

Open Report on behalf of Andy Gutherson - Executive Director of Place

Report to:	Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee
Date:	13 July 2021
Subject:	Tourism Commission Update

Summary:

The Tourism Commission was set up by the county council to take a strategic role in supporting and shaping the future of the industry within Greater Lincolnshire. It met six times and by February 2021 had produced a series of recommendations for future work that are now in delivery. Government, in June produced its own recovery plan. Their aims have a good fit with the recommendations put forward by the Tourism Commission.

Actions Required:

That the Committee notes the report and agrees to receive regular updates on the progress on delivery of the recommendations.

1. Background

Throughout the COVID period as well as supporting businesses, planning work for the future of tourism in Greater Lincolnshire has been ongoing. Our work was based on the themes of the Tourism Sector Deal published by government in 2019 which we felt offered the most joined up approach to the sector than has been seen for many years. A series of roundtables tables and consultation events were held, and we jointly developed a Greater Lincolnshire Tourism Action Plan. However, there was and continues to be an enormous amount of disruption, change within tourism sector, as a result the council has taken a strategic leadership role to support and shape the future industry offer with Greater Lincolnshire by setting up a Tourism Commission with local industry leaders in September 2020, chaired by Cllr Davie. The commission met six times and has produced a series of recommendations for future work. We are now in the delivery phase of our recovery planning.

Update

The county council set up a Tourism Commission in September 2020 to make recommendations for the future of tourism in Greater Lincolnshire, both short term and

long term. Commissioners represented all areas of our visitor economy and met six times between September and February 2021. It produced a series of recommendations under the headings of Investment, Product Development, Marketing and Skills. The Tourism Commission Recommendations are attached, some are already in delivery, some at planning stage or awaiting potential funding.

The Tourism Commission Phase 2 will now meet three times a year, June, October and February to monitor progress on the delivery of its recommendations. The county council has allocated £500k of new recovery money to deliver the recommendations, although this doesn't preclude the gaining of additional funds from other sources to aid delivery. The Tourism Manager will report on delivery progress at the meeting.

DCMS recently published its Tourism Recovery Plan on 11 June 2021. It recognises the economic importance of the sector but also that it has been one of those hit hardest through COVID. There are some changes from the original Tourism Sector Deal, but the key themes are all still there and all our work during lockdown has not been wasted and the activities tie in with the Tourism Commission recommendations.

National Support

Through its Tourism Recovery Plan government is determined to help the UK's world class tourism sector recover as quickly as possible with a full return to pre-COVID numbers by 2023.

Specifically, the aim is to:

- Recover domestic overnight trip volume and spend to 2019 levels by the end of 2022, and inbound visitor numbers and spend by the end of 2023
- Ensure that the sector's recovery benefits every nation and region, with visitors staying longer, growing accommodation occupancy rates in the off-season and high levels of investment in tourism products and transport infrastructure
- Build back better with a more innovative and resilient industry, maximising the potential for technology and data to enhance the visitor experience and employing more UK nationals in year-round quality jobs.
- Ensure the tourism sector contributes to the enhancement and conservation of the country's cultural, natural and historic heritage, minimises damage to the environment and is inclusive and accessible to all
- Return the UK swiftly to its pre-pandemic position as a leading European destination for hosting business events.

These aims have a good fit with the recommendations put forward by the GLR Tourism Commission and endorses our approach of using the government's Tourism Sector Deal as our framework. The possibility of applying for Tourism Zone status is no longer on the table but much of what Tourism Zones aimed to address – such as improving digital skills, place-making, and seasonality – can now be accomplished with the significant levels of funding outlined in the Recovery Plan, such as the new Help to Grow: Digital scheme, the Community Renewal Fund, and the Levelling-Up Fund.

2. Conclusion

Much work has been put in place in Greater Lincolnshire during the past year to prepare for the recovery phase. The work done locally has good fit with the government's Tourism Sector Deal approach. New recovery funding put in place by the county council will help to deliver the Tourism Commission recommendations and further external funds will be applied for.

3. Consultation

The Tourism Commissioners included businesses across Greater Lincolnshire representing all the different elements of the Visitor Economy. The county council's tourism officer meets once a week with all the tourism officers in Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland and the Tourism Commission and Tourism Action Plan have been discussed within that forum. The Tourism Action Plan was widely consulted on across the visitor economy sector using business forums (pre-lockdown) and subsequently through webinars.

a) Risks and Impact Analysis

N/A

4. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Tourism Commission Recommendations

5. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

This report was written by Mary Powell who can be contacted on 01986 805018 or by e-mail at Mary.powell@lincolnshire.gov.uk.

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