

Arts, Leisure and Culture Select Committee

Review of the Marketing of Stockton's Visitor Offer Phase 1 – The Visitor Economy

Outline Scope

Scrutiny Chair (Project Director): Cllr Jean O'Donnell	Contact details: Jean.odonnell@stockton.gov.uk
Scrutiny Officer (Project Manager): Peter Mennear	Contact details: 01642 528957 peter.mennear@stockton.gov.uk
Departmental Link Officer: Mark Rowell, Specialist Lead – Business Engagement	Contact details: 01642 526010 mark.rowell@stockon.gov.uk
Finance Link Officer: TBC	Contact details: TBC
Which of our strategic corporate objectives does this topic address? The following Council Plan 2012-13 priorities are relevant: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Promote prosperity and support economic recovery- Improve and celebrate our heritage- Effective marketing and communications	
What are the main issues and overall aim of this review? This review will be undertaken in two phases. Phase 1 will concentrate on support for the local visitor economy. Recently there has been significant change to national, regional and sub-regional arrangements for tourism support and related marketing activity, in addition to changes associated with SBC's Regeneration Service following the EIT programme. Within SBC, businesses within the visitor economy will in future be supported through the creation of a visitor economy specialism within the wider business engagement team. The review will need to respond to these changes and ensure the Council is well placed to enable the local visitor economy to grow, working in partnership where appropriate. The Council and partners including Tees Active continue to provide significant visitor attractions in the Borough, including for example the re-opened Preston Hall and Park, and the White Water Course, and organises a variety of festivals and events. This scope focuses on Phase 1. Phase 2 will concentrate specifically on the marketing aspects (see note at end).	

The Committee will undertake the following key lines of enquiry:

- What has been the effect of regional and sub-regional changes to tourism support organisations (including ONE and Visit Tees Valley)?
- What support from the Council and sub-regional partners is now in place to support the visitor economy in Stockton?
- What links are in place with other visitor destinations?
- How can the local authority support and enable private sector visitor economy business to grow?
- What type of visitor does/should the Borough focus on (day trips/short stay/longer stays/multi-location holidays)
- How does the visitor economy contribute to the quality of life in the Borough, and wider efforts to attract inward investment?

Who will the Committee be trying to influence as part of its work?

Cabinet, local visitor economy businesses, Tees Valley Unlimited.

Expected duration of review and key milestones:

What information do we need?

Existing information (background information, existing reports, legislation, central government documents, etc.):

Relevant extracts from EIT Reviews of Regeneration and Economic Development, and Events, Arts and Tourism.

Position statement on revised support arrangements for the visitor economy in the Borough.

New information:

The views of local tourism businesses

Visitor figures, spend analysis

Information on regional and national (including Visit England) initiatives, and their local implications

Who can provide us with further relevant evidence? (Cabinet Member, officer, service user, general public, expert witness, etc.)

Regeneration & Economic Development

Representative business organisations
Key local businesses
Tees Valley Unlimited

What specific areas do we want them to cover when they give evidence?

Support for the visitor economy

Understanding of business needs, impact of recent organisational changes, what is required to enable sector to 'support itself' and work in partnership.

How will this information be gathered? (eg. Financial baselining and analysis, benchmarking, site visits, face-to-face questioning, telephone survey, survey)

Baseline position statement to be produced, consideration at committee meetings, face-to-face and other consultation as appropriate.

How will key partners and the public be involved in the review?

Scrutiny reviews will be promoted generally via posters and Stockton News.

Additional consultation activity to be discussed as appropriate. Partners to be invited to meetings, consulted as described above.

How will the review help the Council meet the Public Sector Equality Duty?

The review could lead to the promotion and development of more accessible activities and attractions, and improved, more accessible marketing materials.

How will the review contribute towards the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment/Health and Wellbeing Strategy?

Not directly in terms of information gathering for JSNA. However, development of the visitor economy would improve economic wellbeing. Improved awareness of and attendance at local attractions and leisure activities could improve mental wellbeing.

Provide an initial view as to how this review could lead to efficiencies, improvements and/or transformation:

Phase 1 – develop a response to the changing environment for visitor economy support, and a clear strategy for supporting the visitor economy within Stockton Borough

Phase 2 could cover:

- Marketing activity by Stockton Council
- Stockton Borough-specific attractions/heritage/events
- Web presence (including loss of Visit Tees Valley website)
- Use of One North East legacy assets eg. 'Passionate Places' branding
- Role of Tees Valley Unlimited marketing support and links with sub-regional marketing activity and sub-regional attractions
- Links to other visitor destinations (eg. York, Durham, Newcastle-Gateshead) and with their Destination Management Organisations (if in place)

Link Officer: Beccy Brown