HEYHA Meeting

**Thursday 23rd September 2021**

**10:30am**

**Mercure Hull Grange Park Hotel**

**Attendees**

Nigel Dibb (Chair)

Samantha Cook (Vice Chair)

David Cooke (Vice Chair)

Maurizio De Martino (Treasurer)

Andrew Smith

Gavin Davies

Jonathan Rhodes

Paul Vinsen (Association Advisor)

Helen Newton

Mark Heywood

Ekaterina Vasilieva

Megan Oldridge (Administrator)

Guest Speakers

Rachel Underwood

Paul Vinsen

Meredith Trowsdale

Christine Brown

Charlotte Goy

Laura Freer

**Agenda**

10:30am – Welcome from David Cooke to the Mercure Hull Grange Park Hotel

– Welcome from Nigel Dibb (HEYHA Chairman)

* *Guest Speaker* – Rachel Underwood (Membership Manager, Welcome to Yorkshire) and Paul Vinsen (Ambassador, Welcome to Yorkshire)
* *Guest Speaker* – Meredith Trowsdale (Tourism Officer, Visit Hull & East Yorkshire) and Christine Brown (Growth Hub Business Advisor, East Riding of Yorkshire Council)
* *Guest Speaker* – Charlotte Goy (Chief Executive Officer, Visit Lincoln) and Samantha Pover (Relationship Manager, Visit Lincoln)
* Driving Sales within the Region – Samantha Cook
* Financial and Membership Update – Maurizio De Martino
* Any Other Business.

**Meeting Notes**

**Welcome from Nigel Dibb** – Nigel began by welcoming everyone back to September’s HEYHA meeting and thanked everyone for coming. He then provided an update on attendees and expressed how positive it is to see so many people here, this is due to the challenges the hospitality industry are currently facing. Nigel then ran through the agenda for the meeting. Introducing in turn the guest speakers and a brief summary of what will be spoken about. He then concluded by running through what was spoken about during the board meeting.

**Welcome to the Mercure Hull Grange Park Hotel from David Cooke (General Manager)**

**Rachel Underwood and Paul Vinsen (Welcome to Yorkshire)**

* After being welcomed by Nigel, Rachel introduced herself as the new Membership Manager for Welcome to Yorkshire, focussing in particular on the Hull and East Yorkshire area. As explained by Rachel this role is new to the company, as they wanted someone who lived within the area to provide support and essentially fly the flag. Rachel then provided the group with a brief overview of who and what Welcome to Yorkshire do. She explained that they are the premier DMO for the Yorkshire region and are positioned to leverage the diversity, beauty and cultural heritage of Yorkshire’s offering. They provide a platform for its members, communities and residents to amplify the message that ‘Yorkshire is a great place to Visit, Live, Work and Study’. Rachel then stated the importance of working collaboratively with its members and partners in order to provide many benefits to the members. She claimed that North and West Yorkshire are highly represented, yet East and South Yorkshire are not. In evidence of this Rachel provided the statistics that they currently have only 70 members within East Yorkshire, in comparison to 700 in North Yorkshire. Therefore, emphasising the need to improve this, which can only be achieved with help from the members.
* Rachel continued by sharing Welcome to Yorkshire’s strategic objectives, these are;
  + - Showcase Yorkshire as a great place to Visit, Live, Work, Study on a local, national and global stage
    - Provide a voice for Yorkshire to amplify business views and messages
    - To be the leading Destination Management Organisation; setting an example nationally
    - Act as a regional body for proactive change and positive influence in national and global markets
    - Facilitate opportunity for business growth and development
* Alongside this Rachel stated that Welcome to Yorkshire has undergone a huge transition. Explaining that most of the team are new, but there are some extremely talented individuals working there, which will be apparent in the number and quality of activities planned for 2022.
* Rachel then began to discuss the cost of becoming a Welcome to Yorkshire member and revealed that HEYHA members are eligible to receive an annual partner membership offer. This being £950 + VAT opposed to £1500 + VAT. For this cost members of Welcome to Yorkshire will receive;
  + - Unlimited listings on Yorkshire.com – this includes up to 10 enhanced listings on Yorkshire.com
    - Guaranteed inclusion in WTY content (subject to editorial approval)
    - Free entry into the White Rose Awards
    - Press trip opportunities
    - VIP invitations to our events such as the White Rose Awards, Great Yorkshire Show, Ebor Races. We are currently looking at our events planner for the rest of the year and 2022 so we can get our in-person events back up and running, along with digital webinars etc.
    - PR and Comms support - we have great in house expertise to assist with any support you need.
    - Official partner badge and plaque
    - 5 social media posts on the Welcome to Yorkshire channels (subject to editorial approval) – choose from FB, Instagram or Twitter
    - Access to Welcome to Yorkshire members portal to allow self-upload of events (these would appear on our ‘things to do’ page which gets 65,000 views a month), offers, job listings, press releases and seasonal promotions. The members portal will also include access to online webinars and digital training to support your staff. This is open to all employees.
* Rachel then briefly ran through some events that were in the pipeline for the forthcoming year, this includes Tech Week Humber, which will involve a breakfast meeting, with an open invitiation to all Welcome to Yorkshire members, a Food and Drink campaign which is to replace the very successful ‘Walkshire’, Community Hero Award, South Yorkshire Stories, Digital webinars that staff are able to join and the White Rose Awards 2022.
* Following on from this Rachel emphasised the power of Welcome to Yorkshire’s platform and the benefits it provides. She then shared some statistics in relation to Welcome to Yorkshire’s digital engagement;
  + - 700,000 followers across all platforms
    - 11 million website hits annually (and growing)
    - Facebook – 1.2 million engagements, 30.5 million impressions,
    - 4.2% annual follower growth
    - Twitter – 900,000 engagement, 17.3 million impressions,
    - 1.1% annual follower growth
    - Instagram – 350,000 engagements, 6.5million impressions,
    - 27.4% annual follower growth

* Rachel then introduced Paul Vinsen, who has recently been appointed as one of Welcome to Yorkshire’s ambassadors. Paul then shared with the association members the list of official Welcome to Yorkshire ambassadors;
  + - Philip Bolson – owner Mr B Hospitality former Manager the Grand York
    - Nicky Chance -Thompson DL- CEO Piece Hall Trust
    - Richard Stubbs- CEO Yorkshire & Humber Academic Health Science Network
    - Abbi Ollive – Head of Marketing & Sales Castle Howard
    - Dr Amir Khan – GP & TV Presenter
    - Hannah Cockcroft MBE DL -Paralympian ,multiple-winning gold medallist
    - Paul Vinsen Hotel & Tourism Advisor
    - Debbie Dobson- Director of Sales Dakota Leeds
    - Fiona Gardam- owner Bed & Breakfast The House Of Hawes
    - James Mackenzie Chef Patron Pipe & Glass
    - Gunther Peeters MD FC Eindhoven
* He then explained that these were appointed in July at the Great Yorkshire Show, but since then have attended the Ebor Festival, cricket and the golf in Illkley. Paul then followed this by describing the role that ambassadors play;
  + - To represent all corners of the County North, South, East & West
    - To promote the region as a place to Visit, Live, Work & Study
    - The group will act as thought leaders in their respective sectors
    - To represent Yorkshire &Welcome to Yorkshire at Events
    - To give feedback on their sector to Welcome to Yorkshire
    - To give feedback on WTY activities and ideas for future activities
    - To actively support WTY on Social Networks
    - To encourage membership of WTY
* Paul concluded that overall the most important role in his eyes is to “bang the drum for Hull, Humber and East Yorkshire.”

**Meredith Trowsdale (Visit Hull and East Yorkshire)**

*(*[*meredith.trowsdale@vhey.co.uk*](mailto:meredith.trowsdale@vhey.co.uk)*)*

* Once introduced by Nigel, Meredith explained that Anthony Yates could not attend the meeting today, therefore she has come in his place. Meredith explained the objective of her being at the meeting today was to provide an update on the leisure campaign which has been running for the past six months and to provide details on the plans for the forthcoming six months.
* Meredith began by providing the members with an update of VHEY’s ‘It Must Be Hull’ campaign, which launched in May 2020. This focused upon what is unique and special to Hull, therefore encouraging visitors and residents to visit Hull and experience it for themselves. Meredith continued by sharing the six lead straplines with HEYHA, these being;
  + - For the best night’s sleep… It Must Be Hull
    - For the warmest welcome…It Must Be Hull
    - For turtles and trails… It Must Be Hull
    - For a change of scenery… It Must Be Hull
    - For great days out… It Must Be Hull
    - For food and friends… It Must Be Hull
* Alongside these straplines, Meredith revealed a number of ways VHEY marketed this campaign, this was through; digital advertising of local news sites, digital advertising on A63, radio advertising on Heart FM, paid social media advertising and a joint media campaign with Welcome to Yorkshire. In evidence of their success Meredith revealed a number of statistics such as 40,000 click throughs with their social media advertising and advertising digitally on local new sites reached around 2.4 million people. Further to this Meredith explained VHEY organised digital frames distributed to local businesses and also an eight page A5 insert into the Yorkshire Post and Mail on Sunday. A new platform in which VHEY used to market their campaign content is the launch of the Visit Hull YouTube Channel. Which can be viewed here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0UDVQCrBzUU>. Meredith explained that this new advert has been extremely successful receiving over 37,000 views. Therefore, this will be kept running for the foreseeable future.
* Meredith then moved onto looking forward, this focuses upon the campaigns planned for October 2021 – March 2022. VHEY are planning to continue with the Must Be Hull straplines and images, but in order to stay current creating Autumn/Winter assets. Other areas in which VHEY are planning to market the city is through; paid social media advertising, digital advertising on A63, radio advertising on Heart FM, continued YouTube advertising campaign, eight page A5 insert in the Mail on Sunday, QR codes distributed to hotels, development of the Big Welcome Back and creation of a destination charter.
* After sharing the exciting campaign content in which VHEY have planned Meredith emphasised the need for members to get involved. Ways in which members can achieve this is sharing their positive new stories with VHEY, in which they can share this through their social media. Meredith highlighted the need for high quality images to be sent to VHEY. This is so they are able to pass on these images to local news companies who would be willing to run a story about the venue. Another way in which Meredith stated that members could get involved in VHEY is by using the brand assets, such as the digital frame, hastag (#VisitHull) and QR code. Finally Meredith concluded by explaining the most beneficial way is just simply by talking to them. She stated that if they are doing something wrong, they want to be aware of this, so they can make it right for the venues.

**Christine Brown (East Riding of Yorkshire Council)**

* Following on from Meredith, Christine explained that she is filling in for Will Brown, who had sent her some notes relating to Visit East Yorkshire. She explained that this focussed upon the new Autumn/Winter campaign, which will complement Visit Hull’s “It Must be Hull” campaign very nicely. This was through creating a competitive product by segmenting the target market to meet their needs. Therefore Visit East Yorkshire developed five core audiences, in which they will marker the region to, using TV adverts and social media to achieve this;

* + - **Free and Easy Mini Breakers** – 180,000 audience – 18-39 – focussed on those within Yorkshire (80km away)
    - **Aspirational Families** – 1,700,000 audience – 20-50 – focussed on those within Yorkshire (80km away)
    - **Adventure Seekers/Eco-Conscious** – 1,200,000 audience – 18-39 – focussed on those within Yorkshire (80km away)
    - **Yorkshire Ambassadors** – 6,500,000 audience – 35-54 – people across the UK.
    - **New Audience – Retired Easy Going** – 5,300,000 audience – 60+ - Across the UK.
* Following on from this Christine stated that there was currently a big focus on the safe return of events in the region. Beverley Festival of Christmas is a major event that has been given the go ahead for this year. Another event in the pipeline for VHEY is the annual REYTA awards, which is due to take place on the 31st March 2022. Christine emphasised the need for venues to take part, as applications open on the 1st November 2021.
* Christine then moved onto her role as a Business Support Advisor for The Growth Hub. She began by introducing herself and how she is able to provide support to VHEY and also individual businesses on a one to one approach. Growth Hub has the objective of providing business support information and organisations who provide a number of services. These include; funding, training courses, events, support, advice and mentoring, in order to help businesses within the region. Christine explained that she works specifically with hospitality businesses, but requires feedback from businesses in relation to the topics of training they provide in order to achieve their objective of helping businesses recover and grow.

**Charlotte Goy and Laura Freer (Visit Lincoln)**

* Charlotte began by introducing herself and Laura to the association. She explained that Visit Lincoln are a team of seven, currently experiencing exciting growth, which has been fuelled by COVID. This is due to the huge amount of support required from DMO’s to local businesses during the pandemic.
* Charlotte explained that they work with the councils and businesses on the Lincolnshire coast. Stating that the website and marketing campaigns have supported the growth of the visitor economy by 30%. This is through marketing the region through the eyes of the visitor, emphasising the importance of research and the constant development of the product.
* Charlotte then went on to list some of the activities that Visit Lincoln have focussed upon, these include;
  + - **Cycle England/Lincoln** – bookable cycle packages, funded by Develop England. This targeted an international audience in partnership with P&O Ferries. More recently during lockdown had a more local focus.
    - **US Connections Campaign** – The Mayflower and Lincoln Cathedral
    - **Cathedral Connected** - £16 million funded by the Heritage Lottery Programme.
    - **Cornhill Quarter** - £17 million funded by the Lincolnshire Co-op. This had the aim of pulling in different brands to Lincoln and encouraging a different kind of visitor.
    - **Lincoln University** – They have a new medical school and are in partnership with Siemens, therefore encouraging a large international market.
    - Many different funding programmes- eg. Levelling Up Fund.
    - Six Town Deals - £25 million – Skegness, Mablethorpe, Boston, Lincoln, Scunthorpe and Grimsby – this will bring a lot of change to these areas over the next five years.
* Alongside these Charlotte explained there are a number of other campaigns such as destination marketing, visitor management and bidding for town deals – this involves £1.5 million spend on digitalising the high street. A further marketing activity in which Visit Lincoln have planned is their autumn campaign featuring a Digital Arts Festival and Lincoln Christmas Market. .

**Driving Sales within the Region – Samantha Cook**

* Sam commenced by commenting on the current exceptional demand within the region, and although there is a clear lack of staff, members need to remain positive and use this demand as a chance to capture data. Particularly significant to this is coach contacts, who may be used during the quieter times to fill the hotels. Sam emphasised the need to organise a Sales Meeting to look further into and discuss quarter one in 2022. Explaining this is the perfect time to look into how venues can retain and convert the summer of 2021 business into summer 2022.

**Financial and Memberships Update**

* Maurizio provided members with a brief overview of the current financial situation of the Association. He then concluded by reiterating the importance of the five outstanding memberships to be paid as soon as possible. It was agreed by the board the next payment for memberships will be the 1st April 2022 and to offer a six months membership fee for any new or existing members that are yet to pay.

**Market Report**

* Overall, the current situation of hospitality within the region is very similar from venue to venue. The demand is very high, with many venues stating they have had the highest occupancy rates for a long time. Forecasting business for Christmas 2021 it was agreed upon that the situation is looking positive and venues already have a significant level of bookings.

**Any Other Business**

* Nigel thanked all the speakers and everyone for coming and reminded members of the next HEYHA meeting, which is taking place in October.

**Additional Information**

* Gavin Davies is leaving the Village Hotel Hull and the area.
* Nigel is also leaving the area and Endsleigh Park, therefore stepping down as Chairman.
* David Cooke is to replace Nigel as HEYHA Chairman.
* Next meeting to be held on Thursday 28th October 2021 at Saltmarshe Hall.