

Report to Environment & Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Agenda
Item:
A.4

Meeting Date: 12th September 2013
Portfolio: Culture, Health, Leisure & Young People
Key Decision: No
Within Policy and
Budget Framework YES
Public / Private Public

Title: TOURISM REPORT
Report of: Jane Meek, Director of Economic Development
Report Number: ED 25 13

Purpose / Summary:

The purpose of this Report is to update Members of the Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Panel on delivering the Tourism Strategy.

Recommendations:

Members are asked to continue their ongoing support of the Tourism Strategy as outlined in this Report

Tracking

Executive:	
Overview and Scrutiny:	
Council:	

1. BACKGROUND

As an attractive historic city tourism has always played an important role in the economy of the area. In 2009 the City Council together with Cumbria Tourism, Hadrian's Wall Heritage and HWDA agreed to establish a Tourism Partnership for Carlisle and North Cumbria which aimed to improve the tourism product further and grow the industry locally.

In addition it was considered that a Partnership would enable resources to be maximised and work more effectively. Consequently each of the partner agencies contributed staff resources and the City Council's tourism team were seconded to the partnership and a Board was established made up of public and private sector representatives.

The economic downturn, the abolition of the Regional Development Agencies and the subsequent loss of funding to key partners resulted in a withdrawal of resources from the Partnership and a need for the Council to take stock and re-assess how it can best support tourism in the area with the resources available.

As a result over the last 18 months the strategy has been to work with partners on key areas which will deliver outputs and outcomes in line with the Carlisle Plan. This has included entering into Service Level Agreements where appropriate.

2. TOURIST INFORMATION SERVICE

2.1 Brampton TIC

Is now being managed by a group of volunteers that Carlisle TIC trained and supported for 18 months and Brampton Parish Council. It was BPC decision to take on the running of the Centre and they are now looking to rebrand the centre as Brampton Heritage & Visitor Centre, so they will be stepping away from being a Tourist Information Centre. We continue to offer our support and provide advice to the Volunteers and BPC.

2.2 Carlisle TIC/Old Town Hall

Phase 1 of the Old Town Hall Project is now completed. The building has undergone intensive roof repairs, works to external walls; refurbishment and replacement of some windows; internal works to the Tourist Information Centre including plaster and timber repairs, upgrade of thermal insulation, a modified

reception counter for customers with disabilities, new carpets and decoration. In addition a number of the recommendations by the Environment & Economy O&S Task Group have been implemented in Phase 1 including the replacement of the cash register and the lowering of the counter to accommodate the needs of the disabled. Since the TIC has moved back in staff have received a number of positive comments from visitors and local residents.

Phase 2 of the Old Town Hall project focuses on the TIC and the Assembly Rooms, how it will look and function. The intention is to modernise the service to become more interactive and customer friendly. Options will be presented to members for consideration.

3.0 Marketing and Branding

A key issue for Carlisle for the economy and in particular tourism is to raise the profile of Carlisle and what it has to offer. The Council have been working on the Sense of Place Project in order to develop the “Carlisle Story” which businesses can use to promote both their business and Carlisle. This was launched on 11th July at a Breakfast Event attended by a number of Tourism Businesses.

4.0 Carlisle Tourism Partnership Conference

This one day conference took place in the Hallmark Hotel on 26 April 2013. It was well attended by over 100 delegates and included key note speakers from Visit England, Hadrian’s Wall Heritage Trust, Cumbria Tourism and local media company, Hydrant. The afternoon consisted of three workshops, from which a set of clear objectives and priorities were formulated. (E-Business/tourism, the Carlisle Offer - Retail v Tourism and Promoting Carlisle).

5.0 Hadrian’s Wall Trust/Cumbria Tourism Partnership Service Level Agreements

There have been formulated, two Service Level Agreements with Hadrian’s Wall Heritage Trust and Cumbria Tourism. These reflect the services and commitments we would expect to see for Carlisle from the relevant regional organisations to whom we pay an annual fee. These are as outlined in the Carlisle Plan. Included in the SLA’s are agreements to both liaise and have meetings on a regular basis.

6.0 Britain's Heritage Cities, Carlisle

Carlisle is a member of Britain's Heritage Cities Group. There are 8 cities which form part of this group including Chester, York, Durham and Bath. The Group have drawn up a Terms of Reference (see Appendix A) which sets out the key priorities and how it will engage with VisitEngland and London. The Group has direct access to the Regional Growth Fund managed by VisitEngland. Membership of the Group enables Carlisle to have access to overseas marketing channels including USA/Canada market, as well as emerging markets in Asia.

7.0 Events

The Marketing and Tourism team are fully engaged in the preparation, planning and delivery of events in the city. Over the last twelve months they have been involved in the following programme of events:

Event	Delivered by the Team
Diamond Jubilee Celebrations and Carlisle Music City – June 2012	Implementation and delivery of all aspects Diamond Jubilee Day and support for CMC Information and merchandise stall on site. Marketing and promotion. Social Media. Joint working cross authority, business engagement.
Olympic Torch Relay – June 2012 City centre and Bitts Park	Attendance at planning meetings and assist with delivery. Information and merchandise stall on site. Marketing and promotion. Social Media. Joint working cross authority, business engagement.
Africa Express – September 2012 Citadel Station	Implementation and assist with delivery (CMC, Africa Express, Virgin, Direct Rail Services) Marketing and promotion. Social Media. Joint working cross authority, business engagement
Carlisle Fireshow – November 2012 Bitts Park	Assist with promotion-marketing and social media/web.
Christmas Lights Switch On – November 2012 Winter Wonderland – November –	Assist with promotion-marketing and social media/web. Joint working with

Jan 2012 City Centre	Communications to produce publicity material
Roger Albert Clark Rally – November 2012 Brampton	Assist with promotion-marketing and social media/web.
Santa's Grotto – November-December 2012 TIC and Talkin Tarn	Joint working with Green Spaces (Talkin Tarn Grotto) Promotion-marketing and social media/web.
Made By Carlisle event – March 2013 Carlisle College	Information stall on site. Support for Economic Development Officer
Subway Transformation – April - May 2013 Trinity and Hardwicke Circus	Assist with design elements, support for Community Engagement. Social Media delivery.
Carlisle Tourism Conference – April 2013 Hallmark Hotel	Implementation support and assist with delivery. Information stall on site. Provision of merchandise
Carlisle Music City – May-June 2013 City wide	Assist with implementation promotion-marketing and social media/web.
Pirelli Rally – May 2013 Carlisle Racecourse Base	Assist with promotion-marketing and social media/web. Implementation of Prize Draw and support for Economic Development Officer
Carlisle Design Week – June 2013 City wide	Assist with promotion-marketing and social media/web. Business engagement and support for Economic Development Officer
IHBC Conference – June 2013 Crown & Mitre and City Centre	Assist with implementation, copy and images for IHBC Carlisle web site. Promotion-marketing and social media/web. Business engagement. Provision of merchandise.
Sense of Place Launch – July 2013 University of Cumbria	Implementation support and assist with delivery. Promotion-marketing and social media/web. Business engagement.
Centennial Rally and Ride – August 2013 Devonshire Walk base.	Assist with organisation, site visits. Copy and images for Rally web site. Promotion-marketing and social media/web.
Carlisle Pageant & Carlisle Pageant Week – August 2013	Joint implementation, planning and delivery of all aspects of Pageant Week. (Pageant Working Group)

	Information and merchandise stall on site. Marketing and promotion. Social Media. Joint working cross authority, business engagement, including Pageant Offers and stalls. Information and merchandise stall on site. (with Local Plan Consultation and Local Environment)
Tour of Britain – September 2012 / 2013	Joint implementation, planning and delivery of some aspects of ToB. (ToB internal Steering Group) Marketing and promotion. Social Media. Joint working cross authority)

In addition:

- Attendance and input into City Council Events Working Group
- Production, distribution and promotion of a quarterly events guide, regular social media and web interaction for all city wide events.
- Tourist Information Centre involvement when the Assembly Room is booked out for events i.e. Lights Switch On, Pageant, Jubilee etc.

Conclusion

There are a variety of initiatives across the Council which contribute towards delivering the Tourism Strategy and the Carlisle Plan which the Tourism and Marketing Team play an important part.

Contact Officer: Jane Meek

Ext: 7190

**Appendices
attached to report:**

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers:

- None

Britain's Heritage Cities Terms of Reference

Purpose

The Heritage Cities Group is a partnership of Destination Organisations brought together by shared product and common interests to maximise the potential of their visitor economies, through collaboration and sharing of knowledge in order to enhance visitor experiences and develop effective marketing activity.

Strategic Objectives

1. To take the Heritage Cities product to market through intelligence led activity to generate economic growth.
2. To raise the profile of Heritage Cities and its contribution to the economy with wider stakeholders including Government and the private sector.
3. To develop a platform to facilitate the sharing of best practice, finding solutions to common issues and aspirations.

Actions

1. To investigate what research currently exists at destination and national level to better inform the marketing plan and wider remit of the group. (NBS to lead)
 - a. Establishing baseline to enable benchmarking –VE to pull out volume/value figures for each group member
 - b. HCG to nominate a spokesperson to liaise with VE to gather overseas research to inform plans
2. To set up the operational framework for HCG involving strategic and operational groups and an agreed interface between them. To develop roles and responsibilities with each group including Chair and Vice-Chair (MS to lead)
3. To undertake a review of current activity and opportunities for the 2013 / 2014 financial year (Deliver Group, led by GT)
4. To develop a new measurable overseas marketing plan for 2013 / 2014 (Deliver Group, led by GT)
5. Explore the opportunities for domestic marketing collaboration across databases, research, partnership destination management and deliver a proposed action plan (Destination Marketing Managers)
 - a. To engage with VisitEngland through the operational group on the RGF Romantic Heritage Cities Thematic
6. To establish the means of engaging with VE and London & Partners in order to develop a more effective approach to how London as a gateway can work with us (SG to lead)

Membership

Existing membership to be reviewed in April