all the Directors for attending and looked forward to seeing colleagues in Inverness in March.

End