

DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report seeks to update Members on developments since the launch of the Tourism Strategy in early 2017 and specifically seeks approval to consult on a draft Destination Management Plan for Newark. The draft Destination Management Plan is attached at **Appendix 1**.

2.0 Background Information

- 2.1 The Tourism Strategy for Newark and Sherwood was approved by Economic Development Committee in January 2017. The vision and strategic aims for the Tourism Strategy were to:

Vision

To champion Newark and Sherwood as a great place to holiday in a world class destination offering rich outdoor activities, civil war heritage and the great legend, Robin Hood.

Strategic Aims

1. To actively promote Newark (including Southwell) for its civil war heritage and cultural offer.
 2. To actively promote Sherwood for its legend Robin Hood and fantastic outdoor activities, biodiversity and rich history
 3. To maximise the potential for growth through tactical marketing campaigns
 4. To develop a successful, thriving tourism industry
 5. To develop consistent brands for the areas.
- 2.2 Since the launch of the strategy, a number of projects have been developed to better coordinate the district's offer for tourists and travel operators. The Tourism Action Group, for example, brings together tourism-related business across the district with the aim of improving collaboration and development of the tourism offer. Work is underway in the Sherwood area to develop a clear and consistent offer and the new Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre in Edwinstowe is due to open this summer.
- 2.3 In the Newark area, the departure of the Council's Business Manager – Heritage, Culture and Visitors provided an opportunity for the District Council to review how it was best able to exploit the opportunities available from growing the number of visitors to the area, with the aim of improving revenues at the heritage assets it is responsible for, including the National Civil War Centre, Palace Theatre and Castle.
- 2.4 In partnership with the Town Council, which also has important heritage assets within its responsibility, a consultant with expertise in this field was jointly commissioned to develop a Destination Management Plan for the Newark area in line with the strategic aim Number 1 of the Tourism Strategy.

- 2.5 A Destination Management Plan (DMP) is ‘a shared statement of intent to manage a destination over a stated period of time, articulating the roles of the different stakeholders and identifying clear actions that they will take and where appropriate the apportionment of resources’. The plan was developed in partnership with the town and district councils, local stakeholders and following consultation with national bodies such as the Heritage Lottery Fund and Visit Britain and in line with best practice from the destination management organisation for Bath.
- 2.6 The Newark area has natural geographic advantages in terms of its connectivity as a gateway to the district, benefiting as it does from its location on the A1, A46 and sitting on the East Coast Mainline. The Newark area is therefore well-placed as a gateway for the district to attract visitors before helping to signpost them strategically to the rich array of attractions elsewhere in the district.
- 2.7 National data suggests that the economic impact of the visitor economy is worth around £260-million to the district economy per annum. The draft Destination Management Plan for Newark is aiming to increase the economic impact of tourism through better coordination and integration of the visitor assets and offer within the town and vicinity, thereby increasing the number of visitors as well as the (dwell) time they spend in the town. The aim being over a period of time to improve the depth and breadth of the tourism offer and, in doing so, encourage visitors to stay longer. On average, an overnight visitor spends almost seven times the amount a day visitor would spend (compared to Nottinghamshire as a whole where it is only around five times).

3.0 Proposals

- 3.1 The proposals included in the Destination Management Plan are included within the recommendations within the document. Key proposals in relation to the District Council include the introduction of new marketing resource to fully develop the promotion of the visitor offer across the district, given the key role tourism has supporting the district’s economy.
- 3.2 The proposals also recommend that the tourism assets within the responsibility of the District Council are brought into a single management structure, to provide better coordination and a more integrated offer. Longer-term, the DMP suggests that consideration is given to the future management arrangements and whether opportunities exist to deliver the services in some other structure, in a similar vein to the successes the District Council has had with Active4Today and the operation of its leisure centres.

4.0 Equalities Implications

- 4.1 There are no negative equalities implications within this report.

5.0 Impact on Budget/Policy Framework

- 5.1 The proposals in the Destination Management Plan, including the introduction of new marketing resource to fully develop the promotion of the visitor offer across the district will need to be costed and a budget for the cost established. The first year cost can be funded from the change management reserve, part of which has been ring fenced to fund one-off costs that support the delivery of the Council’s strategy; in this case, the Tourism

Strategy. The financial appraisal will also include an estimation of any additional income that may be generated from the proposals to implement a single management structure, to provide better coordination and a more integrated offer. A separate report will be brought to Committee incorporating these costs.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS that:

- a) the Committee approves the draft Destination Management Plan for consultation with the local and national stakeholders which have been involved in its development;**
- b) the Director – Customers works with partners to establish the Newark Steering Group which will be the body responsible for the delivery of the Destination Management Plan;**
- c) the Committee approves, in principle, the move to a single management structure for tourism assets within the responsibility of the District Council, the creation of a new marketing post to promote the visitor offer across the District and the commissioning of research to establish better information on visitor numbers and experiences, and;**
- d) subject to the approval of recommendation c), the budgetary implications of the proposals are fully costed and brought back to the Committee for decision at its meeting in March.**

Reason for Recommendations

The recommendations will support NSDC in maximising the contribution of tourism to the economy which helps generate employment and revenue for tourism related businesses in the district, as well as helping to improve revenues as NSDC tourism assets.

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