

POLICY REVIEW & DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Type of Report: Information report	Portfolio(s): Culture, heritage and health.
Will be subject to a future Cabinet Report:	YES
Will be need to be recommended to Council:	NO
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OPEN	

Regeneration and Development Panel

Date: 25th November 2015

Subject: West Norfolk Destination Management Plan

Summary

The West Norfolk Tourism Forum, with support from the tourism section at the Borough Council has developed a new Visitor Economy Destination Management Plan for West Norfolk.

The plan has been developed to provide a framework of objectives and actions over the next five years for increasing the value that visitor spending can make to the local economy throughout the Borough of King's Lynn & West Norfolk. The plan aims to provide:

- A clear assessment of what the issues and opportunities are for maximising the benefit of the visitor economy.
- Proposals on how the overall destination, locations and products can be branded and promoted.
- To provide West Norfolk's understanding of how other destination management organisations and tourism bodies can work to meet the needs of the visitor economy in west Norfolk.

Recommendations

- 1) That the Borough Council considers and endorses this plan as the tourism industry's assessment of the issues and opportunities for sustainably increasing the contribution that visitor spending makes to the economy of the West Norfolk.
- 2) That annually, the Borough Council receives a presentation and report on progress and any changes to the Destination Management Plan.

Background

Over recent years, Government, Visit England and the Local Enterprise Partnerships have encouraged local destination management organisations with strong representation from the business community to develop Destination Management Plans to acknowledge local priorities for the visitor economy. The importance of King's Lynn and West Norfolk having a destination management plan was also emphasised in the recommendations made through Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk Corporate Peer Challenge undertaken in February 2014.

The West Norfolk Tourism Forum has been the representative body for the visitor economy throughout West Norfolk for 26 years. It has an executive committee which includes representatives of trade associations and local business groups, borough and town councils as well as representatives of individual businesses. The Borough Council's tourism section provides secretariat and professional guidance to the executive committee.

The development of the plan has been managed through a series of meetings of the West Norfolk Tourism Forum Executive Committee and through a consultation event at the 2014 West Norfolk Tourism Forum Annual General Meeting.

The plan has been developed through a series of stages:

Section 1 – Executive summary

Section 2 - Overview

Section 3 - Evidence gathering and review of the product including:

- Tourism facilities – (*accommodation, catering, attractions, activities, events, retail*)
- Heritage and culture – (*Historical connections, traditions, specific sites, arts & crafts and cultural festival and events*)
- Landscape and countryside – (*Appeal and distinctiveness of landscape, routes, trails, wildlife features and seaside/beach management*)
- Built environment – (*Features, architecture, parks and gardens, public realm*)
- Access and transport – (*Links to and within the destination*)
- Visitor services – (*Marketing, signposting, information and facilities*)

Section 4 - Assessment of current performance including:

- Key drivers in the visitor economy
- Local performance of the visitor economy
- Business performance.
- Market research and market intelligence
- Identifying local issues through local policies
- Assessment of external trends and competitor destinations

Section 5 – setting direction

Based on the evidence gathering in stage 3 and 4, a comprehensive assessment of strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats (SWOT) was undertaken. This aimed to distil out fundamental issues for the visitor economy, suggested changes to existing activity, priorities and themes.

From this SWOT the plan has developed:

- A vision statement
- Identified 4 key aims
- 12 objectives to help achieve these aims.

Section 6 - action plan

For each objective the action plan identifies between 1 and 6 actions which will contributed towards the objective.

The plan is developed for an initial 2 year period, 2016 and 2017. This 2 year plan will be reviewed and rolled forward annually.

The West Norfolk Tourism forum supports the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk taking the lead on marketing activities. Where actions are reliant on the work of other organisations, the Tourism Forum would support the Borough Council's tourism team taking the lead in liaising with those organisations to work towards achieving the outcomes.

Section 7 – Industry indicators

Three sets of indicators are identified:

- Barometer indicators of the estimated overall volume and value of the visitor economy – These are influenced by many factors outside the scope of the destination management plan.
- Barometer of local indicators of usage and footfall
- Marketing performance indicators with specific annual targets

Measuring progress and continuing development

The plan would be reviewed 6 monthly by the Executive Committee of the West Norfolk Tourism Forum at its spring and autumn meetings and a summary review provided at the Annual General meeting in November.

It is suggested that annual updates would be provide to the Borough Council – Regeneration & Development Panel.