

# Report to Environment & Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Agenda  
Item:  
**A.3**

Meeting Date: 27<sup>th</sup> February 2014  
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 11 14

## **Purpose / Summary:**

The purpose of this Report is to update Members of the Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Panel on work with partners to support Tourism.

## **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. INTRODUCTION**

Tourism plays an important role in the economy of Carlisle and the Council works in partnership with a number of organisations and businesses to support Tourism. A particular focus over the last year has been the development of the Carlisle Story which is the basis of raising the profile and marketing Carlisle to a wider audience. This Report provides an update on the ongoing work with partners to support Tourism.

## **2. TOURIST INFORMATION SERVICE**

### **2.1 Brampton TIC**

Brampton Tourist Information has now been running independently since July 2013 with a team of volunteers. Brampton Parish Council are proposing to close the office for a short period of time to rebrand the centre with it then being reopened April 2014. Carlisle TIC still offers ongoing support to the centre.

### **2.2 Carlisle TIC/Old Town Hall Phase 2**

Following the appointment of Johnston and Wright as lead consultant in January 2014, design work is now progressing to create a contemporary Tourist Information Centre and public facilities in the Assembly Room based upon the recommendations arising from the Members Workshop on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2013

The design of the Tourist Information Centre is being informed by a working group derived from the main Steering Group who are working with Vertigo Creative Studios as part of the Johnston and Wright team to prepare proposals and a cost plan for presentation and sign – off by the full Steering Group in late March 2014. Subject to agreement, project information including drawings, schedules and specifications of materials and workmanship will then be prepared to facilitate listed building consent in July 2014 prior to the appointment of contractor(s) later in the year to carry out the works. The site works are forecast to take 6 months from the date of site handover, which will require temporary relocation of the Tourist Information Centre during the construction period. However, any works will need to avoid the run up to Christmas when the businesses in the area are at their busiest.

In summary the project will result in:

- Significantly improved and enhanced access for visitors, including the creation of an enhanced Ground Floor Public Entrance Foyer, with full access to the VIC and Assembly Room for wheelchair users improving the building's DDA compliancy.

- Reinstatement of the historic shop front between Costa Coffee and the external stair.
- Improvement of disabled WC facilities.
- Reinstatement of the original bright open space of the former Committee Room No 1 incorporating a new lift and timber stair.
- Refurbishment of the Assembly Room to become a flexible space for use as a City Centre Meeting / Conference venue and Exhibition Space.
- Removal, relocation and replacement of existing tired sales and exhibition stands, hanging exhibits, furniture, fittings and equipment and reception fitment.
- Comprehensive upgrading of facilities and services associated with a Strategic Visitor Information Centre (VIC) as set out in Cumbria Tourism's Strategic and Destination VIC's standards.
- More cost effective operation of the service with improved revenue generating potential.
- Progression of outstanding repair and restoration works prioritised in the Conservation Management Plan or subsequently identified by investigation which were not progressed as part of Phase 1 including upgrade / replacement of the existing water services to the building.

### **3.0 Marketing and Branding**

Since the Carlisle Story was launched in July 2013, two successful meetings of the Carlisle Ambassadors have been held, both attracting over 50 people representing a range of organisations and sectors. The Council also held a Marketing Workshop in January, facilitated by Peter Anderson, to showcase the free resources available and to encourage the use of the branding toolkit. Local businesses are beginning to use the imagery, narrative and visual expression within their own projects. The Carlisle Story has also featured in Cumbria Tourism's latest marketing campaign 'The Place to Be' which incorporates the "Carlisle : City of the Lakes" strapline.

### **4.0 Carlisle Tourism Partnership**

The Carlisle Tourism Partnership met in November for a workshop facilitated by David Gosling. Discussion focussed on the strategic actions for the future. It was agreed that what the sector really needs to grow is marketing.

However, rather than depending on public funding with reducing budgets, the tourism sector would only be able to support activity through partnership working. The Private sector needed to be part of the solution and have a voice for tourism. It was proposed that all sectors need to come together through the Carlisle Ambassador group to help promote Carlisle. The tourism sector needed to be part of the Carlisle Ambassador group to ensure that tourism has a voice.

It was proposed that rather than Carlisle Tourism Partnership continuing in its current form, members should become Carlisle Ambassadors and through this and Cumbria Tourism Commercial membership, ensure that the sector is supported as part of the economy.

## **5.0 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 Oxford, Stratford, Chester, York, Durham, Lincoln and Bath. The current structure and purpose of the group is soon set to fundamentally change. The priorities will more reflect the Core Cities group and emerging Core Counties Group.

It is intended that there will be no membership fee going forward and therefore, the overseas marketing and PR element will cease to exist in its current form. Partner marketing campaigns with Google, travel, on line and trade focused activity will feature in future plans.

## **6.0 Events**

### **Events Programme 2014**

We have a busy, rolling programme of events planned for 2014, subject to Full Council approving the budget on 20 February. So far this includes:

- Wednesday 16 - Monday 21 April: Easter International Market, Carlisle city centre
- Friday 2 - Sunday 4 May - Pirelli Richard Burns Foundation Rally, start and finish in Carlisle city centre
- Saturday 24 May - Sunday 1 June: Carlisle Music City. Visit [www.carlislemusiccity.co.uk](http://www.carlislemusiccity.co.uk)
- Monday 26 May: Upperby Gala, Hammond's Pond
- Monday 26 May: Talkin Tarn Triathlon. Visit [www.sportinaction.co.uk](http://www.sportinaction.co.uk)
- Saturday 14 June: Cumberland Show, Carlisle Racecourse
- Saturday 14 June: Carlisle Gay Pride, Carlisle city centre
- Saturday 28 June: Armed Forces Day, Carlisle city centre
- Saturday 16 - Monday 25 August: Carlisle Pageant, Carlisle city centre
- Saturday 1 November: Fireshow, Bitts Park
- Sunday 9 November: Remembrance Sunday, Carlisle city centre

- Sunday 16 November: Christmas Lights Switch On, Carlisle city centre
- Wednesday 3 - Sunday 7 December: Christmas International Market, Carlisle city centre

To coincide with the Glasgow Commonwealth Games, we're planning a Mini Commonwealth Games/Summer of Sports event/s. Plans are also under development with Carlisle Food Partners to promote Carlisle's culinary skills with a food event later in the year. We are also talking with partners and stakeholders to organise a series of commemorate events for the anniversary of the First World War.

### **Community Events Panel**

We launched a pilot Community Events Support Panel in January. The panel has offered the following events financial support (subject to the Council's Budget being approved on 20 February):

- Pirelli Rally – 3 and 4 May 2014
- Gay Pride – 14 June 2014
- Cumberland Show – 14 June 2014

### **Conclusion**

The Council continues to support Tourism where ever it can through a range of initiatives, working with Partners and ensuring that what Carlisle has to offer is communicated clearly to internal and external markets.

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**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**