



Doncaster Council

Report

Date: 18th April 2019

TO THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF REGENERATION AND HOUSING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

DONCASTER'S VISITOR ECONOMY STRATEGY

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision
Cllr Mordue - Business, Skills and Economic Development	All	Yes

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. During the past five-years, Doncaster has developed an increasing reputation as a quality visitor destination. This has been achieved by a marked improvement in the quality of the visitor economy offer, investment in key attractions and overnight accommodation. The co-ordination and package led marketing approach including the use of social media and video has enabled a modern, family friendly image of Doncaster to be portrayed.
2. This Strategy (Appendix A) sets out how the ambition for Doncaster to become recognised as a major visitor destination by 2022 can be achieved and how we aim to compete with other major towns and cities that already attract significant day and overnight visitors.
3. The visitor economy strategy also sets out how Doncaster has been successful in attracting and delivering large national and international events and we want to build upon that success in a planned and co-ordinated way with strategic purpose linked to our vision and objectives within the visitor economy strategy. The focus on major events would be to ensure they are the right fit for Doncaster and they have a long lasting impact on people and businesses across the borough.
4. The delivery of the strategy and associated action plan of initiatives will contribute to ensuring that Doncaster is not only recognised locally as a quality destination but as a world-class destination offering a unique visitor experience generating new jobs and bringing additional value to the economy.

5. The Strategy co-ordinates the vast and varied initiatives/projects that are being delivered by a range of partners to provide a single and coherent plan for the benefit of Doncaster, its residents, visitors and workforce as outlined below. It will ensure that Doncaster's public and private sectors continue to work together at all levels to act upon key intelligence, trends, activity and emerging investment to deliver the very best within the Visitor Economy Sector.

EXEMPT REPORT

6. The report is not exempt.

RECOMMENDATIONS

7. That the Regeneration and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel consider and provide comment on the Visitor Economy Strategy.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

8. A commitment to:
 - Provide Doncaster residents with an enhanced programme of events and cultural activities.
 - Provide new world-class attractions/venues in addition to those already sited in Doncaster.
 - Provide employment opportunities through the development of new attractions and venues.
 - Increase feelings of civic pride in Doncaster.

BACKGROUND

9. English Tourism contributes £106 bn to the British economy, and is worth £6.5 bn to Yorkshire and The Humber region. Doncaster's benefit from Tourism is worth over £400m per year, and the growth in visitor numbers has exceeded the national average of over 5% year on year.
10. Contributing to this success, Doncaster Council has for the last 10 years invested in its tourism and marketing offer through Visit Doncaster and our award winning Tourist Information Centre. This will however be the Council's first Visitor Economy Strategy.
11. The past five-years has seen a marked improvement in Doncaster's reputation as a quality visitor destination. This has been achieved through an improvement in the quality of the tourism offer, investment in key attractions, overnight accommodation and by a co-ordinated and package led marketing approach contributed by the use of social media channels and video.

12. In order for Doncaster to compete with other towns and cities, it must continue to further invest in its development of key facilities and programming of major events to attract more and more visitors year on year.

13 Our Vision is that Doncaster...

By 2022, will be recognised as a major visitor destination within Yorkshire and will be seen as one of the foremost emerging visitor destinations nationally. Doncaster's reputation will be one of an eclectic blend of historic heritage, family friendly attractions, a broad ranging arts & culture offer, fantastic entertainment, cuisine, sport and leisure facilities.

14. In order to achieve this, 6 key objectives are identified below that aim to contribute to reaching this:

Objectives

1. Culture and Heritage:

Create, develop and promote new and existing artists, attractions and events to continue building our cultural and heritage offer.

2. Major Events:

Position Doncaster as a host of quality national and international events that have long lasting impact on the people and businesses across the borough.

3. Quality Destinations:

Promote Doncaster and the town centre as destinations to spend quality time.

4. Accessible Doncaster:

Develop and promote Doncaster as an accessible destination for all visitors regardless of faith, background or disability.

5. Local Engagement:

Encourage Doncaster residents to recognise and engage in attractions, events and culture.

6. Longer Stays:

Increase overnight stays to embed Doncaster as a true weekend, conference and long stay visitor destination.

15. In order to achieve these objectives and ultimately our vision, five cross cutting, enabling work streams have been identified.

1. Promoting Doncaster
Raising awareness of our offer amongst residents, visitors and potential visitors
2. Better Intelligence
Improved data and evidence
3. Developing Partnerships
Working collaboratively to get better results
4. Promoting Doncaster
Appropriate resourcing to help support and improve our offer
5. Developing Skills and Education
Helping to develop a stronger and higher skilled workforce resulting in a more responsive tourism industry and quality experience

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

16. Three main options were considered for the strategy;
 - a. To continue without a strategy and deliver activities in a piece meal approach.
 - b. To allow the private sector to deliver investment and events without the Council's intervention or co-ordination.
 - c. To create a Visitor Economy Strategy that presents a coordinated plan to develop the sector for the benefit of the community and visitors. (recommended)

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

17. The recommended option provides a Visitor Economy Strategy that creates the maximum impact for Doncaster's reputation and quality of life for its residents, the Council must take a major role in leading and co-ordinating tourism and visitor economy related activities. A collective Doncaster has a much stronger voice than individual attractions and venues can ever have creating a stronger output, resulting in more visitor spend and overnight stays – with benefits to the economy.

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

18.

	Outcomes	Implications
	Doncaster Working: Our vision is for more people to be able to pursue their ambitions through work that gives them and Doncaster a brighter and	Providing employment opportunities

	<p>prosperous future;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better access to good fulfilling work • Doncaster businesses are supported to flourish • Inward Investment 	
	<p>Doncaster Living: Our vision is for Doncaster's people to live in a borough that is vibrant and full of opportunity, where people enjoy spending time;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The town centres are the beating heart of Doncaster • More people can live in a good quality, affordable home • Healthy and Vibrant Communities through Physical Activity and Sport • Everyone takes responsibility for keeping Doncaster Clean • Building on our cultural, artistic and sporting heritage 	<p>Providing vibrant town centres, quality attractions and venues for residents. Enabling residents to enjoy major events and cultural performances in their hometown.</p> <p>Provide a co-ordinated marketing approach so that activities and events are attended and appreciated.</p>
	<p>Doncaster Learning: Our vision is for learning that prepares all children, young people and adults for a life that is fulfilling;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every child has life-changing learning experiences within and beyond school • Many more great teachers work in Doncaster Schools that are good or better • Learning in Doncaster prepares young people for the world of work 	<p>Providing fun and cultural experiences for young people to enjoy, learn from and be inspired.</p>
	<p>Doncaster Caring: Our vision is for a borough that cares together for its most vulnerable residents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children have the best start in life • Vulnerable families and individuals have support from someone they trust • Older people can live well and independently in their own homes 	<p>Providing an increased health and wellbeing to our residents through the pleasure of arts and culture.</p> <p>Provide young people with an opportunity to engage in tourism and the arts.</p>
	<p>Connected Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A modern, efficient and flexible workforce • Modern, accessible customer interactions 	<p>Digital promotion including social media and website.</p> <p>Face to face interaction within the Tourist Information Centre.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operating within our resources and delivering value for money • A co-ordinated, whole person, whole life focus on the needs and aspirations of residents • Building community resilience and self-reliance by connecting community assets and strengths • Working with our partners and residents to provide effective leadership and governance 	
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RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

19. That;

- Visit Doncaster / Doncaster Council is responsible for actions listed with their responsibility in the action plan only. Many actions are the responsibility of the private sector and are subject to private investment and wider implications.
- All activity is subject to appropriate levels of resources (financial and staffing).
- Macro economics could affect the delivery of key investments such as Brexit and economic downturn.

Governance

20. To ensure that the Council's contribution to Visitor Economy Strategy objectives are robust we would propose to review and enhance existing arrangements. The Objectives of any new arrangements to be put in place would include:

- a) To oversee the contribution by the local authority to the delivery of the visitor Economy Strategy
- b) To set and discuss the strategic positioning of Doncaster with regard to major events across the borough
- c) Identify, advise and include key stakeholders as appropriate in the process
- d) Ensure Local Authority support and delivery of major events is planned and resourced appropriately.

21. To achieve these objectives the council would;

- Introduce a strategic events group that would proactively position Doncaster and recommend decisions and direction on future and continuing major events across the Borough (responsible for objectives a-c above)
- Support the existing partnership delivery arrangements which would continue to take on the main delivery work arising from hosting major events (objective d).
- Recommendations made by the strategic events group would need to be informed by / inform future resource and structural considerations i.e. do we have the resources to achieve our vision with regard to major events.

- Doncaster Council's Directors will regularly review the strategy, its action plan and receive updates on the progress of the projects to ensure that all elements of the Strategy are managed effectively.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials...ND..... Date.....5th April 2019

22. Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 gives the Council the power to do anything that an individual may do. The approval of the Visitor Economy Strategy and the commitment to deliver the associated action plan will assist the Council in optimising Doncaster's ability to improve on its offer to visitors year on year. Further legal advice and assistance will be given as the strategy and action plan are delivered.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials...DR.....Date...05.04.19.....]

23. Approval of the Visitor Economy Strategy and a general commitment to deliver the associated actions does not in itself carry any direct financial implications for the Council. However, individual projects and initiatives arising from implementing the Strategy will require specific advice and implications to be considered as and when they are further developed. This is expected to be concluded by further reports or decisions relating to individual projects as they come forward. No works should be commissioned unless sufficient resources have been identified.
24. It should be noted that a number of the actions outlined in the strategy include projects or initiatives that have resources identified and are already underway. Either as part of the Council's capital programme, e.g.: -
- Station forecourt improvements;
 - Civic Quarter cinema and restaurants;
 - Wool Market refurbishment;
 - Doncaster Culture and Learning Centre.
25. Or as part of the activities of a number of services within the Council, e.g.: -
- Visit Doncaster, including the Tourist Information Centre and Doncaster Growing Together events budgets;
 - Inward Investment and Sector Growth, including working with investors and business owners;
 - Communities, including town centre management and initial investment in a culture development programme;
 - Leisure, including co-ordination of major cycling events.
26. A number of the events budgets are or will be provided from one-off funding and will not be available beyond 2020/21. If events funded from those monies are intended to re-occur beyond that date then they will need to become self-sustaining, otherwise further resources will need to be found. This could be difficult in the current climate of the Council's budget.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials...CR Date...04.04.19..]

27. There are no direct HR Imps in relation to this Report, but if in future staff are affected or additional specialist resources are required then further consultation will need to take place with HR.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials PW Date...05.04.19

28. The strategy makes reference to the ongoing use of T Stats technology, which is an online tourism data management system to enable improved collection, analysis and sharing of trends and data with partners/stakeholders in the Doncaster visitor economy. This technology was considered and agreed by the Technology Governance Board in December 17, subject to discussions with SPU re the Corporate BI solution. These discussions concluded that whilst the BI solution may meet some of the general functionality, it may not allow for the nuances of the tourism work and the stakeholder management associated with it. It was therefore agreed that the T Stats contract should be sought for one year following which the situation should be reviewed again with SPU.
29. The strategy also includes an action to develop a new Visit Doncaster website and it is understood that the report author is submitting a proposal in relation to this for consideration by the Technology Governance Board in May 19.

HEALTH IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials... CEH ..Date ...03.04.19.....]

30. The vision to improve the cultural environment for Doncaster through a wide ranging approach has great potential to impact positively on Doncaster residents' health and wellbeing. In particular through the improvement of the physical environment and facilities that are health promoting such as libraries, museum, sport facilities and open spaces.
31. The evidence for the impact of events to improve health in the long term is not conclusive and recent research on the Tour De Yorkshire in Doncaster has suggested that to leave a legacy that impacts on the largest proportion of the population, the window of opportunity to engage residents is within 3 weeks prior to, with a focus on the 48 hours around the actual event.
32. It is recommended that decision makers consider how residents are best placed to take advantage of the opportunities that this strategy will deliver in particular focussing on addressing inequality in access. Barriers to access could include disability, transport, cost, age and ethnicity. It is recommended that the design, cost, location, access and communication of all events, activities and attractions are considered in light of overcoming barriers to access, particularly for those living in Doncaster. Co-production and engagement with local residents, especially young people, could not only maximise the health and wellbeing benefits of the visitor economy for local people, but could also help overcome barriers to participation.
33. Doncaster Council has a responsibility to protect the health and wellbeing of its residents. We would also welcome the continuation of the consideration of the health impacts within the delivery of events.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials...LR..... Date.....4.4.19.....]

34. Decision makers must consider the Council's duties under the Public Sector Equality Duty at s149 of the Equality Act 2010. The duty requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the act, and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a 'protected characteristic' and those who do not share that protected characteristic.
35. Visit Doncaster in its marketing and promotion of Doncaster ensures that visitors of all race and ethnicity are welcomed equally. Provision for any additional needs will be accommodated whenever possible.

CONSULTATION

36. Consultation had been undertaken with the Doncaster's Visitor Economy Group – representing major attractions and accommodation providers.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

37. Draft Visitor Economy Strategy – Appendix A

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