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## **EXCERPT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE HELD ON 14 MARCH 2011**

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**EX.029/11 DEVELOPMENT OF CARLISLE'S VISITOR ECONOMY**  
(Key Decision)

**Portfolio** Economic Development

**Subject Matter**

Pursuant to Minute EX.010/11, the Strategic Director submitted report SD.03/11 updating Members of the Executive on progress made to bring together the Carlisle Tourism Partnership and the City Centre Partnership to form a new 'not for profit' company limited by guarantee.

The Strategic Director summarised the background to the matter, commenting that the new partnership proposals sought to bring together a more cost efficient model for the two partnerships and, in addition, to incorporate a working relationship with further and higher education partners and also seek government grant support for the creation of jobs via the Regional Growth Fund (RGF).

That newly incorporated company would take a key role in delivery of:

- a comprehensive marketing strategy for the City
- an annual self sustaining city and district events programme
- take the lead in managing Tourist Information in Carlisle
- City-wide communications and co-ordination activities
- direct advice and support to existing and new retail, tourism and hospitality businesses
- partnership working with both FE and HE providers to develop retail, hospitality / catering and tourism skills
- specific work with key partners to develop Carlisle's cultural and night time economies
- advocating and lobbying activities

The proposed company would also take responsibility for developing any move towards the incorporation of a Business Improvement District, covering the area identified in the consultant's report or any revised footprint.

The Strategic Director reported that the development of a new 'not for profit' company designed to deliver the roles identified above may require the agreement of a number of different existing and potentially new partners. He added that informal consultation with

a range of public and private stakeholders had now taken place both as part of the RGF application and specifically in relation to this report. Feedback from those discussions had proved to be encouraging and provided a sound platform for the next stage of the new company's development. Details of the potential company structure, proposed time plan and funding arrangements for the new company were also set out within the report.

The Strategic Director commented that, subject to Executive approval, the intention was that formal support be sought from existing members of the City Centre Partnership and Carlisle Tourism Partnership to develop a Shadow Board. The Shadow Board would then focus on developing terms of reference and objectives for the proposed new company and also devise governance arrangements and a memorandum and articles of association. He then outlined the recommendations contained within his report.

The Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel had on 20 January 2011 (EEOSP.08/11) considered the matter and resolved:

- "1) That Carlisle Tourism Partnership be thanked for their enthusiasm and excellent work;
- 2) That the Panel recommended that officers explore how other areas had approached successful Business Improvement Districts (BID) and identify what the issues were;
- 3) To improve the evening economy businesses should be encouraged to consider later opening times, the Panel would therefore encourage the potential CIC to address this issue. The Panel also wished to thank the businesses that currently opened later in the evening;
- 4) That consideration be given to the residents living in the City Centre and how the Community Interest Company (CIC) or BID would affect them;
- 5) That further consideration would be given to the footprint of any potential BID at a future meeting of the Panel;
- 6) That there was a need for better signage to direct visitors to the available car parks within the City and a need to improve the links between the car parks and the City Centre and the Panel would like to see this addressed in the future;
- 7) The Panel were disappointed that the Carlisle Tourism Partnership had lost their funding and expressed concern that the budget available for all tourism and events for Carlisle had been reduced and would result in minimal marketing activity and the loss of the city centre events programme;
- 8) That the Panel looked forward to an update on the new partnership proposal at their next meeting in April;

- 9) That the Panel looked forward to receiving the End of Project report from the Carlisle Tourism Project at a future meeting."

A copy of the Minute Excerpt had been circulated.

The Economic Development Portfolio Holder recognised the need to build upon the Tourism Partnership's success, adding that good reviews had been received last week from the Rough Guide. She was therefore fully supportive of the recommendations set out in report SD.03/11 which constituted a good means of moving forward in the current difficult economic climate.

The Community Engagement Portfolio Holder was agreeable and looked forward to the proposed new company being a success.

The Leader considered the above proposal to be the only way forward. He moved the recommendations, commenting that the Economic Development Portfolio Holder and himself would join the proposed Shadow Board to assist with the development of the company and its terms of reference.

**Summary of options rejected** None

## **DECISION**

That the Executive:

1. Agreed to bring together the City Centre and Carlisle Tourism Partnerships to form a new community interest, not for profit, limited company that would take up the roles outlined at Section 2.2 of Report SD.03/11.
2. Nominated Councillors Mrs Bowman and Mitchelson as City Council representatives to join the proposed Shadow Board to assist with the development of the company and its Terms of Reference.
3. Committed £150,000 (total) taken from the Economic Development Directorate budget for a limited two year period to support the development and operation of the proposed organisation.
4. Asked the Interim Assistant Director (Economic Development) to work with partners to develop and implement a project plan and risk assessment that would take forward the proposal, and ensure the successful commencement of the new company.

## **Reasons for Decision**

To update Members on progress being made to bring together the Carlisle Tourism Partnership and the City Centre Partnership to form a new 'not for profit' company limited by guarantee.

