

Cabinet

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Durham Tourism Management Plan 2012-2016



Report of Corporate Management Team

Ian Thompson Corporate Director Regeneration and Economic Development

Councillor Neil Foster, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Economic Development

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To seek endorsement from Durham County Council for the Durham Tourism Management Plan 2012-16.

Background

- 2 Durham has had a Tourism Management Plan since 2006. It was compiled by Visit County Durham in collaboration with the county's tourism industry and a range of partners, including the county council and the district councils, and became the blue print for development of the visitor economy in the county. The plan was based on a series of studies that provided intelligence about the county's product, its customers and its competitive position in England and the UK as well as significant input from across the county. It clearly described what all organisations, businesses and individuals in the county with an interest in the success of the visitor economy needed to focus on for future success.
- 3 The plan has been refreshed annually since 2006 in the light of new intelligence including visitor surveys in 2008 and 2010, annual economic impact surveys, a major customer segmentation study in 2007, a major study into the image and identity of the county to external audiences and benchmarking at a national level through Destination Performance UK.
- 4 The Durham Tourism Management plan is developed and monitored by the board of Visit County Durham. It has also been the subject of several presentations and discussions at the County Council's Economic Development and Enterprise Scrutiny Committee.
- 5 In November 2011 Visit County Durham embarked on a programme of work designed to track progress against the original objectives of the Durham Tourism Management Plan, test the existing objectives and the approach to each to see if they were still valid and to discover if any new priorities had emerged since 2006.

- 6 The consultation took the form of an industry conference in November 2011 that was attended by 60 delegates, a series of presentations and discussions to relevant organisations and forums (14 separate events in total including meetings of the three AAPs that prioritise tourism) and a conference on rural tourism in March 2012 attended by 80 delegates as part of English Tourism Week.
- 7 The plan will be refreshed annually to take account of new and completed projects. In particular section 8, summary of specific actions, is designed to be a fluid and changing part of the plan.
- 8 In order to support delivery of the plan by the County Council, a Tourism Working Group will be established which will meet quarterly. Appropriate representation from across the County Council will be invited to join this group which it is hoped will assist in the co-ordination of activity to ensure a primary focus on the delivery of the key actions outlined in the DTMap.

Recommendations

- 9 It is recommended that Durham County Council endorse the refreshed Durham Tourism Management Plan and adopt it as the plan for developing the county's visitor economy.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 10 The plan is based on marketing intelligence and benchmarking and has a very clear visitor focus.
- 11 The plan has been widely consulted on and sets out in a clear and focused way what the county needs to do to ensure continued success in developing its visitor economy.
- 12 Durham's approach to developing its visitor economy using this plan has been held up nationally, by Visit England, as an example of good practice and is one of several reasons why Durham has been selected as a primary destination by Visit England and anticipates future investment from the national level.

Background Papers

Survey's and studies that are mentioned above are available from Visit County Durham.

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

There are no direct financial implications arising from the contents of this report. Durham County Council supports a strategic tourism team and invests around £0.8m a year in revenue expenditure on this team whose aim is to maximise tourism potential in County Durham. The delivery of the Tourism Management Plan actions is largely based on a range of private, voluntary and public sector partners working together and can include both financial and non-financial contributions. Private sector leverage is key to this and the County Council's main role is to act as a co-ordinating body to maximise inward investment from partners into Durham. Where direct financial support is proposed by the County Council itself to specific projects in the Plan, the appropriate financial approval will be obtained in line with the Councils budget framework before commitments are made.

Staffing

Relevant staff will be invited to join the Tourism Working Group to be established in order to better support and co-ordinate activity within DCC to develop the visitor economy.

Risk

None

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

None

Accommodation

None

Crime and Disorder

None

Human Rights

None

Consultation

The plan was heavily influenced by visitor market intelligence. It also went through a comprehensive consultation process with the following stakeholders:

- Durham Tourism Management Plan Committee
- Durham Attractions
- Visit County Durham Board
- Durham Hotels Association
- Durham Natural Environment Partnership
- County Durham Economic Partnership Rural Working Group
- County Durham Economic Partnership Business and Enterprise Working Group
- North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Discover Durham Travel Trade Attractions Group

- Durham County Council Strategic Investments Team
- Durham County Council Planners
- Visit County Durham staff
- Teesdale Area Action Partnership Tourism Group
- Weardale Area Action Partnership Tourism Group
- Durham City Area Action Partnership
- Durham Heritage Coast
- Durham University

Procurement

None

Disability issues

None

Legal Implications

None