

THE VISITOR ECONOMY STUDY

Economic & Community Development Advisory Committee - 12 December
October

Report of	Lesley Bowles - Chief Officer for Communities and Business
Status	For information
Key Decision	No

Executive Summary: Working with the local tourism sector, Roni Lovegrove has considered the current and future tourism demands and pressures in the District and how the sector, together with the District Council and other partners can respond to future demand.

This report supports the Key Aim of: Supporting and developing the local economy from the Corporate Plan and supporting the Dynamic and Sustainable economy priorities in the Community Plan.

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Roderick Hogarth

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Recommendation to Economic and Community Development Advisory Committee:

To receive a presentation by Roni Lovegrove outlining the current and future demands and pressures for the Visitor Economy in the District and to note suggestions or potential activities and actions that could be followed to stimulate the Visitor Economy in the District.

Reason for recommendation:

To inform Members of the work to date and help inform the drafting of the new Economic Development Strategy and emerging Local Plan.

Introduction and Background

- 1 The Visitor Economy Study was undertaken to draw out the experiences, challenges and opportunities for individual businesses and operators in the sector across the District. This followed on from a stakeholder session that was held in March 2017 where it was agreed that the study would form a

basis for greater collaboration in the sector and with partners, including the District Council.

- 2 Roni Lovegrove, from Henden Manor in the south of the Sevenoaks District, has undertaken the research on the Study on a voluntary basis, including meeting many of the participants in the March 2017 stakeholder session and providing insight into new and emerging trends in the sector.
- 3 The presentation will draw out specific detail and comment around a number of headings, including the travel market, constraints on growth, transport, signage and a sense of place.
- 4 It is hoped that the sector will continue to build on the collaboration that has been fostered through the stakeholder workshop and the follow up presentation to the group on the study findings. The findings will help to inform the drafting of the new Economic Development Strategy and the emerging Local Plan. The SDC Economic Development Team will continue to provide assistance as required.

Key Implications

Financial

There are no financial implications for the District Council associated with this report. Any work taken forward will be within the context of the emerging Economic Development Policy and financial implications will be taken into account at that stage.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

There are no legal implications for the District Council associated with this report. Any work taken forward will be within the context of the emerging Economic Development Policy and legal implications will be taken into account at that stage.

Equality Assessment

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on ends users.

Conclusion

The research has provided an insight into the experiences, challenges and opportunities for individual businesses and operators in the Visitor Economy sector across the District. This will assist the drafting of the new Economic Development Study and the emerging Local Plan in underpinning this key sector. It will also inform the District Council's future role in enabling further collaboration with the sector and partners.

Lesley Bowles
Chief Officer for Community and Business