**THE EVENTS INDUSTRY FORUM**

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD AT BATH & WEST SHOWGROUND SHEPTON MALLETT ON WEDNESDAY 9TH MARCH 2016

Present:

Steve Heap (Chair) – Association of Festival Organisers

Jim Winship (Secretary) – the Event Service Association

Mark Harding – UK Crowd Management Association

Andy Grove – Local Authority Event Organisers Group

Andy Lenthall – Production Services Association

Susan Tanner – National Outdoor Event Association

Paul Hooper – Association of Show and Agricultural Associations

Beverley Griffiths – Emergency Planning College

Teresa Moore, Centre for Crowd Management

Nigel Jagger, Chief Police Officers Association

Michael Hunt, UK Athletics

Sean Whittle, Portable Sanitation Europe

Bob Fox, National Catering Association

Guests:

Jill McCracken, Police Operation Gothic

Apologies:

Michael Hirst – Business Visits and Events Partnership

Paul Reed, Association of Independent Festival Organisers

Nigel Cox, Rugby Football Union

Michelle Ramsey, Association of Conferences and Events

**Minutes of Last Meeting**

These were approved by the meeting.

**Membership Report**

Jim Winship reported that 26 organisations are currently in membership of EIF.

It was also suggested that the Police and DCMS might be invited to join. Jill McCracken said that she would discuss this with police colleagues. Jim Winship to write to DCMS.

Both Teresa Moore and Andy Grove informed the meeting that they were on the move and might not be in a position to represent their organisations at future meetings. Steve Heap thanked both for their support and hoped that they might find a way of remaining involved as their contributions were valuable.

**Operation Gothic**

Jill McCracken explained the development of Operation Gothic and how the police are keen to work with event organisers to tackle crime at events. She explained how by gathering data about crimes at events, the Gothic team have been able to work with events to reduce crime in some areas. Although there is still more work to be done, this has already resulted in reductions in some types of crime.

She also explained that there are areas that need further attention and that there is particular concern with criminals getting onto sites through sub-contractors. She urged event organisers to look at ways of vetting those working on sites to reduce the risks.

There was also concern that sex crimes, which have become an issue in other countries, might also spread to the UK event industry.

Jill agreed that her presentation could be circulated to members.

There was concern that the Gothic team might be cut back due to restructuring in the force and the meeting agreed that the EIF should write to APCOA expressing its concern about this and why it considers it important to keep Gothic going.

**Purple Guide**

Funding – The Forum currently has £58610.37 available in funds from sales. After allowing for reserves, it has around £20,000 it could invest in new grants or projects.

Jim Winship agreed to provide members with a report on how many subscriptions have been purchased in the last 12 months compared to the previous year as well as how many educational institutions have purchased licences.

App Version – Jim Winship said that his team was still seeking a way for creating an app version of the Guide but the stumbling block currently is the subscription restrictions. Work is continuing to find a solution.

Up-dates – Jim Winship reported that he was about half way through getting the Chapters of the current guide checked and updated. Eddy Grant has also agreed to look at how the CDM regulations should be applied to the guide. He said that he hopes the updates will go live in April.

Members were asked to let Jim know if they spotted any parts of the guide that needed revisiting. One chapter that may need some updating is the medical section where there have been some comments on elements.

Grants - EIF gave a further £6400 in grants last Autumn. These went to Powerful Thinking to update their festival guidance and to Bournemouth University to support funding to justify events being included on the Creative Industries Board.

EIF to invite new applications for grants and members were asked to put forward suggestions for projects that they felt might warrant funding.

Mini Purple Guide – The meeting agreed that the Forum should develop a condensed mini-version of the Purple Guide for smaller events. This may require some funding to produce.

New Guidance: It was further agreed that the Forum should develop two new guidances to sit alongside the Purple Guide – one on crime based around the work being done by the Gothic operation and another on disability. Jim Winship to talk to Jill McCracken about the former and Attitudes are Everything about the disability guidance.

In addition, Andy Grove reported that he was continuing to develop guidance on police charging and now had the support of the police for this. He agreed to circulate a copy of the latest draft to members for their input.

Marketing - the meeting also agreed that EIF should seek further endorsements for the Purple Guide and should embark on a marketing programme to build greater awareness of the guide. Steve Heap and Jim Winship to take this forward.

**PRS Update –** Steve Heap updated members on the situation regarding PRS tariffs – PRS are seeking to increase tariffs from 3% to 4-7% as well as to include sponsorships and other revenues within the scope of this. Negotiations on this – led by the CPA – are continuing.

Paul Hooper reported that he had been informed that PRS and PPL (which similarly charges a tariff for recorded music played in public) were joining forces from January 2017 and he believed they would be seeking to renegotiate the Agricultural Shows Tariff at that point, although they had stated there would be no increase in tariffs generally. Steve Heap asked Paul to pass on any information he had to Carol Smith at the CPA.

**Business Rates –** The meeting was informed by Steve Heap that it is expected that rates for event sites would be considered by the Rates Review which is due to be concluded in 2017. However, there are some signs that some local authorities may be backing away from back-dating charges.

**BVEP –** Susan Tanner reported that the Partnership now has two new vice chairs.

**APPG –** Susan reported that the All Party Group under the chairmanship of James Heappey MP, is continuing to lobby Government on behalf of the events industry, particularly on rates.

**Events Are Great Britain –** A new campaign to promote Britain’s events industry is due to be launched in April.

**Exhibition Venues -**  There are concerns that following the closure of Earls Court as a venue, both Olympia and the QE11 Centre could also be lost. The QE11 is being considered as a home for Parliament when the House of Commons is shut for renovations.

**Research –** Susan reported that BVEP is gathering data on the events market but there are some gaps that need filling. It was agreed that Jim Winship would contact Tony Rogers, who is organizing this, to find out if there were any gaps EIF might be able to help with.

**Purple Guide Training** – It was suggested that EIF might organize some training days around the Purple Guide. This to be considered by the Directors.

**Security Industry** – Some concerns were expressed at the meeting about the way some security companies were presenting themselves looking very similar in uniform to the police. It was felt that this was both misleading for the public and damaging to the industry.

There is also concern about forged Security Industries Authority (SIA) badges being used by some disreputable companies.

It was felt that the SIA and Police should be lobbied on this as there should be a way for the public to clearly differentiate between security companies and the Police.

**HMRC –** Paul Hooper said that he had been approached by Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs about how his organization could assist them in getting information out to SME businesses about VAT and Tax. They are also planning to launch some webinars in the Summer and would like to make SMEs aware of these.

**Cashless Festivals** – Bob Fox informed the members that he was working on a code of practice for the use of cashless systems at festivals. There is a concern about this being operated legitimately so that concessions are not put at risk. He said that the code should be available early in 2017.

**EIF Website –** This has recently been updated and members were asked to look at the site and suggest any additional information that it should contain. Jim Winship also suggested that the site could be used to support any events that members might be organizing and want to promote.

**Next Meeting –** It was felt that the Birmingham area was the most central for most members to get to. As a result it was agreed that the next meeting would be at NCASS offices in Birmingham on 1st November 2016.