
Subject:	TOURISM AND VISITOR ECONOMY STRATEGY
Meeting and Date:	Cabinet – 4 November 2019
Report of:	Tim Ingleton, Head of Inward Investment
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Michael Holloway, Portfolio Holder for Community and Tourism
Decision Type:	Key
Classification:	Unrestricted

Purpose of the report: To seek approval for public consultation on the Tourism and Visitor Economy Strategy, and delegated authority for the Strategic Director (Operations and Commercial) and the Head of Inward Investment, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Community and Tourism, to further amend, edit, finalise and adopt the Tourism and Visitor Economy Strategy following public consultation.

Recommendation: To grant approval for a period of public consultation on the Tourism and Visitor Economy Strategy, and to delegate authority to the Strategic Director (Operations and Commercial) and the Head of Inward Investment, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Community and Tourism, to further amend, edit, finalise and adopt the Tourism and Visitor Economy Strategy in response to consultation.

1. Summary

- 1.1 Dover District Council has recognised the strategic importance of tourism and the visitor economy to Dover District, as well as its direct correlation and synergy to wider corporate objectives, policies, planning and ambitions – to make Dover District ‘a great place to live, work, visit, learn and invest’.
- 1.2 It has been proposed that the Council should adopt and deliver a new and ambitious, overarching, Tourism & Visitor Economy Strategy supporting the District’s collective and collaborative aims.
- 1.3 In order to finalise and adopt the new Tourism & Visitor Economy Strategy and maintain a launch date of around the start of April 2020 approval is sought to undertake 8 weeks of public consultation as soon as possible, followed by final copy amendments and editing in response to consultation.

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 Tourism is recognised as one of the UK’s largest, most valuable and fastest growing industries. In 2018 it accounted for 7.2% of total UK GDP (£145.9 billion) and 3.9% of UK GVA (£67.8 billion). In terms of employment the industry accounts for 5% of all UK employment (2016). The government’s modern Industrial Strategy set out a long-term plan to boost the productivity and earning power of people throughout the UK. The tourism sector is recognised by the government in having the scale and geographical reach to deliver on this ambition. Tourism is one of only ten industries to receive a Sector Deal through the government’s Industrial Strategy.

- 2.2 Tourism is equally recognised as a key industry in Dover District. The visitor economy is currently worth around £282 million annually and supports 5,796 jobs. The District welcomes over 4.5 million visitors per year. Dover District Council has recognised the strategic importance of tourism and the visitor economy to Dover District, as well as its direct correlation and synergy to wider corporate objectives, policies, planning and ambitions – to make Dover District ‘a great place to live, work, visit, learn and invest’.
- 2.3 Economic development, tourism, inward investment and the visitor economy are recognised and considered a central component of Dover District Council’s work.
- 2.4 Over the last year the Council has invested in tourism and the visitor economy. The Council has created a new Strategic Tourism Manager post to accelerate the promotion, maximisation, inward investment and safeguarding of tourism and visitor opportunities and productivity across White Cliffs Country. As well as leading the Tourism & Visitor Economy Department and its onward development, the role has also been tasked with formulating a new strategic and collaborative approach for tourism across the District. This strategy aims to compliment, support and influence Dover District Council’s wider strategies, policies and planning decisions; including the emerging Corporate Plan and Local Plan. It also aims to raise current and future aspirations and opportunities on the national stage.
- 2.5 Previously based within a ‘Museum & Tourism’ function, the ‘Tourism & Visitor Economy Department’ is now a central part of a new ‘Economic Development & Tourism Department’, led by the Head of Inward Investment, due to its strategic importance to economic, social and cultural regeneration.
- 2.6 The strategy is fully aligned to the objectives of Dover District Council’s Corporate Plan and Local Plan. It has also adopted the five strategic pillars of the Government’s ‘Tourism Sector Deal’ and ‘UK Industrial Strategy’ as its core themes. These pillars are: Ideas, People, Place, Business Environment and Infrastructure.
- 2.7 Thorough research and internal and external stakeholder consultation has already taken place. This included informal consultation from October 2018 (ongoing), and formally during a dedicated tourism stakeholder consultation workshop in March 2019. Key findings from two external ‘Local Plan Consultation Workshops’ in October 2018 were also included.
- 2.8 Prior to CMT approval, the working draft was also shared internally with the Head of Inward Investment; the Head of Planning, Regeneration and Development; the Head of Museums & Tourism; the Head of Commercial Services, Parks and Open Spaces; the Head of Assets & Building Control; and the Head of Community & Digital Services; with feedback and subsequent amendments made. Internal feedback and review was also sought from the Policy and Projects Manager; Strategic Delivery Manager (Infrastructure); Planning Delivery Manager; Corporate Projects Manager; Funding & Communication Manager; and the Leadership Support Officer.
- 2.9 Please refer to: APPENDIX 1 – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY CONSULTATION DRAFT, ‘Destination White Cliffs Country – A Growth Strategy for Tourism and the Visitor Economy 2020 to 2030’.
- 2.10 Please refer to: APPENDIX 2 – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FLYER CONSULTATION DRAFT, ‘Destination White Cliffs Country – A Growth Strategy for Tourism and the Visitor Economy 2020 to 2030’.
3. **Identification of Options**
- 3.1 To grant approval for public consultation on the Tourism and Visitor Economy Strategy, and to delegate authority to the Strategic Director (Operations & Commercial) and Head of Inward Investment, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Community &

Tourism, to further amend, edit, finalise and adopt the Tourism and Visitor Economy Strategy in response to consultation.

- 3.2 To grant approval for public consultation on the Tourism and Visitor Economy Strategy, and to delegate authority to the Strategic Director (Operations & Commercial) and Head of Inward Investment, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Community & Tourism, to further amend, edit and finalise the Tourism and Visitor Economy Strategy in response to consultation. Final strategy sign-off and adoption to be sought through Cabinet.

4. Evaluation of Options

- 4.1 Option 3.1 (Recommended) offers best practice in regard to further public consultation and delegated authority enabling swift, nimble and timely amendment, finalisation and adoption of the strategy.
- 4.2 Option 3.2 offers best practice in regard to further public consultation. The process of Cabinet approval for adoption (following the period of consultation and amendments) could add circa two months to the project timeline.

5. Resource Implications

- 5.1 Delivery of this strategy will require additional resources for the Tourism & Visitor Economy Department, as well as additional annual budget; both will be determined in due course as part of Dover District Council's internal, annual, financial planning.
- 5.2 Other Dover District Council departments with connected and cross-purpose objectives may also require additional budgetary resource.
- 5.3 Where possible and available external funding and grants will be sought to support plans and objectives within the strategy.
- 5.4 Departmental resources and budgets will be discussed and finalised through normal Dover District Council processes and approvals.
- 5.5 Other than through funding bids and direct/indirect taxation, the strategy will not generate direct income for the Council, however it is projected to grow our district's visitor economy, attract further investment and development in the district, and generate more employment and opportunities for our communities.

6. Corporate Implications

- 6.1 Comment from the Director of Finance: Accountancy have been consulted in the writing of this report and have no further comment to make (AHC).
- 6.2 Comment from the Solicitor to the Council: The Head of Governance has been consulted during the preparation of this report and has no further comment to make.
- 6.3 Comment from the Equalities Officer: This report does not specifically highlight any equality implications however in discharging their duties members are required to comply with the public sector equality duty as set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15>.
- 6.4 Other Officers (as appropriate):

7. Appendices

- 7.1 Appendix 1 – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY CONSULTATION DRAFT, 'Destination White Cliffs Country – A Growth Strategy for Tourism and the Visitor Economy 2020 to 2030'.

7.2 Appendix 2 – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FLYER CONSULTATION DRAFT,
'Destination White Cliffs Country – A Growth Strategy for Tourism and the Visitor
Economy 2020 to 2030'.

8. **Background Papers**

[UK Industrial Strategy](#)

[UK Tourism Sector Deal](#)

[The UK Government's International Business Events Action Plan](#)

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