

# ***Information/Discussion Paper***

## **Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

**Monday 31 October 2016**

**Place & Economic Update**

**Extract relating to Tourism**

### **TOURISM**

- 1.1** Tourism Marketing Consultant, Kelly Ballard started work on the project at the end of July 2016. She is working approximately two days per week until July 2017 to deliver the year one recommendations as per the Creative Tourist Outcomes Review.

#### *Stakeholder engagement*

- 1.2** Introductory meetings have been held with 95% of key tourism stakeholders including the Tourism Partnership, cabinet members responsible for tourism and various other tourism businesses in the locality.
- 1.3** Cheltenham Tourism Partnership meeting – planned for 23rd November. Meetings will be held every two months.
- 1.4** Work has started with the Cheltenham Trust to get a better understanding of the work the team undertake in relation to tourism and marketing, their capacity and capabilities. Two workshops have been undertaken to develop the wider understanding and scope of the tourism market, how it effects Cheltenham, the work the trust are currently involved in.
- 1.5** These workshops will assist in providing a clear and collaborative focus on priorities, ensure buy-in from the team, give the Trust management an opportunity to reshape their marketing plans and resources and the team the opportunity to feed into the marketing strategy.

#### *Communications Strategy*

- 1.6** An initial press release has been made to launch the communications plan for tourism in Cheltenham. This was launched with a piece around the value of the current tourist economy. Evidence suggests that Cheltenham has an existing tourism economy with a value of c£150m per year. A report has been commissioned due at the end of October that will provide more detail. The strategy is intended to promote the work being undertaken and increase awareness.

#### *Cotswold Partnership*

- 1.7** Whilst Cheltenham develops its own business model, we have strengthened our partnership with Cotswold DMO. We have agreed to contribute £3k to the Cotswolds Partnership. This will improve our profile in the Cotswolds and provides access to their links and marketing opportunities from VisitBritain and VisitEngland; access to various communications channels including a 45k email database; TStats, a system to monitor and report on visitor footfall and

occupancy rates which will help when evaluating success; Influence over their marketing plans; access to other training and visitor service opportunities for the tourism businesses of Cheltenham.

### *Brand development*

- 1.8** It is essential that the 'Cheltenham Brand' development work is closely aligned with the emerging Place Strategy. Finding the right balance between the vision for the future Cheltenham and how this links to its heritage and cultural offer is key to getting a powerful brand. For example if the tourism strategy were to position Cheltenham as a good place for the over 60's to visit then this may have a negative effect on encouraging young people to come study and work in the town.
- 1.9** A brand specialist is being brought in to support this workstream to effectively weave-in Cheltenham's rich cultural tapestry and economic potential, along with other social and environmental factors.

### *Working with Cheltenham BID*

- 1.10** The tourism programme has involved close involvement with the newly establish BID. Research is being undertaken that will benefit a number of stakeholders. The results are expected to give an overview of who is coming to Cheltenham, who isn't and reasons why. It will also inform perceptions of Cheltenham and marketing opportunities.
- 1.11** Work is also ongoing regarding the Christmas campaign and how this will work with the Trust and the use of VisitCheltenham.co.uk – a marketing campaign will be developed which can be a test bed for future collaborative campaigns.

### *Business Model*

- 1.12** Work is progressing with the Trust and Cotswold Tourism to review the current financial situation as both are charging tourism businesses for services. With such a small pool of tourism businesses this is unsustainable in the long-term. Initial ideas will be discussed at the Tourism Partnership meeting on the 23rd November where the appetite to support and invest will be assessed.
- 1.13** Consideration is also being given to a 'Marketing Cheltenham' type organisation that would have responsibility for Inward Investment and wider 'place' marketing. This is in the early stages however and everything is still in the air. Other destination models need to be reviewed. Stakeholders from the Development Task force are being met to discuss the principle of this approach. It is important that we look at how Cheltenham can effectively work with other DMOs and tourism organisations in the region, and how we are able to benefit each other's economies. This is particularly the case with Gloucester and the Cotswolds.

### *Strategy*

- 1.14** In order to engage stakeholders within Cheltenham and outside, a short, punchy strategy needs to be created from the Creative Tourism recommendations. This will be drafted by the end of November. Following on from this a marketing strategy will be developed. Both documents will be signed off by the Tourism Partnership.