

DESTINATION HEREFORD

PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: COMMUNITY SERVICES

CABINET

23RD JUNE, 2005

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To consider a proposal to establish a Destination Management Partnership (DMP) for Herefordshire in line with the West Midlands Visitor Economy Strategy 2004. This is the first stage in the process with the private sector currently being consulted on the proposal to set up one autonomous body to deliver tourism in the county by April 2006. Cabinet's approval is sought to work towards the establishment of one body for Herefordshire by April 2006. There is still work to be undertaken on the financial cost of operating the DMP and this work will be done during the preparation of the Action Plan. In particular, commitment and involvement of other directorates will need to be secured and any additional resourcing implications quantified.

Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision

Recommendations

- THAT (a) the establishment of a Destination Management Partnership for Herefordshire by April 2006, be supported in principle;**
- (b) the shadow partnership (currently named the Tourism Co-ordination group) be requested to develop an operational Action Plan for the DMP by September 2005. This plan will include the requirements for funding; staffing; the delivery mechanism; the membership and timetable for delivery. The funding for the DMP will be raised from existing Herefordshire Council (Tourism budget); membership from the private sector; sponsorship from companies and funding from Public Sector bodies;**
- (c) the service areas responsible for planning; environment; trading standards; street cleansing, transport and licensing be invited to participate in the development of a DMP and be involved in the partnership thereafter; and**
- (d) in preparation for the DMP a desk be provided within the Tourism Section of the Council for an Industry Liaison officer, a post that will be financed by the Association for the Promotion of Herefordshire until March 2006. This will be a cost to the Authority of providing a desk, IT and telephone facilities, these costs will be found from savings achieved from within the Tourism budget.**

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Jane Lewis, Acting Cultural Services Manager on 01432 263068

Reasons

The West Midlands Visitor Economy Strategy (April 2004) recommended that each destination in the West Midlands should be represented by a Destination Management Partnership, a private/public sector organisation to be a single body delivering tourism in the destination. The rationale for developing a DMP is as a means to develop a high quality, thriving Herefordshire Visitor economy. The public sector intervention is necessary in the tourism sector because of the high number of Small and Medium Size Enterprises (SME's) which form the industry in the county and because a number of the influencing factors in the destination falls within the public realm and infrastructure e.g. transport, street cleansing, planning control. All these services need to be incorporated within the structure of the DMP.

The vision is to develop a high quality, thriving Herefordshire visitor economy, based on the premise that a good place to live and work is a good place to visit. A DMP is a specific tourism visitor economy organisation approach that will allow Herefordshire to compete more effectively in an increasingly cluttered marketplace and to use limited resources more effectively.

Considerations

1. The Tourism Industry in Herefordshire is fragmented by a number of bodies including five local Tourist Associations, one County Tourist Association and Herefordshire Council delivering tourism in the County. This fragmentation causes duplication of effort and also makes poor use of the very limited resources available.
2. The DMP could lead in the development of the destination and attract external funding from Advantage West Midlands (Cluster Development) and the Rural Regeneration Zone. This funding would not be available if a DMP was not established in line with the Visitor Economy Strategy for the West Midlands.
3. The DMP approach could improve efficiency and effectiveness and add value to current tourism activity especially by integrating the activities of the services across the Council.
4. The budget currently allocated by Herefordshire Council for the promotion of Tourism in Herefordshire will be used to match fund the private sector contribution towards the operation and marketing costs of the DMP. Discussion are ongoing with regard to the funding from the private sector and whether the DMP will be a membership organisation.

Alternative Options

The alternative options would be to operate the tourism service for Herefordshire under the present arrangements. This would not enable us to attract any external funding or to improve the county in line with the requirements of the principles of a DMP.

Risk Management

There are no risks identified in following this course of action.

Consultees

Tourism groups in Herefordshire, Tourism Co-ordination group, Tourism Operators in Herefordshire and Heart of England Tourism.

Background Papers

None