

Chichester District Council

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

17 March 2015

Report from the Tourism Task and Finish Group

1. Contacts

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2. Executive Summary

This report presents the findings and recommendations of the Tourism Task and Finish Group. It provides an assessment of the visitor economy in and around the District and identifies the variety of disparate organisations involved in supporting tourism and delivering tourism services. The report considers the current trends and lifestyle considerations affecting the visitor economy and sets out the Group's findings, including the significant opportunities available to drive future growth, and recommends a robust and clear course of action to take forward to Cabinet.

3. Recommendation

The committee is requested to consider the findings of the Task and Finish Group and to recommend to Cabinet that option 4, as set out in section 8 of this report, be pursued and resources allocated accordingly.

For completeness, and to save having to constantly refer the reader to other reports, we have included and summarised much of the information previously contained in the progress report to the committee in July 2014.

4. Background

4.1 Chichester District has considerable tourism assets:

- a high quality natural environment that includes the Witterings, a natural harbour that is classified as an area of outstanding natural beauty, and attractive stretches of the South Downs National Park
- a 900 year-old cathedral with its towering spire and walled gardens
- the world-renowned Pallant House Gallery
- it is the home of British Polo, hosts Glorious Goodwood - one of the most prestigious events in the UK horse-racing calendar – and the world's biggest heritage motor sport event, The Goodwood Revival
- it has the UK's leading repertory theatre outside the West End
- a popular Marina – the second largest in the UK
- historic market towns
- important National Trust properties

- some of the best inshore waters on the South Coast for windsurfing, sailing and diving

... and many more features and attributes which, historically, have always made the District an attractive place to visit.

However, during the post-war decades, when many other areas were actively developing their tourism assets and striving to exploit the burgeoning tourism market, Chichester generally chose not to. There was little proactive work to attract visitors or to provide infrastructure and facilities to grow and support a visitor economy.

In line with lifestyle changes and increases in people's leisure time, this began to change in the late 70s and 80s when the Duke of Richmond brought together a number of places of interest and activities, forming the Chichester Visitors Group to begin some joined-up thinking and promotion. This in turn led to the Council providing tourism information services, together with officer and financial resources to develop the District as a destination, eventually creating the 'Visit Chichester' brand in 2004.

- 4.2 There has never been a statutory duty on local authorities to deliver visitor services and, following cutbacks in local government funding, in 2009 the Council entered into a Destination Management Partnership with Visit Chichester (VC), initially providing a modest annual grant each year from April 2009 to March 2012, after which point the Council ceased further funding.
- 4.3 During this time it was anticipated that VC would develop a new approach to serving and developing the tourism sector, and would secure alternative and new methods of funding to achieve this. A Destination Management Plan for the five-year period to 2015 was supported and adopted by the Council in 2010. Its stated objective being:
- “To grow the value of the District’s core tourism assets via greater engagement and partnership, through which Chichester District will secure an unrivalled reputation for its high-quality landscape, accommodation, attractions, public realm, heritage, arts and cultural offer, excellent customer care, and a year-round programme of activities and events centred on the area’s unique culture and natural environment”*
- 4.4 However, VC has struggled to make significant strides forward and its funding is now generally well below the levels obtained 5 years ago.
- 4.5 In 2012, the Council also reviewed its provision of Tourist Information Services. The TICs in Midhurst and Petworth closed with some aspects of the services relocating to alternative outlets. In Chichester the TIC was relocated to the Novium museum.
- 4.6 Tourism is still regarded as a key economic sector and is supported by the Council in the emerging Local Plan and through the Economic Development Strategy. In September 2013 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a presentation from representatives of Visit Chichester at which the issues facing the organisation and delivery of its business plan were set out to

members. Following this a Task and Finish Group was convened in January 2014 to:

- assess the opportunities to develop inbound tourism to the District and to expand the visitor economy
- to understand our existing and potential tourist market by identifying the area's different assets and why people visit
- establish whether the current DMO is fit for purpose and to consider any in-kind support which the Council can provide to VC to become more effective and, in so doing, to assess the VC model against other Destination Management Organisation (DMO) models
- consider what options are available to us going forward to assist in facilitating a strong DMO, in order to:
 - raise the profile of the District as a visitor destination
 - manage the visitor economy
 - exploit the economic potential to create jobs
 - develop a successful year-round tourism offer
 - exploit the potential for inward investment to the District
- consider what 'destinations' Chichester is made up of and to consider whether 'Chichester District' is a recognisable destination, or whether it should be part of a wider destination; and whether there is an opportunity to work with other authorities for a wider tourism offer
- understand the purpose of tourism information services and how this is delivered

4.7 The group consists of Mr G McAra (Chair), Mrs C Apel, Mr N Thomas, Mrs B Tinson and Mrs N Graves.

4.8 In tandem with the work of the Task and Finish Group the Council has included support for the visitor economy in its Corporate Plan 2015-2018 stating under the Economy Priority the objective to "Promote Chichester District as a visitor and cultural destination"

In line with this the Council has reviewed the progress and initial findings of the Task and Finish Group and has provisionally allocated funding to undertake research to provide baseline data for any future tourism strategy.

4.9 The importance of tourism to the local economy is also recognised by neighbouring authorities, and members will recall that during the course of the Task & Finish Group's work two other studies on the visitor economy emerged. One is a study of the visitor economy across the Coastal West Sussex Partnership (CWSP) area, and the other is a new targeted marketing initiative through West Sussex County Council (WSSCC).

The draft report on the CWSP study has been presented to the five authorities who commissioned the study. It provides some useful data, ideas and clear pointers on how to develop the visitor economy within the CWSP area, including Chichester.

WSSC are progressing their 'Beautiful Outdoors' project which is a standalone project promoting 'active tourism' targeted at a specific Greater London demographic

Reference to the findings of the CWSP study and the Beautiful Outdoors project is made throughout this report

5 Current Tourism Services in and around Chichester District

Organisations in the District involved in Tourism

5.1 There are several organisations in the District supporting the visitor economy to varying degrees. Some include the visitor economy as part of their overall work, while others undertake specific activities to support tourism in individual towns, areas, or sectors within the industry. Furthermore, some have modest financial and personnel resources, while others are entirely voluntary.

5.2 In brief, these organisations include:

Visit Chichester - Visit Chichester was set-up as a public-private membership organisation headed by a non-executive Board of directors with the aim that directors should be from local accommodation providers, visitor attractions, Chichester Chamber of Commerce & Industry (CCCI) and CDC. The board is currently weighted in favour of the public sector. There are two directors representing the visitor attraction/events sector. All directors are volunteers. There is one part time member of staff working on social media and some paid consultancy. There is some private sector buy-in, but resources are extremely limited with a budget of only c. £70,000 per annum. Less than half of this comes from membership. With funding generated through sale of advertising space, VC produces a local accommodation guide and operates the Visit Chichester website. The main aim of Visit Chichester is to work collaboratively with industry partners to position Chichester District as a premier holiday destination on the south coast

Midhurst Tourism Partnership – The Partnership is made up entirely from volunteers. It has a constitution but no assets. It produces brochures funded by a combination of advertising income and local funding (e.g. from the Town Council, SDNPA, etc.). It is currently producing a new 'Visit Midhurst' website with funding from Chichester District Council. The Town Council have always provided a member on the group (currently Gordon McAra) and historically have provided secretarial support

Petworth Business Association - The PBA is a very active, but entirely voluntary organisation. It absorbed the Petworth Tourism Partnership a couple of years ago so now undertakes any work in the town to attract visitors and to provide visitor information. With support from the District Council and with funding generated through sale of advertising space, it is currently producing a new brochure. It also operates the Discover Petworth website

Selsey Business Partnership – This is a voluntary group supporting local Selsey businesses. One of their key aims is 'To promote the branding of Selsey in order to encourage more visitors into Selsey', but there are not any resources directly allocated towards tourism

Chichester Chamber of Commerce and Industry – This is a membership organisation which actively supports businesses in the City and beyond. It provides a ‘voice’ on local business issues including tourism and used to have a seat on the board of VC. A key aim is to promote Chichester and to encourage more visitors, but there are not any resources directly allocated towards tourism

Chichester Visitors Group – This group was first established by the Duke of Richmond in the 1980s and is a loose partnership of visitor attractions and places of interest. They produce an annual attractions leaflet, funded by the individual members, which is widely distributed around the district and beyond

Chichester BID (City Centre Partnership) – The BID is closely involved with the City’s visitor economy. Their stated aim is to “make the most of the many assets the City has to offer, including the diverse mix of retail, local heritage and culture.” Each of their four main strategic objectives, as below, contribute to developing the conditions necessary to grow the visitor economy, and significant funding is directed towards these objectives:

- Improve the marketing and promotion of our City Centre.
- Improve the organisation of our City Centre.
- Improve the quality of the environment of our City Centre.
- Improve the safety and security of our City Centre

Chichester Harbour Conservancy - Chichester Harbour AONB has approximately 1.5 million people visiting each year. Walking, cycling, photography, drawing and painting, and bird-watching are just some of the interests of these visitors, plus of course the many people who visit and use the harbour for sailing and boating. There are strong indications that the number of people coming to Chichester Harbour AONB will continue to increase. The Conservancy manages the visitor infrastructure, visitor numbers and activities within Chichester Harbour AONB and has funding to do so.

Manhood Peninsula Partnership – A community led initiative, which brings together key organisations and local groups - ranging from local authorities to the RSPB to the Environment Agency – to balance ecological, environmental, infrastructure and economic issues. It is funded by the public sector and one of its key objectives is to grow and develop the visitor economy across the Peninsula. Its recent conference largely focussed on the potential to grow its visitor economy

Neighbouring Authorities and Organisations Involved in Tourism

- 5.3 Each of Chichester District’s neighbouring and overlapping authorities are also involved in the management and promotion of tourism for their specific areas. In recent years, each authority has made substantial reductions in resources allocated to support the visitor economy and there are significant variations between authorities in the scope of their support and the level of resources allocated. There is usually no longer one department and one budget to support tourism activities, and what remains is now spread

amongst various council departments. The main expenditure is on general marketing activities

Arun District Council - At present, the Council does not have a tourism strategy or action plan. 'Sussex by the Sea' is the destination brand for Arun District. Their investment in tourism (staff and resources) includes one full-time officer and other time and resources allocated to PR, marketing and events. Their spend is estimated at just below £100k.

Worthing Borough Council - Visit Worthing has a full-time tourism officer and a tourism budget of around £58,000, although this excludes venues promotion and marketing, and events. The Council is recruiting an Events Co-ordinator to operate across Worthing and Adur.

Horsham District Council – No full-time resources are allocated to the visitor economy, although one officer within economic development covers support to tourism businesses. They operate one visitor information centre

Havant Borough Council – The Council co-ordinates a 'Visit Havant' website, aimed at serving visitors to Hayling Island and Emsworth. They offer some visitor information services on Hayling Island and have an officer shared with East Hampshire District Council focusing on tourism development and the websites. In addition, they are working on links with Portsmouth City Council

East Hampshire District Council – There are no full-time resources, and tourism activities are promoted through a partnership of the visitor accommodation providers, visitor attractions and hospitality businesses in the district, co-ordinated by the Council in conjunction with Havant BC.

West Sussex County Council – West Sussex County Council do not have any full-time staff resources allocated to tourism. However, significant staff time and financial resources have been allocated to their 'Beautiful Outdoors' project

South Downs National Park - As a National Park, the SDNPA has statutory purposes and socio-economic responsibilities, as specified in the Environment Act of 1995, to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area, and to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Park by the public. Much of their work is therefore inherently directed towards the visitor economy. They have one full-time officer focussing on sustainable tourism, and within their headquarters in Midhurst they operate the South Downs Centre - a visitor interpretation and advice centre, part-funded by CDC.

The Private Sector

- 5.4 Private sector businesses working in the visitor economy include accommodation providers, places of interest and attractions, event operators, food and drink businesses, transport operators, conference and hospitality providers, and many other leisure, hospitality and retail businesses.

Some of these organisations provide input and time to many of the organisations listed above, and some provide financial input mainly through modest membership fees and/or through the purchase of advertising space in publications in a variety of often overlapping publications and online platforms.

In many cases, within their marketing activities, private sector businesses and organisations are also undertaking wider marketing of the District and surrounding area, further duplicating the work of the many organisations above.

6 Understanding the Visitor

6.1 It is important to consider how 'tourism' has changed and is continuing to change – and the challenges this presents and the opportunities this brings. Each of us take holidays, short breaks, day trips and other 'tourism activities'. If we think about how we have taken holidays, breaks and day trips over the years, it is very likely that what we do in 2015 is very different to what we did in 10, 20 or 30 years ago.

There will have been many changes, but a few might include

- Less importance attached to an 'annual holiday'
- Individual breaks are shorter and we are taking more of them
- More day trips being taken
- Visits to friends and relatives that are essentially holidays
- We are far more likely to book online ... and 'last minute' is often the norm
- More 'health' and 'active' tourism - looking for breaks that exhilarate and help keep us fit, or help us to pursue a sporting interest
- More 'skills' and 'cultural' tourism to learn new things
- Fewer week/two-week trips to seaside destinations
- More short breaks to towns and cities
- Trips and holidays centred on festivals and events
- Holidays and short breaks revolving around specific interests and 'themes' such as culture, heritage, water sports, art, music, cycling, walking, sport, food and drink, and so on

(Source: Visit England)

Looking ahead, the prospects for tourism look strong, with potential for growth in the domestic market, the UK inbound market and in business tourism. The most significant of these is domestic tourism and the Visit England study 'Domestic Leisure Tourism Trends for the Next Decade' presents a key source of data. When considering the Districts assets against this, Chichester and the surrounding area is well-placed to exploit many more opportunities to grow the visitor economy.

6.2 However, there are challenges too. While we don't have the figures specifically for Chichester, overall visitor satisfaction with West Sussex is among the lowest in the country.

To begin our understanding of how to drive tourism growth and how to manage tourism resources to assist this, it is important to understand some of the 'satisfaction' drivers which will impact on our ability to provide the conditions to attract and retain visitors. These include:

- Good quality accommodation
- Accommodation that offers value for money
- Easily accessible for those with impairments
- A place where we feel safe and secure
- Unspoilt countryside
- Good value for money generally
- Clean and well-maintained beaches
- Clean and tidy environment
- Good quality food, drink and dining
- Beaches which are safe and suitable for bathing
- Welcoming and friendly people
- Variety of accommodation to choose from that suits my needs
- Interesting towns and villages to visit
- Easy to find useful information about the destination when planning
- Easy to book your trip/different parts of your trip in advance
- A destination that is not too expensive to get to
- Attractive/well maintained town/city centre
- Opportunities to eat/drink local food and produce
- Very high levels of customer service
- Clear signposting that helps you find your way around the destination
- Wide range of attractions and things to do
- Opportunities to see famous buildings and monuments
- Easy to find useful information about the destination when you're there
- Overall availability of deals and discounts for the destination
- A destination that doesn't take too long to get to
- Availability of reasonably priced car parking
- Opportunities to visit museums/galleries and contemporary arts
- Good range of shopping opportunities
- Easy to get around by public transport
- Availability of individual/independent local shops
- A destination that is easy to get to by public transport
- For countryside breaks, a good range of outdoor activities
- Good range of water-based/beach activities
- Availability of festivals, music, sporting and cultural events
- Good nightlife

(Source: Visit England)

7 The Economic Impact of Tourism

7.1 It is reasonable to ask why Tourism should be a 'special case' and why, in the past, it received the seemingly high levels of support and backing from the public sector. The value of tourism is both direct and indirect. There is much that a community or district such as Chichester has in terms of infrastructure, amenities, community assets and environmental assets that the indigenous

population enjoy and benefit from, that simply wouldn't exist (or would at least be in a poorer form) if 'Tourism' didn't exist.

- 7.2 In a wider context, tourism is essential to England's economy. This 'visitor economy' which covers leisure tourism, business trips and visiting friends and relatives, generates £106billion each year, employs 2.6million people and supports thousands of businesses, both directly and indirectly. It also has a strong and vital interdependent relationship with farming, transport, retailing, cultural assets, coastal and maritime activities, sport, museums and the arts, hospitality and other sectors.
- 7.3 For the first time, Government has a tourism strategy that reaches across Whitehall, looking at policies from a tourism perspective. Funding through the Regional Growth Fund has been allocated to Visit England who is tasked to work with the tourism industry to deliver a 10-year strategic framework for tourism. This sets out ways the industry can work together to deliver a 5% growth in value, year-on-year, over the next decade. This would result in an additional £50billion in expenditure and the creation of 225,000 jobs.
- 7.4 There are substantial opportunities to increase the value of tourism to the District. In particular, the growth in short-breaks in England provides a growing market, and there is a tremendous opportunity to exploit the potential for exponential increases in spend by turning day visitors into staying visitors.

Tourism in Chichester District

- 7.5 The South East attracts the highest tourism spend for any region outside London. In Chichester District, tourism and leisure generates significant direct expenditure and is the largest private sector employer. According to Visit England data, tourism produces the following in Chichester District:
- 5.2 million day trips each year generating a spend of £144million
 - 405,000 'staying' trips each year, equating to 1.3 million 'bed nights', and generating a spend of £75million
 - c. 7,500 jobs in tourism and leisure, plus numerous 'support' jobs
- (Please note: Data produced by Visit Chichester shows higher figures than these, but we have been unable to reconcile them to the Visit England figures)
- 7.6 These figures may look impressive, but we're merely scratching the surface! ... In 2013:
- British residents spent £18.7 billion on 297 million nights away from home in England
 - 66,400 accommodation businesses provided 2.7 million bed-spaces
 - £46.0 billion was spent on 1.4 billion domestic tourism day trips

The potential market is huge, and when one breaks these figures down to the share already being captured by other South Coast destinations (e.g. Brighton, Bournemouth, Isle of Wight, New Forest, Kent) there is a clear and growing market for holidays and short breaks in areas such as ours.

8 Key Findings

- 8.1 It is clear that there are a number of key criteria required to drive forward our visitor economy. Below, we have set out a summary of some of the findings from the Task and Finish Group's work. However, it is worth quoting two sections from the CWSP study which neatly summarises best practice:

"... there are common ingredients for success. These include: focusing on a destination area that has resonance with visitors; active engagement of a strong and sizeable private sector; effective collaboration between public sector partners; a clarity of focus that makes best use of the resources that are available; and strong and clear leadership."

The study further lists the criteria that are key to success:

- A DMO that reflects a sensible destination area
- A private sector of sufficient scale, with enough 'big players' that are prepared to invest
- Local authorities that can work together and provide sustained funding over the medium term
- A DMO that is focused and not trying to do too much with the available resource
- A DMO that can deliver strong leadership

The presentation to the Overview and Scrutiny on 22nd July 2014, by the Chief Executive of Visit Durham also gave a clear steer on the key indicators and measures needed to develop a visitor economy, including:

- A destination is one that the consumer recognises and likes to visit
- Destination management only happens when the public sector is an investing partner
- Destination management is best led by the private sector with significant public sector involvement
- An evidence base and putting your customers first is the best basis for a destination management organisation
- If a positive and proactive partnership is in place it will get the destination management it needs

Understanding the Visitor

- 8.2 All of us are changing our 'tourism habits'. Lifestyle and work influences, new technologies, and a blurring of the lines between work and leisure time mean those working in and supporting the visitor economy have to be responsive and agile to change, and need to develop new approaches to develop new markets and grow new customers.
- 8.3 It is clear that Chichester District and the surrounding areas have a lot to offer, both in terms of changing holiday patterns and in terms of what the customer wants. However, in a competitive environment with other parts of the South Coast and other parts of the country improving their visitor offering, it won't happen by chance. It will require leadership, management and visitor marketing expertise.

The Current Organisation and Management of the Visitor Economy

- 8.4 There is a plethora of organisations, partnerships and groups involved in promoting and supporting tourism and the visitor economy.
- 8.5 Much of the effort, time and resources put into tourism is quite inward looking, thinking about what a town or an area has to offer, rather than what the customer actually wants. There is often an assumption that potential visitors will already know or quickly identify with an individual town or location, when in fact this is far from the case. For example, we think first of 'The Lake District', the 'Isle of Wight', the 'New Forest', 'Cornwall', the 'Peak District', and so on, well before drilling down to the individual locations and activities within.
- 8.6 There is no consistency of approach or coherent strategy.
- 8.7 It is doubtful if many know about, or have regard to, the Districts' Destination Management Plan.
- 8.8 There is much duplication of people, time and financial resources.
- 8.9 There is very limited leadership and few professional 'people' resources with commercial tourism experience and expertise.
- 8.10 With the resources available to individual organisations, there has been little or no research to understand the opportunities and to understand 'the visitor' - who they are, where they come from, why they visit and why they don't visit.

Visit Chichester

- 8.11 Visit Chichester was set-up as a public-private membership organisation headed by a non-executive Board of directors with the aim that directors should be from local accommodation providers, visitor attractions, Chichester Chamber of Commerce & Industry (CCCI) and CDC. The board is currently weighted in favour of the public sector. There is one director representing the visitor attraction/events sector and one representing accommodation providers. All directors are volunteers. There is one part time member of staff working on social media and some paid consultancy. Resources are extremely limited with a budget of c. £70,000 per annum
- 8.12 While welcoming any work undertaken to promote tourism, tourism businesses consulted do not regard the DMO, in its current form, to be vital to their business and several have drifted away from close involvement with the DMO.
- 8.13 The organisation has limited visibility and profile, and some accommodation providers in the District are not clear about the roles it performs.
- 8.14 VC places a lot of importance in developing its website and social media feeds. Despite this, the website does not provide a sufficiently good or responsive service for today's customers. However, the website is being fully

overhauled but much of the work is being undertaken on a voluntary capacity.

8.15 Following discussions with VC, members concluded that:

- VC appears to be an operational organisation with no defined strategic vision or direction and, despite best endeavours, through lack of resources they have not been able to drive the 2010 Destination Management Plan
- It has a fragmented approach and is a fragile structure - It needs robustness
- It has insufficient money to effectively market, manage and build the destination
- It carries out limited consultation with users or providers
- Their presentation to the Group gave no indication of any move or aspiration to restructure or consider alternative ways to serve and develop the visitor economy

The members also felt that the name 'Visit Chichester' is a barrier to engendering a united approach to driving the visitor economy across the district.

Neighbouring Authorities

8.16 Initial discussions with the tourism officer at Arun District Council and with the economic development service at Horsham District Council have indicated a willingness to consider whether some or all of our three districts might comprise an attractive visitor proposition to market and manage.

Through the work we have been involved with on the CWSP study, there is a clear desire among local authorities within the CWSP – Chichester, Arun, Worthing, Adur and WSCC – to work together. In particular, Arun clearly recognise the advantages of joining resources and see the benefits of working more closely with Chichester.

There have not, for the purposes of this work, been any detailed discussions with authorities to the west or with SDNPA, but clear opportunities exist.

The Destination

8.17 When considering a destination to visit, visitors do not concern themselves with administrative boundaries when making their choices. However, VC's focus is purely on Chichester District and neighbouring authorities focus is just on their districts. There is no evidence that anyone has considered whether these are the optimum 'destinations' to serve, or whether there is naturally a narrower or wider destination that would best attract and serve visitors.

8.18 Visit England define a destination as follows: *A destination is an area of visitor appeal which includes attractions, accommodation and support services. It may be defined by physical, thematic or administrative boundaries and it embraces a set of distinctive images and qualities that give*

it a brand identity recognisable by potential visitors. Destinations should be places with which tourism stakeholders have a natural affinity and within which it is practicable for them to work together.

- 8.19 A key consideration of whether an area can and should be managed as a destination in its own right is whether it has a clear and distinctive identity by which it can be promoted and described to visitors and recognised by them. However, as implied by the above definition, destinations can only work effectively if they are meaningful to the tourism businesses, visitors and other players, including the local authorities and communities, who need to work together to manage them.

Creating a Viable and Successful Destination

- 8.20 It is important to consider what activities are required in an area to maximise the impact on the local economy from visitors. These can be broken down into six inter-related sub groups:
- 8.20.1 **Destination Management or A 'Joined-Up' Approach** – This is the process of leading, influencing and coordinating the management of all the aspects of a destination that contribute to a visitor's experience, taking account of the needs of visitors, local residents, businesses and the environment.
 - 8.20.2 **Attracting Visitors** - Is primarily about marketing the destination in a variety of forms, including online, social media, PR, and advertising campaigns, as well as generating activities, events and reasons for visitors to choose the destination, and linking in to national initiatives, many of which provide match funding. This cannot be undertaken in a piecemeal fashion and requires a robust, professional approach with aspirational targets
 - 8.20.3 **Inward Investment and Improving the Infrastructure** – Engendering a culture across all stakeholders to consider the visitor economy at every level – Ensuring the planning process is sympathetic and responsive to the visitor economy; developing and providing sufficient accommodation stock of the right kind; sufficient access to parking, public conveniences, public transport and other facilities; cleanliness of the environment; and seeking ways to support new attractions, events and activities to broaden the destination's appeal.
 - 8.20.4 **Welcome and Ease of Movement** – Ensuring that, whichever way visitors enter the destination, they feel welcome and comfortable in the local environment, and they are able to move around in the most efficient way. This makes a big difference to a visitor's experience. This includes full customer orientation within the destination, placing the needs of visitors as a key consideration in all decision making.
 - 8.20.5 **Extending Stay** – Making good links and joint packages between attractions, accommodation providers, shops and restaurants to encourage longer visits; and generating activities and events to

encourage longer stays. We know that the longer visitors stay the more they spend into the local economy.

8.20.6 **Return Visits** - Getting the previous five right has a big impact on this, but can be enhanced through loyalty schemes, offers and specialist events.

Destination Management Organisation Models

- 8.21 There is a difference between destination management organisations (which coordinate, manage and market a destination) and simply a destination organisation (which is principally involved in marketing). Crucially, destination management includes the **planning, development and marketing** of a destination as well as how it is managed physically, financially, operationally and in other ways.
- 8.22 The size, form, functions and governance of destination management organisations vary across the country. They may be a single organisation, such as a local authority, or can be an informal partnership or a legal entity, such as a community interest company, that includes representation from both the private and public sectors:
- 8.23 A successful DMO will demonstrate strong private sector involvement, and many DMOs, but by no means all, are private-sector lead. To be successful a DMO needs drive and appropriate experience within its personnel and, above all, strong leadership.
- 8.24 Visit England cite This is Durham, Visit Manchester, Shakespeare's England, Visit Kent, Visit Isle of Wight, Visit York and Visit Winchester as examples of DMOs working well.

Tourist information Services

- 8.25 With the move to mobile technology, traditional TIC services are changing. However, TICs maintain an important role for signposting and leaflets, and Chichester's TIC still performs an important frontline role as the contact point for all incoming enquiries, handling all phone calls for VC. (The TIC phone number is the contact for this area on the VC website.) Additionally, visitors still appreciate a staffed TIC and Chichester's TIC has an established business making bookings for accommodation providers, events and local attractions, which it is developing further. The TIC is likely to grow in importance with any increase in visitor numbers to the area, so the Group considers that the future of tourist information services should be integral to any wider strategy on destination management.

Funding

- 8.26 None of this will go anywhere if there is not the funding to drive the aspirations. There must be a clear articulation of the levels of funding required and potential sources. In going forward, any new strategy must not be frightened of proposing high aspirations and sufficient funding to match.

- 8.27 The Task and Finish Group have not looked in detail at the potential for the Council to allocate funding to support any new visitor economy strategy, and is disappointed that the CWSP study has not looked at funding models.

There needs to be an assessment of existing expenditure on tourism (including people resources) among all the different organisations currently supporting tourism, which could be pooled. Similarly, there needs to be an assessment of the potential funding from the private sector and other sources, and to research new models for funding

In this regard we consider there should be an analysis of the potential for a Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID) across any defined destination and to open-up discussions with potential partners and the industry accordingly.

9 Proposals

- 9.1 The Task and Finish Group recognise that there are various options going forward and set out below are 4 options for consideration:

1. Do Nothing.

This not considered appropriate as the Group are concerned that, in its current form, VC does not substantially raise the profile of the district as a visitor destination, or strategically manage the visitor economy to fully exploit the economic potential to create jobs. Therefore, the significant potential to grow the visitor economy and to grow jobs is unlikely to be achieved

2. To continue providing the current level of strategic and officer support to the industry, and some additional funding to provide data and research to better inform the Council's strategies and to assist those currently supporting tourism.

Again, the significant potential to grow the visitor economy and to grow jobs is unlikely to be achieved.

3. To accept the proposals as set out in the CWSP study and, in conjunction with the neighbouring authorities involved in that study, discuss how the proposals might best be achieved.

We believe the approach and the aspirations emerging from that study again fall short, and feel there is much more that could be gained through a more robust and determined approach.

4. Within CDC set-out a brief but clear 3 to 5 year plan which sets the aspiration, establishes the baseline information and then leads the initiative required to bring partners together who will then be able to move forward under one robust and coherent strategy. The outline plan will state the potential to attract new visitors, to support and grow tourism businesses, to grow jobs, to grow the economy, and to attract inward investment if the industry is prepared to join forces.

For CDC, this work will require:

- Officer time to manage the provision of baseline research and to prepare the outline plan
- Member and officer time to assess the practicalities of using existing tourism delivery organisations and to negotiate their use accordingly
- Member and officer time to engage our neighbouring authorities
- Member and officer time to work with tourism businesses and to identify and engage leaders to take this work forward
- Financial resources and officer time to consider what sources of Council or other public funding are available, which could be used to leverage significant additional sums from the private sector, and to assess the potential for a TBID

9.2 The Group recommends that the Committee recommends to Cabinet that option 4 be pursued and resources be allocated accordingly.

10. Outcomes to be achieved

- 10.1 Improved support to the tourism industry and the development of the District's visitor economy.
- 10.2 A clear and cohesive 'destination' identified.
- 10.3 A robust and determined partnership between Chichester and neighbouring authorities, and with private sector businesses, all working together with the current plethora of disparate organisations merged under one united cohesive brand.
- 10.4 A strong, well-supported and professionally managed Destination Management Organisation.
- 10.5 Greatly improved leadership for the visitor economy locally, and successful management and marketing of the area as an attractive, popular and competitive UK and South Coast destination.
- 10.6 New jobs; inward investment in new infrastructure, facilities, attractions and events; and a stronger year-round visitor economy.
- 10.7 Clear targets and KPIs to measure performance and to assist with driving outputs.

11. Resource and legal implications

- 11.1 The Council has already recognised the importance of the visitor economy in the Corporate Plan 2015-2018 and some initial resources towards research and data have provisionally been allocated.
- 11.2 The further resources which may be required will vary depending on the final route taken. However, at a minimum we envisage that some significant officer time will be necessary to instigate the search for leadership and participation from the private sector and from other authorities.
- 11.3 At this stage there are no further resource or legal implications.

12. Consultation

12.1 The T&F Group has received a number of presentations and considered various pieces of evidence. These have included:

- A discussion paper on the present position and the opportunities available to develop the district's tourism offering
- A presentation on the tourism marketplace, the wider visitor economy and the potential for tourism to grow the local economy
- A presentation from Visit England on the role of destination management organisations and the various models that can be applied
- A presentation from SDNPA
- A presentation from the Chief Executive of Visit Durham
- Insights on future trends in tourism, tourism monitors, and numerous research papers and statistics from Visit England
- A presentation from Visit Chichester
- A discussion with the Council's former Front of House Officer who services the Tourist Information functions at the Novium museum.

Consultation

12.2 Individual members and officers from the Group have also:

- Met with representatives from businesses and organisations in the District's tourism sector including Bunn Leisure, Chichester City Centre Partnership, Chichester Festival Theatre, Fishbourne Roman Palace, Goodwood and the Weald and Downland Open Air Museum
- Met with Visit England's Head of Destination Management
- Met with the Chairman of the City Centre BID
- Attended a seminar on TBIDs
- Worked with other authorities on the CSWP study
- Liaised with WSCC on their Beautiful Outdoors project
- Undertaken a walk-about tour of Chichester to consider the city from a visitor's viewpoint
- Attended the LGA Conference on Culture, Sport and Tourism to obtain insights on successful local authority-led tourism
- Met with officers from Arun District Council and Horsham District Council

13. Community impact and corporate risks

13.1 The aim of the review is to have a positive impact on the visitor economy and, in turn, the wider economy in our district.

13.2 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.

14. Other Implications

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

15. Appendices

None

16. Background Papers

Tourism Task and Finish Group Progress Report – 3rd July 2014

Tourism Task and Finish Group Progress Report – 18th November 2014

Minutes of a meeting of the **Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held on Tuesday 22 July 2014 at 11:30am