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**Walsh’s Hotel**

**Thursday 20th June 2024, 10.00am**

**Minutes**

**In attendance:** Richard Mulholland, Cathy O’Neill, Nicola McCloskey, Roslyn Halferty, Vanessa Postle, Kimberley Madden, Brendan Adams, Anne-Marie McStocker, Maria McCann-Russell, Aoife McGrath, Dermot O’Kane, Jim Barr, Lara Goodall, Stacey Nelson

**Apologies:**

Kathleen McBride, Jamese McCloy, Jim Quinn, Shauna McElhone, Damien Houlahan, Brian McCormick Bronagh Duffin, Gary McErlain, Dermot Friel, Lindsey Johnston, Rosalind Mulholland, Sean McEvoy

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| **Agenda Item** | **Detail** | **Action Arising**  |
| **Apologies & Previous Minutes** | Richard Mulholland welcomed everyone and welcomed the new cluster member, Lough Neagh Stories. Anne Marie thanked the cluster members for accepting their application and introduced the business. Cluster members also introduced themselves. | n/a |
| **Recruitment** | LG and CON updated on the outcome of the recruitment process and the applications that had been received. LG noted that Lough Neagh Stories application had been of an exceptional standard.  | n/a |
| **Business Development Activities** | LG provided an update on the upcoming Visit Belfast FAM trip. There will be 10 staff attending, mainly from Business Development and Conferencing team. The purpose of the visit will be to highlight product outside of Belfast to assist their international sales activities. Members discussed the logistics of the itinerary for the 25th June and confirmed final timings with members.LG advised on recent applications to TNI shows. The cluster has been placed on the waiting list for Flavours of Ireland and the USA Shoulder Season webinar. The application to BeNe was successful and a funding application for travel support will be submitted to TNI.LG updated on additional Business Development activities. Two Fam visits are being developed for Sep/Oct, along with the CIE visit that is to be rescheduled. We are currently following up with 5 other Tour Operators for FAM visits generated from MTB. Dermot O’Kane mentioned GAA campaign which quotes Seamus Heaney – Croke Park – may be worth reaching out.LG noted that she has reached out to the MEGA cluster to see if there are areas where the cluster could promote product offering for corporate days or accommodation for visitors. Nicola suggested that LG also approach the GemX cluster in Derry.  | LG to make final updates to the itinerary and forward to members.LG to submit funding application to TNI for travel and subsistence to BeNe.LG to consider an approach to the GAA about the members and their offering.Nicola to send GemX’s number to LGLG to contact GemX cluster in Derry |
| **Marketing** | LG update the members on marketing activities;* One training session has been delivered on updating the website and Stacey has commenced changes to the website and this will be ongoing. Second session is to be scheduled for the August.
* Content itineraries being worked on.
* Digital Audit being carried out by SN across all platforms and online areas. Purpose of these is to identify where you can sell yourself better and highlight the Loughinsholin cluster.
* Content is being produced for a Croga Tours campaign. This will be run over 3 – 4 months, with a weekly feature for each business.
* Working with Best of Scotland on a email marketing campaign that will feature the cluster. Newsletter will be issued in mid-July. Newsletter goes to BoS database of 4.5k agents based in various locations and their third-party distribution is to circa 100k North American agents.
* LG is also working to secure a similar feature of the cluster with ETOA members.
* LG requested members to email any campaign ideas over.
* Design of the business newsletter is being completed by McCadden and will go out monthly when completed.
* CON updated 5th September official launch at Friels
 | SN to continue with website updates.SN will conduct digital audits for cluster members.Progress newsletter feature with BoSMembers to send ideas for additional campaigns.Prepare marketing campaign for Friels new visitor attraction launch |
| **Training & Skills Development** | Members discussed training needs for the Autumn. The following was agreed: * TikTok Training: proposed for September.
* Media training for TV/Radio/Podcast – Cool FM team after general election – end of July suggested.
* Training “Get your guide” – end of September online.
* ChatGPT training – request from Cathy.
* AI Session for end of Sept
 | LG to liaise with Rachael Harriot on TikTok and media training. LG to arrange other training sessions. |
| **A.O.B** | Next meeting Thursday 15th August - Kimberly offered to host at Walsh’s. KM noted that she is hopeful that the 6 new bedrooms will be available to view at the next meeting.Vanessa noted that Council are currently working on 2 Meet the Expert events and a FAM visit to Newry, Mourne and Down. Vanessa will forward details when these become available. | VP to advise |