
REPORT TO:	Environmental Services Committee	AGENDA ITEM:	9
DATE OF MEETING:	3 January 2002	CATEGORY:	DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	Chief Executive	OPEN PARAGRAPH NO:	N/A
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	Kevin Mason (extn 5739)	DOC:	
SUBJECT:	Tourism Action Plans 2001/02 and 2002/03	REF:	
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	All	TERMS OF REFERENCE:	ES11

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Tourism Action Plans for 2001/02 (Annexe A) and 2002/03 (Annexe B) be approved as a basis for the District Council's activity for those financial years.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.2 This document sets out the Council's plans for tourism activity and expenditure during the financial years 2001-2 and 2002-3.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 A new 5-year Tourism Strategy has recently been produced covering the period 2001-05. The strategy aims to give direction to all departments within the Council and the wider community on the Council's Tourism aims and objectives.

- 3.2 The Strategy's aim is "to increase the contribution of tourism to South Derbyshire's economy, in balance with the protection of the environment and the interests of local communities". It has five objectives:

- To continue to promote South Derbyshire as a tourist destination in the most effective ways, and increase residents awareness of the importance and opportunities of tourism;
- To improve the Council's information base by undertaking appropriate research;
- To encourage the sustainable development of tourism in those parts of the District where it is undeveloped or underdeveloped;
- To encourage and extend partnership working and consultation between

authorities, businesses and developers, and voluntary organisations involved in the local tourism industry; and

- To encourage a raising of standards and improvement in the performance of the District's existing tourism facilities and services, and to co-ordinate and extend provision of visitor information, in order to improve the quality of the visitor experience.

- 3.2 The attached Tourism Action Plans compliment the Strategy, identifying areas of activity that the Council intends to pursue and fund over the coming year. Whilst the plan mainly covers activities undertaken by or through the Council's Economic Development section, other areas of the Council such as Planning, Community and Leisure Development, Policy and Environmental Health also have an important part to play in achieving the objectives of the Tourism Strategy.
- 3.3 The Strategy provides a detailed Tourism analysis of the district and this is not therefore covered in these Tourism Action Plans. Further consultation on the contents is not proposed, as a much wider consultation on the new 5-year Tourism Strategy was undertaken less than a year ago.
- 3.4 The Actions Plans are drawn from the Tourism Strategy and other matters arising from the consultation exercise undertaken in its formulation. They take into account the Council's recent successful bid to the East Midlands Development Agency for £15,100 of funding, to assist in the recovery from the Foot & Mouth crisis.
- 3.5 They are also influenced by progress being made in the move towards partnership with East Staffordshire Borough Council, North West Leicestershire District Council and the National Forest Company in working across the broader National Forest area. Tourism activity across The National Forest has developed at a faster rate than had been anticipated. Partnership working to produce a single Visitor Guide will maintain that momentum, enable accelerated development of The National Forest 'brand', and also provide comprehensive information for visitors (for whom the existing fragmented range of leaflets is confusing). The proposal to produce joint Visitor Guides for the area for the calendar year 2003 is ambitious and will require a high level of input; this is however seen as a priority and will be likely to impact on progress made on other aspects of tourism. Recent recognition by emda of The National Forest as one of four strong regional brands that could be built upon for tourism purposes, reinforces the view that the time is right to develop such a partnership (the other destinations / brands being The Lincolnshire Coast, Robin Hood, and the Peak District).

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 Funding will generally be met from within existing budgets and staffing levels, though there may be some as yet unquantifiable implications arising from the proposed partnership working, particularly as this Authority spends considerably less on tourism promotion and development than the other partners. Where items are subject to finance being identified, bids for funding will be made as appropriate, both to external bodies and as part of the Authority's internal processes.

5.0 Corporate Implications

- 5.1 Although the Strategy will be implemented in partnership with a wide range of organisations, substantial input will be required from Council staff from Economic Development, Central Support Services, and to a lesser extent in Planning, and Community & Leisure Development.

6.0 Community Implications

- 6.1 Tourism is important to the local economy, in terms of aiding diversification; creating and sustaining jobs; as a creative force in conserving the heritage, biodiversity and landscapes / townscapes on which it depends; and in making a positive contribution to the overall quality of life of the local community. The strategy endeavours to ensure that economic opportunities are available to all, and aims to be exemplary in its observation of sustainable development principles. In these ways tourism can help to enhance the quality of life in, and image of South Derbyshire.

7.0 Conclusions

- 7.1 The Action Plans seek to build upon progress made to date in the development of tourism, while also moving towards strengthened joint working that will enable accelerated development of The National Forest 'brand' which is increasingly being recognised as a sub-regional tourism destination. The Action Plans also seek to encourage further development of the local tourism product, in order to achieve sustainable growth of the sector in a way that will maximise economic and social benefits.

8.0 Background Papers

- 8.1 South Derbyshire Tourism Strategy 2001-2005

