

Subject:	Visitor Economy Strategy and Destination Management Plan 2018-23		
Date of Meeting:	27 September 2018		
Report of:	Executive Director, Economy Environment & Culture		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Val Birchall	Tel: 01273 292571
	Email:	val.birchall@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Wards affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT

- 1.1 The Council has worked with its partners and sector stakeholders to develop a new strategy in order to support sustainable growth in the local visitor economy and an associated plan to improve management of the visitor experience of Brighton & Hove.
- 1.2 The plans will be used as the basis for future partnership working with the tourism and hospitality sectors and through Visit Brighton, and to inform the Council's priority actions and targets in relation to management of the city as a tourism destination.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Committee adopts the Visitor Economy Strategy (VES) Destination Management Plan (DMP) which is attached in the appendices to this report.
- 2.2 That the Committee notes the outline Destination Management Plan (DMP) attached at Appendix Two to this report and the intention to work with partners to establish a Destination Experience Group to further progress this work.

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The visitor economy in 2016 was worth £886 million to the City of Brighton & Hove. In terms of scale this equates to 7.5% of the total tourism economy of the South East Region which geographically covers East & West Sussex, Kent, Hampshire, Surrey, Buckinghamshire, Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Isle of Wight.
- 3.2 The total number of tourism day visitors equated to 9,627,000, with a day trip expenditure of £353million, therefore the average spend of a day visitor equals £36.67.

- 3.3 Staying trips made by domestic overnight and overseas overnight visitors equated to 1,607,000 trips with overall nights spent in the City of 5,021,000 nights stayed. The domestic and overseas overnight visitors combined created a value of £533million; with an average spend per 24 hour stay of £106.15
- 3.4 Tourism supports in the City of Brighton & Hove 21,760 actual jobs which equates to 14% of all employee jobs in the City.

Visit Brighton – Providing support for the Tourism Economy

- 3.5 Visit Brighton is the tourism unit of Brighton & Hove City Council and works to help maintain and develop a sustainable tourism economy in the city. VisitBrighton's primary objective is to create employment and wealth for the city through marketing, sales, visitor services and destination management.
- 3.6 The unit has four main areas of activity:
- *Marketing & Communications*
 - *Convention Bureau*
 - *Partnership*
 - *Visitor Services*
- 3.7 Brighton & Hove's Visitor Economy Strategy for the next five years aims to maximise the impact of tourism in terms of economic value and jobs supported whilst ensuring the growth is sustainable. The strategy has been developed in consultation with private and public partners after a wide consultation process and outlines the national and local context and reviews challenges and opportunities for the next five years. It is closely aligned to other local strategies and plans which influence the visitor economy and Brighton as a place to live, visit, work and invest including the Economic Strategy and the Cultural Framework.

To sustain and build on our current success the Visitor Economy Strategy sets out to:

- **Improve the environment**
 - **Create sustainable tourism growth**
 - **Develop a strong place brand**
 - **Invest in partnerships**
- 3.8 In order to achieve the vision, clear objectives and targets are identified against which the success of the strategy will be judged at the end of its life in 2023. The success of the strategy will be monitored through the annual economic impact assessment of the City and will relate back to the objectives on the service plan.
- 3.9 The Visitor Economy Strategy advocates adopting a Destination Management Plan; this will set out practical actions, timescales and lead delivery partners.. To deliver the Destination Management Plan, a Destination Experience Group will be developed, to improve the experience of visitors to the City.
- 3.10 The Destination Experience Group will bring together industry and public services to improve and monitor the visitor experience and help manage day to

day and tactical challenges and opportunities. There are also tactical and day to day actions which require close collaboration with key stakeholders.

- 3.11 The Group should bring together those who know and can represent the interests of visitors (the 'Visitor Voice') with those who deliver visitor services and the experience. It will require a clear tourism lead from within the Council, as well as co-ordination with the Council's wider services supporting the success of tourism in the city.
- 3.12 The work of the group will be communicated to the wider industry through the business communications activity of VisitBrighton and business would be invited to share their own ideas with the group via its members.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 The Council plays an active role in the tourism industry, delivering a significant proportion of the tourism 'product'; historic houses, museums, visitor information services, conference venues, the seafront, outdoor events, parks, highways, signs and public toilets. It has a major impact on the visitor experience through the decisions it makes in terms of planning, development, conservation and transport issues, and through its environmental health, trading standards and licensing roles. The Council also supports the city's tourism businesses through many of its communications and marketing activities and in particular through the work of Visit Brighton, positioning and promoting the destination as a leading tourist destination.
- 4.2 Tourism is, by its nature, a fragmented industry with over 80% of tourism businesses are small or micro businesses: it is estimated that over 1,000 businesses in Brighton and Hove are involved in the visitor economy.
- 4.3 Given the depth of engagement the Council has in tourism in collaboration with both private and public sector businesses and organisations, together with the need to proactively sustain and grow the tourism industry (which is critical to Brighton & Hove's sustained economic prosperity) it is imperative we have a comprehensive strategy to set direction for the coming years.
- 4.4 There is a need for an agreed and shared approach to tourism in the City. Adopting the Visitor Economy Strategy will ensure that the key actions and target markets will be addressed and that the sector and regional partners will work effectively together.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The Visitor Economy Strategy 2018 – 2023 was developed in consultation with local, regional and national groups including:
 - BHCC departments
 - City tourism business
 - Local stakeholders
 - Local education providers
 - Regional stakeholders
 - National bodies

- 5.2 Four stakeholder workshops were held during the development of the strategy, attended by thirty two businesses and individuals from tourism sector and the opportunity was given to them to feed into the development and shaping of the Visitor Economy Strategy. The areas of interest highlighted from these workshops were around target leisure markets, conferencing in the City, Events & Festivals, place branding, and the high price of parking charges and the cleanliness of the city in general.
- 5.3 A four-week public consultation was carried out inviting interested parties to comment on the final draft of the Visitor Economy Strategy, the comments were broadly supportive of the direction of the strategy. The importance of cleanliness of the City was mentioned by several respondents.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The Visitor Economy Strategy provides clear priorities for partnership working to build on Brighton & Hove's successful visitor economy by identifying potential markets, products and promotional opportunities and enabling improved working with partners to optimise the economic impact of the sector.
- 6.2 An agreed framework for improvement of the visitor experience through a Destination Management Plan, will provide a basis for developing tactical and practical actions for the Council (across relevant services) and its partners in order to maintain and grow the city's reputation as a visitor destination.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications as a result of the adoption of the Visitor Economy Strategy and the Destination Management Plan. Costs incurred in adopting the VES and DMP would have been met from within existing budgets.

Finance Officer Consulted: Rob Allen

Date: 11/09/18

Legal Implications:

- 7.2 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

Lawyer Consulted: Alice Rowland

Date: 10/9/18

Equalities Implications:

- 7.3 Equalities impacts in the VES include both opportunities to maximise the appeal of the city to diverse visitors and actions to reduce and remove barriers for visitors. This will include improving access (in the public realm and in individual businesses); widening and diversifying the city's cultural offer; targeted advertising including to people sharing a protected characteristic; and using diverse visitor voices to inform improvements and assess successes. Actions to achieve this will be developed from the recommendations and proposals in the

strategy and incorporated into the action plan. They will be monitored as part of the ongoing evaluation of the strategy's success.

Sustainability Implications:

7.4 None directly related to this report.

Any Other Significant Implications:

7.5 None identified.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Visitor Economy Strategy
2. Outline Destination Management Plan

Documents in Members' Rooms

1. None

Background Documents

1. Supporting a vibrant tourist economy – 9th March 2017
Economic Development & Culture Committee
2. Economic Impact Assessment 2016

