

Councillor Craig Sahman
Chair
Regeneration and Housing
Overview & Scrutiny Panel
Floor 2
Council House

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Dear Craig

Place Marketing – Development of the Doncaster Brand

Thank you for your report on Place Marketing and Developing the Doncaster brand. I have read your report with interest, and have the following comments on the findings and recommendations.

With regard to Place Marketing, you will be aware that we have commissioned a piece of work by renowned place marketing consultants, Thinking Place, who will be producing a Doncaster story and a brand that the public and private sector can take forward as a marketing tool to promote Doncaster as a place to invest, work, live and play.

In doing this work, they have held a number of consultations with various stakeholders, and I believe the Regeneration and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel were fully engaged by Thinking Place.

You will be pleased to hear that a number of the recommendations you put forward will be included in the final piece of work put forward by Thinking Place, which is due for publication and roll out in June 2016.

- a) The work will deliver a clear plan for promoting Doncaster, which will include timescales, outcomes and the formation of a private sector led place board and ambassador programme. This plan will be made available for consultation with R&E O&S
- b) This plan will be used for future place marketing work by both the private sector and DMBC via Business Doncaster, who have re-structured their marketing and tourism teams into a Destination Marketing team, in order to better deliver place marketing activities
- c) Thinking Place is working on a 'pitch pack' which will tell the Doncaster story and will be available to anyone who is interested in marketing and promoting Doncaster. This will be available early summer and a series of events will be held to promote the pitch pack and brand.

- d) Business Doncaster will continue with their work on familiarisation visits, which are already increasing in number and receiving positive feedback, and they are already looking for additional resource and advocates to deliver these visits. They are also working closely with property agents and developers to sell Doncaster more effectively to inward investors, which does include sites north of the borough. They are also looking closely at how we better sell Doncaster to certain business sectors, which does include manufacturing and business services.
- e) The new place board, as part of the Thinking Place recommendations, along with Business Doncaster, will be looking at how we develop our tourism offer. This includes working with attractions on joint promotions, producing new literature, and looking at an events plan for Doncaster. The revamped Visit Doncaster website has a very extensive events page, and this website is now being extensively marketed, along with a newly produced Doncaster visitor guide. We are about to appoint a Destination Manager who will head up this work, and part of the remit of the post will be to put together a robust tourism strategy to market Doncaster and increase our profile on a national and international level.
- f) Thinking Place is also looking to put in place a young Ambassador programme which has not been done before. A large part of their work has been to engage with the youth of Doncaster and get our young people to be advocates for the town. This dovetails nicely with the work that is already underway between DMBC and Doncaster Chamber to make schools and colleges aware of the many varied employment opportunities available in Doncaster, and to help retain our young talent.
- g) You may be aware that some work is going on with consultants who are looking at a new town centre master plan. We are aware of issues with our town centre, and these are being addressed collectively across the Council using the new master plan as a basis for our work.
- h) We are working closely on opportunities for apprenticeships, and our skills team are working hard to ensure funding is available for individuals who need training.

I trust the above is helpful and shows that we are taking your recommendations on board. You will see a much greater focus and activity around place marketing in the upcoming months as we are committed to everyone working collectively to raise the profile of our town, and show people just how good Doncaster is.

Yours sincerely

Ros Jones
Mayor of Doncaster