

UPDATE ON SEVENOAKS DISTRICT TOURISM INITIATIVES

Economic and Community Development Advisory Committee – 23 April 2015

Report of Chief Officer Communities & Business

Status: For Consideration

Key Decision: No

Executive Summary: This report sets out Sevenoaks District tourism initiatives which contribute to supporting the local economy and tourism infrastructure.

This report supports the Key Aim of This report supports the Key Aim of the Community Plan's Dynamic & Sustainable Economy priorities

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Hogarth

Contact Officer(s) Hayley Brooks Ext 7272

Recommendation to Economic and Community Development Advisory Committee:

Members are asked to note this report.

Reason for recommendation: This report provides an update to key tourism initiatives being undertaken by this Council.

Introduction and Background

- 1 The tourism industry makes a considerable contribution to economic viability and growth in the District. The District has a wealth of excellent tourism attractions, thriving market towns and a strong network of accommodation providers.
- 2 According to the 2013 Economic Impact of the Kent Visitor Economy, the Sevenoaks District tourism industry is worth over £220 million to the local economy, supports 4,840 jobs and attracts over 3.6 million day trips and 229,000 staying visitor trips annually.
- 3 Tourism plays a key role within the Sevenoaks District Economic Development Strategy with this Council working in partnership to support existing tourism infrastructure and attract tourism investment across the District.
- 4 We work in partnership with Visit Kent and a range of tourism businesses to promote the District to visitors and deliver holistic tourism initiatives to ensure this District is a key visitor destination.

Sevenoaks District Council Tourism Initiatives

Visit Sevenoaks District website

- 5 We have commissioned Visit Kent to work with their website developer to build a new tourism microsite, based on the existing template of the Visit Kent website, to promote Sevenoaks District as a key visitor destination.
- 6 The microsite will provide visitors with a central online resource for the District. The key categories on the website will be 'Come and Explore', 'Where to Stay', 'Plan Your Visit' and 'Things to Do'. The information featured will be maintained by Visit Kent in partnership with this Council.
- 7 We are collating information from all tourist attractions, accommodation providers, town partnerships and event organisers for the microsite. Each town and parish council has been asked to provide text, logo and images to promote their location and each will have their own dedicated section.
- 8 Developers continue to build and populate the microsite with content provided. The microsite is due to be launched in the next couple of months.

Visit Kent Partnership

- 9 We continue to work closely with Visit Kent, as part of an annual Service Level Agreement, to deliver a holistic tourism function in partnership with local tourism businesses across the District.
- 10 The partnership enables the District to be promoted regionally, nationally and internationally to the travel industry, tourism media and through e-marketing campaigns. As part of this work, Visit Kent also provides a free Tourism Business Advisory Service to tourism businesses in the District, networking events, training workshops and co-ordinates press and trade group visits in the District. This District is also represented within Visit Kent themed campaigns and has a page of the main Visit Kent website (www.visitkent.co.uk).
- 11 Annual Performance Indicators are in place and monitored through quarterly partnership liaison meetings. Visit Kent have been invited to the next meeting of Economic & Community Development Advisory Committee to present their 2015-16 priorities, campaigns and the work being undertaken for this Council.

Destination Management Plan

- 12 During this year, we are working with Visit Kent, local tourism businesses and rural landowners to develop a new Destination Management Plan (DMP) for the District. Having a DMP in place is recommended by Visit England and can assist in attracting additional inward investment and funding for a specific destination to achieve shared aims and priorities.
- 13 The DMP will provide a partnership plan to detail how partners can together manage, develop and promote a destination over a stated period of time to further develop initiatives with a common purpose. The DMP will articulate the roles of

different stakeholders, identify clear actions to be undertaken and the resources required.

- 14 The DMP will support the aims within the Economic Development Strategy to create a successful and sustainable visitor economy in the District. It will provide an integrated and clear focus to enhance the tourism offer to businesses and visitors across the District.

Key Implications

Financial

- 15 This Council enters into an annual Service Level Agreement with Visit Kent to deliver the tourism function for this Council as part on an annual Service Level Agreement. The cost to this Council for 2015/16 will be £ 9,455.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

- 16 There are no legal implication for the Council associated to this report.

Equality Assessment

- 17 No decision is required as part of this paper and therefore no perceived impact on end users. Equalities Impact Assessments will be carried out for any tourism initiatives undertaken by this Council, as set out in the report.

Conclusions

- 18 This report informs Members regarding the Sevenoaks District tourism initiatives being undertaken to support the local economy and tourism infrastructure across the District.

Appendices

Background Papers: [Sevenoaks District Economic Development Strategy](#)

Lesley Bowles
Chief Officer Communities and Business