

CABINET

15th September 2020

DISCOVER RUTLAND TOURISM STRATEGY

Report of the Strategic Director for Places

Strategic Aim:	Vibrant Communities	
Key Decision: Yes	Forward Plan Reference: FP/140220	
Exempt Information	No	
Cabinet Member(s) Responsible:	Mr O Hemsley, Leader and Portfolio Holder for Rutland One Public Estate & Growth, Tourism & Economic Development, Communications, Resources (other than Finance)	
Contact Officer(s):	Robert Clayton, Head of Culture & Registration	01572 758435 rclayton@rutland.gov.uk
Ward Councillors	All	

DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet:

1. Notes the development of the Discover Rutland Tourism Strategy by the Discover Rutland Management Board.
2. Approves the use of £28,000 from Section 106 funds to match fund, with Discover Rutland, a new “Rutland – Open for Visitors” campaign, which will support the delivery of the objectives outlined in the Strategy, and strengthen the resilience of the tourism sector in response to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, contributing to the county’s economic recovery.

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To note the development by the Discover Rutland Management Board, in consultation with the wider Tourism Sector, of a 5 year Tourism Strategy for Rutland. The Strategy sets out a number of key objectives and work streams to enhance and sustain tourism and economic activity in the county.
- 1.2 To agree the request from the Discover Rutland Management Board to jointly resource a time limited campaign to promote Rutland as being Open for Visitors, as pandemic measures are eased, and support the delivery of the strategy. This work will seek to strengthen the resilience of the visitor economy, which has been heavily impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, and contribute to the county’s economic recovery.

2 BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

- 2.1 The visitor economy is one of the largest drivers of the Rutland economy, and is estimated to be worth in excess of £135 million to the County through direct and indirect spend. The

most recent STEAM report shows 1.89 million annual visits to the County, with the tourism industry directly employing 1,406 full time equivalent employees, and an additional 348 indirect employees.

- 2.2 The economic value of Rutland's tourism sector extends beyond the businesses directly involved. Tourism-based businesses invest in other local businesses through their supply chain such as local food suppliers and laundry services. In addition, for every pound brought in by visitors and spent in the local economy the incremental value to the economy is greater than that pound due to the 'multiplier effect'. For example the money paid to someone working in a local hotel is paid for by the visitor; this staff member then spends their wages in local shops that in turn enables the retailer to invest in goods and services, or to pay the wages of their staff, and so it continues. This virtuous circle underpins the importance of attracting and encouraging more visitors from outside the county to stay longer and spend more.
- 2.3 Discover Rutland was established in 2007 as a standalone brand to market the Rutland tourism offer. With the support of section 106 funding from Anglian Water, Discover Rutland became a recognised Destination Management Organisation (DMO), and established an independent Tourism Committee to oversee operations. Rutland County Council supports the DMO through employing (though not funding) and hosting the part-time Tourism Officer, and managing the DMO finances.
- 2.4 A Discover Rutland Membership Scheme was created by the Tourism Committee in 2010 to assist with the sustainability of the offer. Membership continues to grow, and now stands at 137 businesses (full list attached as Appendix B). The Discover Rutland Management Committee are very active and take responsibility alongside the Tourism Officer for directing and delivering the priorities of the sector, through a variety of work streams.
- 2.5 The Discover Rutland Tourism Strategy 2020-2025 (Appendix A), which has been approved by the Management Committee, sets out the objectives and work streams for the DMO. The Strategy aims to promote Rutland as a key tourism destination, continuing to develop 3 main objectives from the previous Tourism Vision:
1. Stimulate and support the Rutland offer
 2. Recognise and attract Rutland's key audiences
 3. Ensure a Sustainable Future for Tourism in Rutland
- 2.6 The tourism and hospitality sector has been heavily impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, with many businesses being required to cease operations and close premises to ensure social distancing. However, in the medium term there are significant opportunities for businesses to benefit from a public appetite to holiday within the UK, in the beautiful, spacious Rutland environment. With jointly-resourced support, the Rutland tourism industry plans to deliver a "Rutland – Open for Visitors" campaign, as pandemic restrictions are eased, linking in with the wider Rutland economic recovery work.
- 2.7 In order to undertake the work outlined in the Strategy and the new campaign, the Tourism Committee have requested that Rutland County Council consider time limited joint-funding. £20,000 of DMO funding would be provided from the Discover Rutland reserve, which currently stands at £32,000.
- 2.8 Officers have identified that £13,538 of Section 106 funding is available from APP/2010/1170 (Land's End Way Roundabout) which has the specific requirement to be expended on measures to "encourage and facilitate the use of the [Oakham] town centre." Under the terms of the agreement, the funding should be expended by 11th August 2020. Officers suggest this proposed campaign would be a suitable use of the funding, and that a specific element (amongst others) would be to promote the County's market towns. Similarly, Section 106 agreement APP/2012/0665 (Land to the North of Barleythorpe

Way) has a similar requirement to promote the town centre, and has £14,528 of funds available. Together these agreements total £28,066.

- 2.9 The Council's current Corporate Plan includes a Strategic Objective under Priority Theme 2 to "Produce a Tourism strategy to grow the sector on a sustainable basis". The target date for this was June 2020. Officers believe that noting the Discover Rutland Tourism Strategy and funding the delivery as requested will achieve this objective, with a slight delay due to the pandemic.

3 CONSULTATION

- 3.1 The Discover Rutland Tourism Strategy has been developed by the Discover Rutland Tourism Board, and has been consulted on with the county's tourism sector, including at the Discover Rutland AGM on 25th February, where the document was approved. The response to the pandemic was discussed at the Discover Rutland Management Board on 22nd April.
- 3.2 The proposal has been discussed with the Leader, the Portfolio Holder for Finance, the Portfolio Holder for Culture, the Strategic Directors for Resources and Places, and the Deputy Director Corporate Governance.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 Although Section 106 funds have been identified which could be used to support the proposal, it would also be possible to use Invest to Save funds for the same purpose.
- 4.2 Plans for the employment of Town Centre Managers have previously been explored by the Council, however a decision was made to empower Oakham Town Council and Uppingham Town Council to lead on these areas. A sum of £62,500 was paid to each of the Councils for this purpose from the Hawksmead Agreement in 2016.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications to the Council arising from the objectives outlined in the Tourism Strategy.
- 5.2 Delivery of the campaign and strategy could be undertaken through normal Council processes and without causing a revenue pressure on the budget, if the use of part of the Discover Rutland reserve and Section 106 funds are agreed.
- 5.3 In order to mitigate any future requests for funding, the Campaign will seek to generate additional revenue to support future activity. There is no expectation that additional funding would continue after the proposed 2 year period.

6 LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 Section 106 funds are required to be spent in line with the original agreements. Funds have been identified in paragraph 2.8 above that permit the type of spend identified in the report.

7 DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 A Stage 1 Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) has been completed which indicates that as no personal information or methods of collection will be caused by noting the Strategy or funding the promotional campaign, there is no requirement for a full Impact Assessment to be completed.

8 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

8.1 An Equality Impact Questionnaire has been completed, which has indicated that the Strategy and campaign will have no new impact on equality and diversity issues. As such, a full Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has not been completed.

9 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 No community safety implications have been identified.

10 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS

10.1 No health and wellbeing implications have been identified.

11 CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 Noting the Discover Rutland Tourism Strategy will enable the Council to achieve its Strategic Objective to “Produce a Tourism strategy to grow the sector on a sustainable basis”.

11.2 It is recommended that Cabinet approve the use of £28,000 from Section 106 agreement APP/2010/1170 and APP/2012/0665 to fund the delivery of the strategy and campaign as outlined above. This will ensure the work outlined in the Strategy can be achieved, and the economic recovery and growth of the visitor economy can be supported.

12 BACKGROUND PAPERS

12.1 None

13 APPENDICES

13.1 Appendix A Discover Rutland Tourism Strategy 2020-2025

13.2 Appendix B List of Discover Rutland Members

A Large Print or Braille Version of this Report is available upon request – Contact 01572 722577.