

Chichester District Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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The Great Sussex Way Annual Report

1. Contacts

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2. Recommendation

- 2.1 To receive the annual report from The Great Sussex Way (TGSW) for 2022 and assess performance in line with the Service Level Agreement.**

3. Background

- 3.1 In February 2017, Cabinet approved to support the development of Chichester District's visitor economy through the establishment of a new Destination Management Organisation and confirmed £50,000 annual partnership funding for five years from the commencement of the funding agreement and Service Level Agreement (SLA).
- 3.2 A funding agreement and SLA was entered in to on 1st March 2018 which identifies that monitoring and evaluation of the agreement will take place quarterly and a report on the service activities to be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on an annual basis.
- 3.3 A request for additional funding for Visit Chichester as part of the Covid Recovery Plan was approved by Council to increase the previous level of support for Visit Chichester by £100k per year in years 2020/21, 2021/22 & 2022/23 and provide new support of £130k per year in 2023/24 & 2024/25. Delegated powers were also given to the Director for Growth and Place to approve a new Service Level Agreement with Visit Chichester following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Communities and Cabinet Member for Growth, Place and Regeneration.
- 3.4 The Company name was formally changed from Visit Chichester to The Great Sussex Way (TGSW) in September 2021.

4. Outcomes to be achieved

- 4.1 In line with the 2022/23 SLA there are a number of activities and measurements to be achieved within this period. Below are details and a response from TGSW on how these have been addressed.

Action 1: Increase Visitor Numbers with a post pandemic focus on domestic travellers
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Activity	Measurements
1. Develop a product portfolio for the district. 2. Deliver targeted marketing campaigns throughout the year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cambridge Tourism Economic Impact Model 2018 - Four product portfolios developed in relation to the three market segments as defined in the DMP
<p>Response: Developed 24 new product portfolios and itineraries, all designed around at least one overnight stay. These were designed predominantly to target aspirational families, middle aged and millennial segment audiences.</p>	

Action 2: Increase overnight visitors	
Activity	Measurements
1. Develop campaign/s to promote shoulder season (October/November, February/March). 2. Work with Chichester District Council and cultural partners to ensure a linked up events strategy is developed and promoted. 3. Make accommodation options more accessible by showing them in relation to attractions 4. Increase accommodation members, particularly B&Bs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Six marketing campaigns, such as English Tourism Week, Easter, Roman Week etc - Campaigns developed and promoted to promote shoulder seasons. - Support events strategy development and promotion - Eight themed itineraries to be developed with overnight stay at its core - Have increase from 20 to 40 accommodation providers among membership.
<p>Response: Numerous marketing campaigns linked to the 24 product portfolios and itineraries in addition to Culture Spark and Festival of Chichester have been delivered. All itineraries offer an overnight option. This included promotion of the shoulder season including campaigns such as 'The area in Autumn', and 'Places to celebrate Valentines Day'. The new website hosts an events page on which organisations can advertise events free of charge. Membership for TGSW is free and membership has grown to 670 businesses.</p>	

Action 3: Increase Day visitors dwell time and spend	
Activity	Measurements
1. Develop partnerships between tourism partners to package offers in the district to encourage increased dwell time and spend within the district.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Involve greater number of businesses in our tourist offering. - Membership target of 150 members from 80 as of 1st April 2021
<p>Response: Expansion of itineraries has included more businesses in the offerings and membership has exceeded 150 with now 670 business members.</p>	

Action 4: Work in partnership to create a healthy visitor economy	
Activity	Measurements
1. Develop a communications and networking structure to share insights,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Database of interested parties to be developed and newsletter

<p>explore training opportunities and encourage district wide working.</p> <p>2. Hold 4 tourism events per annum to include leaflet exchange.</p> <p>3. Sustainability of DMO through development of membership scheme.</p>	<p>promoted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Four tourism events held within the district during the year. - Build a strong, collaborative membership community with the aim of aligning purpose and delivering well structured marketing campaigns. This will include cross promotion of attractions and accommodation. - Campaigns will include coverage in specialist / hobbyist magazines to promote activities outside the typical tourist season eg. Star gazing, bird watching, water sports, cycling. 4 per year.
<p>Response:</p> <p>Monthly visitor newsletters have been created and open quarterly networking events take place. The popular leaflet exchange takes place annually and a number of specialist campaigns have been delivered including a number focused on the local wine offer and the great outdoors. A number of press trips have been hosted which have received high levels of quality press coverage.</p>	

Action 5: Improve online presence	
Activity	Measurements
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review current image stock and develop this further. 2. Review and develop The Great Sussex Way website and links to wider platforms. 3. Social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of image content both by The Great Sussex Way and partner images. - 7,000 twitter followers - Seek a 10% increase in Facebook and Instagram followers - Create a LinkedIn account
<p>Response:</p> <p>Improvements have been made to TGSW website and social media following. They have exceeded the 10% increase in Facebook and Instagram and have 7,411 twitter followers.</p>	

Action 6: Review and Governance Arrangements	
Activity	Measurements
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide to Chichester District Council on a quarterly basis a report to provide an update on activity and measures for the Service Level Agreement. 2. Provide and present an annual Report in June each year to Chichester District Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee. 3. Methods to record and monitor tourism data locally to be agreed through partnership working. This would provide a method of monitoring the impact The Great Sussex Way are having on the district. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quarterly Update reports received and discussed on quarterly basis to identify activity within the period and measures against the SLA targets. - Report to June OSC to report annual review of previous year's activity.

Response:

The Cambridge Model is still being produced which measures a like for like approach to tourism across all districts and boroughs in West Sussex. This report however uses historical data and therefore the impact of covid is still being seen in this data.

TGSW have invested in data collection via mobile phones which can now provide more information about where visitors are coming from, how long they are staying and where they are visiting.

- 4.2 Officers have met with TGSW on a number of occasions during the period and attended board meetings when requested.
- 4.3 TGSW have provided an annual report (Appendix 1) which provides further details of achievements to date and future work planned for the remaining part of the year.
- 4.4 Although tourism was significantly impacted by the covid pandemic throughout 2021 and 2022, TGSW are continuing to support local tourism businesses through the recovery.

5. Community impact and corporate risks

5.1 The Chichester District Council have committed to assist in facilitating a strong Destination Management Organisation 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

5.2 The funding is provided in two tranches, 50% on 1st April and 50% on 1st October each year and the SLA is reviewed on an annual basis against performance.

6. Appendices

6.1 Appendix 1 – The Great Sussex Way Annual Report 2022

7. Background Papers

None