

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

18 NOVEMBER 2020

VISITOR ECONOMY STRATEGY

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide the Economic Development Committee with a refreshed NSDC Visitor Economy Strategy for 2020-23.

2.0 Background Information

- 2.1 The Tourism Business Unit commenced a refresh of the Visitor Economy Strategy earlier this year but it was interrupted by our COVID-19 response and the disruption experienced across the tourism and hospitality sectors since the start of the pandemic.
- 2.2 Notwithstanding the disruption and uncertainty associated with COVID-19 that continues to severely challenge the tourism and hospitality sectors, the Visitor Economy Strategy for 2020-23 has now been refreshed to take account of some significant developments. These include: production of Destination Management Plans for Newark, Southwell and Sherwood Forest; development of distinct but complementary destination brands; publication of Nottinghamshire County Council's Visitor Economy Strategy; improved understanding of our visitors and their experiences; a reinvigorated district-wide Tourism Action Group.

3.0 Proposals

- 3.1 Rather than being negated by the pandemic, the Visitor Economy Strategy may now be considered even more relevant in supporting the district's post COVID-19 economic recovery. It outlines the strategic principles by which we will support the district's visitor economy to increase its economic impact, fulfil the vision in our Community Plan ("...encouraging more visitors to enjoy all that Newark & Sherwood has to offer") and create a greater sense of civic pride. These are:

- Destination Management Plans (DMPs)
- Nottinghamshire County Council's Visitor Economy Strategy
- Insight and knowledge
- Destination development
- Destination marketing

- 3.2 The strategy incorporates contributions from a wide range of partners and stakeholders involved in the visitor economy. These include members of the Tourism Action Group; Newark Town Board; Sherwood Strategic Management Group; Southwell Tourism Partnership; Newark Heritage Forum; Newark Business Club; Association of Group Travel Organisers Central Branch. It builds upon the Destination Management Plans for Newark, Southwell and Sherwood Forest that were produced for NSDC by a destination management consultant in 2018/19.

3.3 The strategy includes metrics by which progress can be measured over the course of 2020-23, with comparative data going back to 2017, using industry standard STEAM data. It also includes the measures used to monitor and review the performance of our destination marketing plans, e.g. unique visits to the three visitor websites.

4.0 Equalities Implications

4.1 Delivery of the strategy will always consider equalities to ensure that visitors and potential visitors with protected characteristics are not disadvantaged in their experiences. For example, our visitor websites have recently been developed to make them more accessible and compliant with new public sector website accessibility regulations.

5.0 Digital Implications

5.1 The majority of our destination digital marketing services are currently outsourced to third party agencies. We will review this arrangement with ICT Services to consider whether any of these services can be brought in-house as part of NSDC's commitment to work towards being a Digital Council.

6.0 Financial Implications (FIN20-21/3799)

6.1 None. The costs of delivering the strategy will be met via an annual review of the allocated Promotion of Tourism budget.

7.0 Community Plan – Alignment to Objectives

7.1 The aims of the strategy align clearly with the vision in our Community Plan (“...encouraging more visitors to enjoy all that Newark & Sherwood has to offer”) and the objective to “Deliver inclusive and sustainable economic growth”.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

That Members note and support the refreshed NSDC Visitor Economy Strategy for 2020-23.

Reason for Recommendation

To enable Officers to continue to support the district's visitor economy as an important asset for economic recovery.

Background Papers

Nil

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