

STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

PROFORMA

Cabinet Meeting11th February 2010

1. Title of Item/Report

Draft Tourism & Visitor Economy Strategy 2010-2015

2. Record of the Decision

Cabinet considered a report introducing the Draft Tourism & Visitor Economy Strategy highlighted and presented the aims and objectives set out in the strategy, the reason for the strategy and the need for it to be fed into the Regeneration Strategy, the Regional and sub Regional Tourism Strategies and Plans.

It was explained that Tourism was recognised nationally as a key sector for the economy and vital for regeneration, with £86 billion spent annually on UK tourism, including £17 billion by 33 million overseas visitors and £44 billion on day trips by UK residents.

Within the Tees Valley the value of the tourism industry in 2006 was £535 million. The visitor economy incorporated:

- i) Attractions (e.g. natural environment, heritage and culture, iconic buildings, retail, sport, leisure facilities, food and events)
- ii) Infrastructure (e.g. signs, transport, parking, interpretation, public space and amenities)
- iii) Services (e.g. hotels and bars, pubs and restaurants, galleries, every day events and day-to-day services)

These elements contributed to the vibrancy and sense of place, civic pride, regional and local distinctiveness. Members noted that this was the first Tourism and Visitor Economy Strategy for Stockton Borough and was set to deliver an action plan up until 2015.

In recent years the tourism industry had become much more focused, with changing attitudes to leisure and tourism focusing on visitor's needs and requirements. Development of the overall product, together with the emerging new technology and practices and the need to raise the profile of Stockton locally, regionally, nationally and internationally, had highlighted the need for a Tourism & Visitor Strategy for Stockton.

Stockton Borough's development priorities were linked to the Regional Tourism Economy Strategy, the Tees Valley Investment Plan and ATMAP (Area Tourism Management Plan), which would be delivered by the new Tees Valley Unlimited structure, in terms of strategic positioning for the Borough.

The strategy set out priority objectives to take tourism within the borough forward, increasing visitor stay and spend by changing perceptions of the area and creating an attractive visitor destination. Therefore, generating more jobs and training opportunities with a positive impact on the local economy, The main purpose of this strategy would be to increase the overall value of tourism to the local economy.

Stockton's Vision was – 'By 2015 Stockton-on-Tees would deliver a high quality visitor experience, continually surprising and exciting our visitors with a vibrant, contemporary and diverse offer in an historically rich environment'. The strategy would provide a framework for strengthening tourism activity and promoting growth in the visitor economy, in and around Stockton on Tees. The plan would be the linkage in the process of developing the Stockton Visitor offer within the regional and national context, with the key to success being our ability to develop and work in partnership with a wide range of agencies, businesses, residents and colleagues, to a common agenda. Through partnership working the strategy would improve tourism facilities, services and events and ensure that people with a disability were able to access and take part in tourism activities.

The main areas of improvement were almost identical to the issues raised in the Tees Valley Area Management Plan (ATMAP) document and would be delivered through our 14 main priorities addressed in the action plan. Members were provided with details of the priorities.

RESOLVED that:-

1. the Draft Tourism & Visitor Economy Strategy be approved.
2. the aims, objectives and priorities set out within the Tourism & Visitor Economy Strategy be endorsed.
3. Reasons for the Decision

To realise the ultimate vision of creating a more attractive visitor destination and increasing visitor spend therefore generating job opportunities and boosting the local economy.

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

Councillors Lupton and Mrs Womphrey each declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in respect of this item as a result of their membership of the Tees Active Board referred to within the strategy. Councillor Cunningham also declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in respect of the same item as a result of his role as a Board Member of the Regional Development Agency, and Councillor Cook similarly declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest as a result of being a member of the Visit Tees Valley Board.

6. Details of any Dispensations

Not applicable

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

Not later than Midnight on Friday, 19th February 2010

Proper Officer
15 February 2010