

Agenda Item 6

Chichester District Council

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

18 November 2014

Tourism Task and Finish Group Progress Report

1. Contacts

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2. Recommendation

2.1 The committee is requested to note:

- progress of the Task and Finish Group
- the two new areas of work detailed in sections 4 and 5

and to agree that the final report be delayed to a future meeting.

3. Background

3.1 Following the report of the Task and Finish Group to the July meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and the subsequent presentation by Mrs Melanie Sensicle, Chief Executive of Visit Durham, it was anticipated that the Task and Finish Group would complete its research and submit a final report and recommendations to this meeting.

3.2 However, two new and potentially complementary projects to develop the visitor economy report have emerged. One is a study of the visitor economy across the Coastal West Sussex Partnership area, and the other is a new targeted marketing initiative through West Sussex County Council. The Task and Finish Group consider it is appropriate to contribute to, and learn the outcomes of, these projects before submitting a final report.

3.3 Additionally, the Group has had the opportunity to investigate and begin considering a potential new funding model which may assist with the development of any new destination management initiatives. There has also been an opportunity for members of the Group to meet with the Board of Visit Chichester.

4. Study being Conducted Through the Coastal West Sussex Partnership

4.1 During the summer the Chief Executives of Arun District Council, Adur District Council, Worthing Borough Council and Chichester District Council considered a proposal from Adur and Worthing to investigate the opportunities for 'Growing Employment in the Visitor Economy' across the Coastal West Sussex Partnership area. A team of four consultants from Brighton Based 'Venues

Advisors' have been engaged to undertake the study, with the cost being met by the District and Borough Councils, West Sussex County Council and the Coastal West Sussex Partnership. Mr Oates is a member of the project Steering Group.

- 4.2 The consultants will review the current visitor economy across the Partnership area, consider the way it is organised and managed, speak with key figures, businesses and organisations to assess the aspirations of each authority and relevant private sector businesses, assess the potential to develop and grow the visitor economy, undertake new research, identify how one or more manageable and marketable destinations might be formed, and propose how the visitor economy across the wider Partnership area might move forward. The consultants will report back to the Coastal West Sussex Partnership Board, on which Cllr Cullen sits, and then report to District/Boroughs for further discussion and appropriate action.
- 4.3 It is anticipated that the study and report will be completed by the end of this year.

5. West Sussex County Council Initiative

- 5.1 It has been identified that, since the recession, the county has been gaining more low-paid jobs while at the same time losing high-value jobs to other counties and countries. Additionally, while there is variation within the county, West Sussex generally has an older population than national trends with 40% of the population aged 50 or over and a lower proportion of 25-45 year olds – the demographic group that includes young wealth creators who could potentially galvanise new economic activity and are sought after by national and global employers. To address this, West Sussex County Council is pursuing 'Five Bold Ideas'. These are headed 'Develop a Leading Bioengineering Centre of Excellence', 'Do More with Gatwick Airport', 'Bring High-end Finance to Chichester', 'Make Bognor Regis Better' and 'Beautiful Outdoors'.
- 5.2 These five ideas are intended to accomplish two things. First, to build on West Sussex's existing economic assets to draw more high value jobs into the area. Second, to leverage West Sussex's proximity to London to pull the capital's current and future young wealth creators into the county.
- 5.3 One of the five ideas relates to the theme 'Beautiful Outdoors', with the aim to make West Sussex a preferred destination for young professionals. This is based on the premise that the more people experience West Sussex directly, the more likely they are to move to the area.
- 5.4 At the time of preparing this report we are just commencing discussions with West Sussex County Council on this and the other ideas. When further information and detail is to hand it will help inform our final report and recommendations.

6 Other Activity

- 6.1 For completeness, and to assist in the preparation of the final report and recommendations, members and officers on the T&F Group have also undertaken work in other areas including:

- Research into two alternative funding models for destination management and marketing
- A meeting with the board of Visit Chichester
- Further discussion with representatives of the tourism industry
- A discussion with the Chief Executive of Coast to Capital

7. Next Steps

- 7.1 Subject to the outcomes and recommendations of the Coastal West Sussex Partnership study, it is anticipated that the final report and recommendations of the Task and Finish group will be brought back to a meeting of this committee early in 2015.

8. Resource and legal implications

- 8.1 The Task and Finish Group is currently resourced with officer input from the Economic Development Service and by the Principal Scrutiny Officer. At this stage there are no further resource or legal implications.

9. Consultation

- 9.1 Organisations consulted to date are as detailed in section 6 of the Tourism Task and Finish Group Progress Report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 3rd July 2014.

10. Community impact and corporate risks

- 10.1 The aim of the review is to have a positive impact on the visitor economy and, in turn, the wider economy in our district.
- 10.2 The main risk to this Council is a loss of economic and community benefits if Visit Chichester fails and no action is taken to replace or improve it.

11. Other Implications

| | Yes | No |
|--|-----|----|
| Crime & Disorder: | | ✓ |
| Climate Change: | | ✓ |
| Human Rights and Equality Impact: | | ✓ |
| Safeguarding: | | ✓ |
| Other (Please specify): eg Biodiversity | | ✓ |

12. Appendices

None

13. Background Papers

Tourism Task and Finish Group Progress Report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 3 July 2014