

# **JOINT REGENERATION AND NEIGHBOURHOODS AND CHILDREN'S AND COMMUNITY SERVICES PORTFOLIO**



**27 July 2012**

**at 9.30 am**

**in Committee Room C, Civic Centre, Hartlepool**

The Mayor Stuart Drummond, Cabinet Member responsible for Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Portfolio and Councillor Cath Hill, Cabinet Member responsible for Children's and Community Services Portfolio will consider the following items.

**1. KEY DECISIONS**

No Items

**2. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION**

2.1 Tourism Business Support – *Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning)*

**3. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

No Items

**4. REPORTS FROM OVERVIEW OF SCRUTINY FORUMS**

No items

**JOINT REGENERATION & NEIGHBOURHOODS  
AND CHILDREN'S & COMMUNITY SERVICES  
PORTFOLIO  
27<sup>th</sup> July 2012**



**Report of:** Assistant Director (Regeneration & Planning)

**Subject:** TOURISM BUSINESS SUPPORT

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**1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY**

Non - key

**2. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 2.1 To provide a progress report on the delivery of tourism in Hartlepool and the North East. The report informs of the progress of support that the Council has made to the tourism economy in Hartlepool and seeks comments and endorsement of this approach.

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The visitor economy in Hartlepool is valued at an estimated £119 million, supporting 2000 jobs and attracting 3 million visitors according to the Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Monitor (STEAM). The businesses who support this industry play a vital role in making Hartlepool a better place to live and work
- 3.2 There have been significant changes to tourism structures in the last 12 months. The closure of Visit Tees Valley, the wind-up of One North East in March 2012 and the significant budgets that supported these agencies has led to the Chief Executives of the Tees Valley Local Authorities considering how to address any emerging gaps in promotion of the North East to industry and visitors. The preparation of a position statement has been funded with a brief to:-
- review the current position of the Tees Valley visitor economy
  - review the relationship of tourism to strategic economic development and growth priorities for the Tees Valley
  - understand the likely levels of future investment in the visitor economy by Tees Valley local authorities and partners.

- consider options for investing Regional Efficiency Improvement Programme (REIP) residual funds to support economic growth and visitor economy in Tees Valley

3.3 The initial outcomes of the research identified four potential options as a framework for further discussion by Tees Valley Chief Executives.

- Option 1: Tees Valley Marketing Campaign
- Option 2: Business Engagement and Partnership
- Option 3: Inward Investment and Economic Growth Marketing
- Option 4: Supporting inward investment and private sector let visitor economy initiatives.

3.5 As from April 2012 there is now no dedicated tourism sector support at a sub-regional level with the loss of the Interim Tourism Post at Tees Valley Unlimited (TVU).

3.6 In light of the major structural changes for tourism support to ensure that Hartlepool can derive the maximum added value from the remaining support structures, the Council is engaging specifically with the North East Tourism Alliance. This is an association of organisations with a common interest in the development and promotion of the area's visitor economy. Their purpose is to share, forward plan and where agreed work cooperatively to ensure there is a coordinated approach to the development of the areas' visitor economy and promotion of its visitor offer.

3.7 The Alliance is chaired by an independent chair and includes the founder members Hadrian's Wall Trust, Newcastle Gateshead Initiative, North East Hoteliers Association, Northumberland Tourism and Visit County Durham. Tees Valley Unlimited are a member of the alliance and the Tourism Officer at Hartlepool Borough Council has been asked to represent TVU within the Alliance. This will help Hartlepool to further develop new networks and be engaged with external tourism organisations and potentially provide opportunities for engagement which can benefit the Borough.

3.8 The Economic Regeneration Strategy (ERS) has identified tourism as a key sector and one of its key objectives - Objective 5 – To boost the visitor economy. Whilst sub-regional and regional support has diminished it is important for Hartlepool Borough Council to support the tourism economy through business support and marketing activities. The actions bespoke to the visitor economy within the ERS provide the methods for supporting such businesses within the financial limitations available for both the Council and businesses alike. The actions outlined are to:-

- 1) Develop and implement a marketing plan to raise the profile of Hartlepool
- 2) Review and improve visitor information links between visitor locations to improve connectivity in Hartlepool
- 3) Develop destination Hartlepool / invest in Hartlepool websites and social media activity
- 4) Develop and deliver bespoke tourism training courses
- 5) Undertake business events to support the visitor economy

- 6) Undertake a programme of targeted account management with key tourism businesses to provide business advice
- 7) Undertake a joint marketing campaign with partners and key stakeholders across the region
- 8) Engage with schools and colleges to raise the profile of the visitor economy to the potential new workforce through bespoke events
- 9) Deliver the Diamond Festival in Hartlepool

## 4. PROPOSALS

4.1 In line with the key priorities identified, various initiatives have been started and delivered on all of the key priorities identified.

- A 12 month marketing plan has been developed to identify core activity for tourism (and Economic Development) in line with the actions identified within the ERS. The plan takes into account not only traditional marketing methods but also the importance of engagement initiatives, target audiences and how they factor in delivering the ERS.
- What's happening Hartlepool campaign - The joint activity between Tourism and Cultural Services involved the amalgamation of the Mini Guide and What's on Campaign which delivered costs savings of £5000 from core budgets but delivered a campaign to a targeted audience. 45,000 copies were printed January 2012 and have been distributed up to a 1-2 hour drive time. The guide has an income target of £1900 through advertising opportunities and this was over-achieved by £950. A follow up supplementary leaflet is being printed in July / August 2012 to focus on additional events which are running from August to December 2012. The project was delivered well within the overall project budget of £14,550 (inclusive of income). The campaign will be reviewed before embarking on the 2013 campaign.
- Continued activity is taking place to further enhance the What's happening Hartlepool brand including social media and re-branding of promotional material including the information boards around Hartlepool.
- The new destinationhartlepool.com platform went live in April 2012 in line with the loss of the regional destination management system 'desti.ne'. The visitor facing element to the site is almost complete to phase 1 and work will commence on integrating a 'live' and 'invest' sections, bringing all visitor, events, business and inward investment information all within one framework, as was requested by previous Portfolio Holders for Regeneration & Economic Development, Culture, Leisure & Tourism and Performance Portfolios. This has been a joint project with the Cultural Services Team and work is now underway to engage with other key areas of the Council to consult and provide training allow them to include their activities and events to the site, including Countryside and Sports Development.
- The website platform has been created to maximise self authoring, updating and development for users (be it internal individuals or external

businesses). This will be password protected and have scales of entry but will in the long term help to create a website with up to date, real time information and ultimately be more cost effective.

- Work is also ongoing to provide advice and guidance on the changes for businesses on website presence and promotion, particularly with the loss of [visitteesvalley.com](http://visitteesvalley.com) and [visitnortheastengland.com](http://visitnortheastengland.com). In partnership with Middlesbrough and Stockton the aim is to provide businesses with advice as to how they can promote their business effectively in these changing times and how they can utilise social media and free opportunities, whilst also monitoring and evaluating their activity.
- Partnership working has continued with Discover Durham and Visit County Durham and has developed opportunities in both the group and consumer markets. This provides opportunities to reach larger audiences but also to network with other tourism related businesses and organisations to gain access to examples of best practice. The forthcoming year will provide opportunities for stronger linkages with the Lindisfarne Gospels event in 2013 offering opportunities to promote Hartlepool through the early Christian Heritage connections.
- The Tourism Team continue to support the work of Northern Film and Media and work with production companies wishing to film in Hartlepool. As the HBC contact, general location enquiries are responded to and assistance with specific filming opportunities is provided on a regular basis. In 2012 extensive filming has taken place for 2 upcoming episodes of Inspector George Gently. This upholds our corporate commitment to the Filming Friendly Charter. Culture and Information, the Town Hall Theatre and Hartlepool's Maritime Experience also deal directly with enquiries for filming within the town.
- Networks & Business Engagement – The Passport Group and Hotels Group have each met on a bi-monthly basis, sharing examples of best practice and providing updates on their activities. The groups have delivered opportunities for joint working including marketing activities, raising awareness of individuals businesses, event support and potential joint purchasing opportunities. The meetings are also a platform for informing and seeking support on tourism activity (and other services) provided by the Council. There has also been individual business support for businesses that have required specific advice and guidance relating to their individual activity.
- Business support continues on 1-1 engagement to ensure they maximise HBC tourism support and to inform on all the activities which the Council deliver which are supporting them. Each business will be consulted on a host of opportunities in which they can participate. The meetings will also encourage business to participate in networking activity and also marketing activity as well as identifying opportunities where HBC tourism support can assist in the future.

- Bespoke training – Work has continued to provide bespoke training and workshops to those within the sector, students who are involved in a travel or hospitality related qualification and students choosing GCSE options. The Tourism Team has also engaged in training on the Family Wise project (a service to help support family members on the route to work) by delivering a day of training combining the My Hartlepool project with job opportunities within the service sector. In addition the service is linking with Public Projection to provide awareness of the new Food Hygiene Awards and to deliver an awareness raising event. Discussions are underway to build relations and engagement with Hartlepool Sixth Form College through the bespoke tourism training activity that can be provided and developed including My Hartlepool and Discover Days and career opportunities within the sector.
- The Community Services Section has delivered a variety of events at various locations with two significant events in June being the Diamond Festival and Olympic Torch event. The Diamond Festival was a 5 day event which attracted over 10,000 people and generated excellent feedback and local media coverage whilst the Torch Relay event attracted around 23,000 people and gave Hartlepool international medial coverage. Working in partnership with Cultural Services, support was provided to promote events, not only to potential visitors via website and social media activity but to local businesses to raise their awareness of the town itself. Partnership work continues in targeting specific audiences using the What's Happening brand as a tool of recognition.
- The Tourism Team has been providing support to the Department of Regeneration & Neighbourhoods Income Generation & Commercial Skills group, particularly in relation to developing and delivering marketing plans. The Team is also engaged and continuing to build relationships with individuals and teams where marketing activity is delivered and opportunities for joint working, staff or marketing support can be provided.
- The Redcar, Saltburn, Hartlepool Golf Week, July 2012 (in conjunction with Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council) is looking to be the most successful event to date with 316 participants due to take part in the week long event. The event will be cost neutral for the Council. Minimal marketing is required for this event with word of mouth from previous participants proving the best advertising. Initial analysis shows that the majority of visitors are from outside (around 75% from outside the North East) and staying overnight. The 6 clubs who participate have already signed up to the event for 2013. Last year's event saw an average spend per person of £250 bringing an estimated £74,500 into the local economy.
- The Eat Campaign continues throughout the year with distribution of the Eat Guide, backed up by marketing and promotional activity through social media and the website. Solicitation has just been sent to all eating out establishments to participate in the 2012/13 campaign.

## **5. RISK IMPLICATIONS & FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- 5.1 Hartlepool and Tees Valley's profile within Tees Valley and North East England has significantly reduced over the last year with the changes in infrastructure. Funding opportunities for businesses are now limited, in particular for the smaller SME's which make up a large proportion of the tourism businesses. Activities have been identified to support businesses in Hartlepool to identify how to raise their profile.
- 5.2 With tourism contributing significantly to the Tourism Economy work will continue to build partnerships to raise the awareness of Hartlepool and to maximise on promotional opportunities. It will be important to maximise ways of reaching the visitor audience in the most effective and cost efficient way to identify joint initiatives and continue to raise income to support projects.

## **6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 The Portfolio Holders are recommended to note the overall support provided to the tourism economy and seek comments and endorsements of this approach.

## **7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 The activity outlined in this report will continue to support, improve and raise awareness of the tourism sector which is important to the economic wellbeing of the town.

## **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 8.1 There are no background papers.

## **9. CONTACT OFFICER**

Damien Wilson  
Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning)  
Civic Centre  
Victoria Road  
Hartlepool  
TS24 8AY

Tel: (01429) 523400  
Email: [damian.wilson@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:damian.wilson@hartlepool.gov.uk)