

MEETING:	COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE:	28 JUNE 2010
TITLE OF REPORT:	INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF THE DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP
REPORT BY:	ASSISTANT DIRECTOR ECONOMY AND CULTURE

CLASSIFICATION: Open

Purpose

To outline proposals contained in a report undertaken by the Stevens View Partnership to review the mechanism for the future promotion of tourism in the County.

Recommendation

THAT: the report is noted.

Key Points Summary

The Stevens View Partnership were appointed to review the operation of Herefordshire's Tourism promotion.

The review found that the DMP (Destination Management Partnership) needs to take the next step in its development. To that end the review is suggesting a number of changes, including:

- A new DMP be established to take a more strategic role with membership of the new board reflecting this approach;
- That a Chief Executive Officer is appointed with administration support;
- That the Council's revenue budget is allocated to the DMP to be combined with other sources of income to deliver a new tourism strategy;
- That the DMP delivers aspects of tourism promotion via an SLA with Herefordshire Council;
- That the DMP will not be a membership based organisation. However, the geographic membership groups will be co-ordinated by a Federation that will have representation on the board of the new DMP.

In line with all these changes it is proposed that there should be more advanced marketing and branding that links with the County's identity that involves key businesses.

The report recommends the establishment of a Transition Group to achieve the ambitions in the report. This would include producing a tourism strategy, appointing a Chairman and a CEO of the DMP, and final arrangements for budget, spend and delivery. The Transition Group has now been formed and consists of an independent leader, representatives from the DMP, representatives from the local authority and AWM.

Alternative Options

- 1 That the general principles of the report are not implemented, with a largely status quo arrangement with the DMP.
- 2 That consideration is given to withdrawing support from the DMP with sole decision making by the local authority on how its tourism resources are allocated.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 3 The findings and recommendations of the report give guidance on progressing tourism in the county, and draws on best practice in the UK and internationally.

Introduction and Background

- 4 The Herefordshire DMP was established in 2006 as the body to direct and co-ordinate tourism delivery in the County. The DMP is a private / public sector partnership that acts as a limited by guarantee company but is not trading. The local authority contributes its revenue budget (c£80,000) and it is facilitated by the Council's Tourism, Food and Marketing Manager, with a team of six other officers (2 part time and 4 full time) delivering the activity directed by the DMP. Other funds contributing to the tourism budget include external funding, membership fees, sponsorship and income (event income, sponsorship, private sector contributions to marketing). The Council's contribution to supporting tourism is £500k pa (this includes the costs of the TICs and overheads of the tourism team).
- 5 The Stevens View Partnership were appointed to conduct a review of the role of the DMP in the wider context of maximising tourism potential.

Key Considerations

- 6 The Report makes the following recommendations:
 - Form the Transition Group (informed by the Steering Group) plus a leader recruited from the business community;
 - Conduct initial branding exercise;
 - Commission a tourism strategy;
 - Develop a draft business plan from the strategic document;
 - Recruit a new DMP chairman;
 - Recruit a CEO for DMP;
 - Form the DMP board (members should demonstrate the requisite business skill, marketing, finance, etc).
- 7 It is also recommended that work is undertaken to reinvigorate / reform the county wide tourist associations (Wye Valley, Golden Valley, Mortimer Country, Malvern Hills, etc), in so doing creating a tourism federation the chairman of which will sit on the new DMP board.

- 8 Subject to the Executives consideration it is proposed that all the above to be achieved by 1st October 2010 when it is proposed the current DMP will be dissolved (and members will then populate the various associations around the county), and formally constituted a new DMP.

Community Impact

- 9 Tourism is a key contributor to the economy (amounting to £410k pa direct spend in the county), as well as enabling the sustainability of many rural services. Visitors will continue to come to the county without public sector intervention, but support facilitates increased length of stay, provides co-ordinated approach, additional information and targets new audiences.
- 10 The positive impact of a new business model as described in the attached document will have a major impact on regeneration and a buy-in by the business community and tourism linked to a “sense of place”.

Appendices

- 11 None.

Background Papers

- A Review of the Destination Management Partnership, circulated to Members, and available to members of the public on request.