

Cheltenham Borough Council
Social & Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee
10th January 2011

Economy & Business Improvement Overview and Scrutiny
Committee

24th January 2011

Developing a Marketing & Tourism Strategy

Report of the Tourism & Marketing Working Party

Accountable member	Cabinet Member Sport & Culture, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
Accountable officer	Assistant Director Wellbeing & Culture, Sonia Phillips
Accountable scrutiny committee	Social & Community and Economic Business & Improvement
Ward(s) affected	All
Key Decision	No
Executive summary	<p>The Council's business plan, approved by Council on March 30th 2009, included a milestone to produce a marketing and tourism strategy for Cheltenham in order to maximise opportunities to attract UK based and overseas visitors and investors.</p> <p>In June 2009 the Overview & Scrutiny Committees of Social & Community and Economic & Business Improvement approved a decision to form a small, time limited working party to develop the strategy.</p> <p>The attached draft Marketing & Tourism Strategy is a result of the work undertaken by the Working Party and is reflective of feedback received from both parent Scrutiny Committees and stakeholders in the business and tourism community.</p>
Recommendations	The Marketing & Tourism Strategy is approved and goes forward for Cabinet approval.

Financial implications	<p>Any savings resulting from an implementation of an approved merger of the Tourism Information Centre and Art Gallery & Museums teams will be reflected the medium term financial strategy. (see 2.1)</p> <p>Contact officer: Sarah Didcote, sarah.didcote@cheltenham.gov.uk, 01242 264125</p>
Legal implications	<p>None directly arising from this report</p> <p>Contact officer: Nicolas Wheatley, nicolas.wheatley @tewkesbury.gov.uk, 01684 272695</p>
HR implications (including learning and organisational development)	<p>These plans include the creation of a single Marketing team within the merged service team. The main HR implication is around the creation of a single team to be achieved through the merger of the Tourist Information Centre Team and the Art Gallery & Museum Visitor Services. Informal consultation has been ongoing and the Unions are aware of the proposals. Dependent on the outcome of the HLF bid, the formal restructure process should commence April 2011. The merger of the two teams is set to realise savings in 2012-13 as identified in the budget proposals. Any post reductions, including any requirement for compulsory redundancies, will be identified as the restructure process progresses. The Council's policies regarding managing change (and any process to manage redundancy) will be followed, including assessing any associated cost implications.</p> <p>Contact officer: Donna Sheffield, donna.sheffield@cheltenham.gov.uk, 01242 774972</p>
Key risks	<p>The key risks are set out within Appendix 1 of this report.</p>
Corporate and community plan Implications	<p>Strengthening our economy. Enhancing the provision of arts and culture.</p>
Environmental and climate change implications	<p>The impact and potential conflict between sustained and improved tourism against environmental and climate change programmes was identified as a key issue within the Strategy. There will be a need to ensure that full consideration is given to the environmental impact when delivering the action plan.</p>

1. Background

- 1.1** The Council's business plan included a milestone to produce a marketing and tourism strategy for Cheltenham in order to maximise opportunities to attract UK based and overseas visitors and investors.
- 1.2** The Overview & Scrutiny Committees of Social & Community and Economic & Business Improvement approved a decision to form a small, time limited working party to develop the strategy. The working group consisted of Councillors Rawson, Ryder, Holliday and Karl Hemming who were all members of the Social and Community O&S Committee when the group met and similarly Councillors Cooper, Stennett and Whyborn from the Economy and Business Improvement O&S Committee. The working group last met in February 2010 and were supported by officers from Wellbeing & Culture and the Town Centre Manager. The Tourism & Marketing Working Group embarked upon a consultative process of engaging with a cross section of the business and tourism community, which included retail, culture and business sectors in order to seek their views upon Cheltenham as a visitor destination and how it currently markets itself.
- 1.3** In addition to this, the Working Group considered the key issues raised at the branding workshop convened in November 2009, and also reviewed financial and visitor data of the council's existing tourism and marketing provision.
- 1.4** As a result a consultative draft Marketing & Tourism Strategy was presented to both Scrutiny Committees, which was subsequently circulated to stakeholders within the wider business and tourism community between May and June 2010. Feedback from a number of external stakeholders was received with the intention of presenting the revised and final version to both Committees in September prior to the Strategy going forward for Cabinet approval.
- 1.5** During the period of consultation announcements regarding the significant reductions in public sector funding were made by the new coalition government, along with its intention to abolish a number of agencies and bodies. These changes were likely to effect national and regional and partnership bodies responsible for tourism, as well as funding levels at County & District level.
- 1.6** In light of this uncertainty it was felt appropriate to await confirmation of the level to which tourism was to be affected by these changes and the funding reductions nationally, regionally and locally, before bringing the Strategy back through Scrutiny.
- 1.7** Announcements regarding changes to a number of government funded bodies, as well as the Comprehensive Spending Review were made recently. Whilst the full impact of the announcements is still yet to be clearly understood, it is felt that the strategy has now reached a point where it can come forward for approval by both parent Committee's before going forward for approval by the Cabinet.
- 1.8** Whilst there has been disappointment with the time delay that has occurred in moving the Strategy forward, it is hoped that the reasons given for the delay are accepted and understood.

2. Progress to date

- 2.1** Despite the delay officers within the Tourism team have been working towards the delivery of a number of actions and improvements identified within the action plan during the year. The progress of this work is :
 - The merger of the Tourist Information Centre Team and the Art Gallery & Museum Visitor Services is progressing well - new job roles/structures have been graded and formal consultations have commenced with the Unions. The formal consultation process with the affected teams will start from January 2011. These plans include the creation of a single

Marketing team within the merged service team.

- Merger of the individual visitor guides from Cheltenham, Gloucester and the wider Cotswolds to one guide, and this will be launched for 2011. The savings generated has resulted in a review of the current Tourism website being undertaken to consider changes to the design scheme and to include more selling/commissioning/advertising opportunities to boost income generation.
- The Museum, Arts & Tourism Manager now sits on the Cheltenham Inward Investment working group meeting - and has been tasked with developing links between Economic Development and the draft Tourism Marketing Strategy. It is envisaged that this will result in the development of strategic working partnerships, projects and activities through marketing Cheltenham and the wider Cotswolds.
- Review of the Cotswold and Forest of Dean Destination Management Organisation (DMO) was completed in April. New working arrangements with DMO have been put in place, as a result a new Executive Officer Group completed a review its strategy & work programme taking account of the recently launched Visit England Strategic Framework for Tourism 2010-2020.
- Work with Gloucestershire First & the DMO is reflective of the strategy and work programme which focuses on 4 key interdependent objectives, which align to the national strategic plan while focusing on the local level. The key objectives are:
 - To increase England's global market share,
 - To offer destinations of distinction,
 - To champion a successful thriving tourism industry
 - To develop greater engagement between the visitor and the experience.

- Work is focused on developing media relations - to promote the area and increase our global market share; setting up the new Boardroom Style.com to ensure we offer new "attractions" and continue the development of our thriving tourism industry; and the publication of our one joined-up Accommodation Guide for 2011 to help the visitor combine a number of experiences in a single day and then relax overnight at one of our many high quality establishments.

- A significant project for the Group and Board for this year and next will be how we develop, manage and deliver tourism information. This project is going to take an in depth look at:

- how we manage our data on the Destination Management System (DMS) and web;
- how our customers can access that information, whether it be on the web, out of hours, at our Visitor Information Centres, or elsewhere;
- the quality of our service provision at these access points, and much more.

The work will now be absorbed with the Tourism service plan.

- 2.2** The Cabinet Member for Sustainability is currently working on a scheme to encourage sponsorship of roundabouts and green spaces by businesses and community groups.

3. Consultation and feedback

- 3.1** The Marketing & Tourism Working Group met 5 times during the period September 2009 and March 2010. The Tourism & Marketing Working Group embarked upon a consultative process of engaging with a cross section of the business and tourism community, which included retail, culture and business sectors in order to seek their views upon Cheltenham as a visitor destination and how it currently markets itself.

- 3.2** In addition to this, the Working Group considered the key issues raised at the branding workshop

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convened in November 2009, and also reviewed financial and visitor data of the council's existing tourism and marketing provision.

- 3.3** As a result a consultative draft Marketing & Tourism Strategy was presented to both Scrutiny Committees, which was subsequently circulated to stakeholders within the wider business and tourism community who had been engaged initially.
- 3.4** The Working Party received the following feedback from external stakeholders during the consultation period May – July 2010.
- A generally positive response was received from the Cheltenham Arts Council.
 - A generally negative response was received from the Chairman of the Cheltenham Hospitality Association (who has subsequently stood down) who commented (among other things) on littering, the amount of financial support being given to the Everyman Theatre by the Borough Council, the need to withdraw funding from twinning activities, the risk of over-providing hotel and bed & breakfast accommodation, and the amount of gum deposited on the streets.
 - A joint response from a hotelier and two other guesthouse proprietors made a number of points, including what they considered to be the repetitiveness of the draft document. They suggested a pedestrian underpass at Boots Corner and the leasing of the Pump Room to an experienced private operator. They also objected to the relocation of the TIC to the Art Gallery and Museum site, believing that it should be in a retail unit in the town centre.
 - Response from the Chief Executive of the Everyman Theatre, commented on what he considered to be the lightness of the background data. He suggested that the entertainments venues and Festivals could be more effective if they worked together; and urged the Council to give more thought to the future of the Town Hall, bearing in mind that major music and comedy acts seem to be moving away to larger venues.

4. Performance management –monitoring and review

- 4.1** Should the Strategy be approved the action plan will be built into the council's performance management framework and and service planning process on an annual basis

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Appendices	1. Risk Assessment
Background information	1. Draft Tourism and Marketing Strategy 2. Corporate Business Plan 2. Overview & Scrutiny Committee Report: June 2009 – Developing Marketing & Tourism Strategy. 3. Overview & Scrutiny Discussion Paper : March 2010 4. Overview & Scrutiny Briefing Note: November 2010

The risk				Original risk score (impact x likelihood)			Managing risk				
Risk ref.	Risk description	Risk Owner	Date raised	I	L	Score	Control	Action	Deadline	Responsible officer	Transferred to risk register
1.01	If the council fails to plan for future tourism and marketing provision this may result in Cheltenham failing to maintain and improve it's position within the economic, tourism and business sector.	SP	December 2010	4	2	8	Accept	Ensure strategic decisions for marketing and tourism are reflective of future economic and business trends.	Feb.2011	JL	Wellbeing & Culture Risk register
1.02	If the council fails to understand the importance of marketing and tourism within the town's economic and business community this may result in lost partnership or funding opportunities at a time when there is great pressure on the council to achieve savings and continued efficiencies.	SP	December 2010	4	2	8	Accept	Engagement with key external stakeholder partners was a integral part of the draft Tourism & Marketing Strategy resulting in shared knowledge and understanding of responsibilities, challenges and need to maximise future partnership opportunities.	Feb 2011	JL	Wellbeing & Culture Risk register
1.03	If the council fails to integrate the strategy within the corporate strategy and commissioning framework this may result in the action plan not being delivered.	SP	December 2010	4	1	4	Accept	Once strategy has been approved actions will be incorporated into the corporate strategy 2011/12 and appropriate service plans. Outcomes identified in the strategy will be used to inform commissioning activity.	March 2011	SP	Wellbeing & Culture Risk register
1.04	If the council does not integrate the strategy with the emerging Local Enterprise Partnership framework this may result in Cheltenham failing to be in a position to develop future	SP	December 2010	3	2	6	Reduce	Ensure close working with the economic development team and Gloucestershire First to try and sustain business and economic development	March 2011	JG	Policy & Performance risk register

	business and economic opportunities.							opportunities locally from which Cheltenham will benefit. Lobby to ensure that tourism, marketing and inward investment are seen as key priority areas for the new LEP.			
1.05	If the council fails to understand the needs of existing and future visitors to Cheltenham this will result in a downturn in visitor numbers and investors in the town.	SP	December 2010	4	2	8	Accept	Ensure regular and consistent approach to analysis of visitor surveys and customer information which is monitored and service improvement made as necessary.	March 2011	JL\GN\SPet.	Wellbeing & Culture Risk register