

Report

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Report to:	Executive Committee
Date of Meeting:	15 August 2018
Report by:	Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)

Subject:	City Region Tourism Strategy and Action Plan (2018-2023)
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ request endorsement of the City Region Tourism Strategy and Action Plan for the period 2018-2023.

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendations:-

- (1) that the contents of the City Region Tourism Strategy and Action Plan be noted.
- (2) that the City Region Tourism Strategy and Action Plan and the progress of the Tourism and Destination Marketing Portfolio group be endorsed.

3. Background

3.1 The tourism sector is identified nationally and locally as a key growth sector. The Lanarkshire Tourism Action Plan to 2020 is based on the national tourism strategy and aims to deliver growth and increase collaboration amongst tourism businesses in Lanarkshire. The Council has worked closely with the tourism sector over the last 13 years to maximise the visitor expenditure in the area. We work in conjunction with partners including North Lanarkshire Council, Visit Scotland and the Lanarkshire Area Tourism Partnership which comprises private sector accommodation, attraction and events businesses.

3.2 Tourism activity in 2017/18 focussed on delivering marketing campaigns in Spring and Autumn targeting visitors within a drive time of 2-3 hours, publications such as the Great Days Out booklets which are distributed throughout the central belt and beyond, maximising the outcomes from the PR contract with BIG Partnership to promote Lanarkshire through trade, press and online activity. The marketing activity to increase the overall profile and attractiveness of Lanarkshire as a visitor destination is driven through www.visitlanarkshire.com. Product development has centred on developing and funding access statements for all tourism businesses on their website to encourage additional business from this market. In excess of 300 access statements have been completed covering 90% of Lanarkshire's tourism assets including transport hubs, and over 190 of these are in South Lanarkshire.

3.3 The Glasgow City Region Economic Strategy (RES) was published in February 2017 and sets out an ambitious vision for the City Region by 2035:

“A strong, inclusive, competitive and outward looking economy, sustaining growth and prosperity with every person and business reaching their full potential.”

- 3.4 Within the RES a number of the high level objectives influence the tourism agenda, and these are supported by a number of actions, which are in turn to be taken forward by the tourism portfolio group:
- We will attract an additional 1 million tourists to the City Region by 2023
 - We will develop a shared tourism offer throughout the City Region. This will be founded upon a joint Tourism and Destination Marketing Strategy developed in conjunction with VisitScotland and VisitBritain.
 - We will establish a Regional Events and Festivals Forum to maximise the economic benefits they can bring across the City Region. This would co-ordinate a regional approach to securing events and festivals and consider the regional expansion of existing festivals.
- 3.5 The group is led by Inverclyde Council and includes representation from the City Region local authorities, Scottish Enterprise, Visit Scotland and the Scottish Tourism Alliance, the industry leadership body for tourism.
- 3.6 The Tourism and Destination Marketing Portfolio Group is one of the eight portfolio groups within the City Region thematic structure of People, Place and Business.
- 3.7 The Portfolio Group is asking each of the City Region Local Authorities to seek endorsement of the City Region Tourism Strategy and Action Plan at a local level. An overview of this strategy and action plan is provided in the following section.

4. City Region Tourism Strategy and Action Plan

- 4.1 In order to deliver upon the actions of the RES, the tourism portfolio group has now finalised a City Region Tourism Strategy and Action Plan and copies have been made available in Member Services. In summary, the strategy sets a target to attract an additional one million tourists to the City Region by 2023 and this will be achieved by the following:
- focussing on the area’s strengths such as cultural tourism, events, outdoor activities and food and drink.
 - improving the customer journey through improving the customer experience, transport and digital connectivity.
 - enabling tourism to grow through leadership and partnerships, jobs and skills, data and insights.
- 4.2 To deliver the tourism strategy a 3 year Action Plan has been produced and this provides detail on required activity, lead partners and timescales for each identified action. Actions have been allocated to tourism portfolio group members to take forward and some of these are already being progressed in line with agreed timescales. A flavour of the key actions is outlined below:
- more research into visitor and market profiles to identify new opportunities
 - create a regional events and festivals forum to maximise the economic benefits of events across the wider city region.
 - create smaller sub groups to collaborate and create new opportunities from the region’s strengths e.g. culture and outdoor activities.
 - identify ways to work more effectively and maximise returns from business events coming to the region
 - support the food and drink sector through encouraging the roll out of food and drink initiatives

- work closely with SPT, Abellio and Transport operators to improve connectivity and ticketing.

4.3 The anticipated benefits of a Regional Tourism Strategy and action plan are considered to be:

- Further growth, employment and income for tourism businesses;
- Wide range of tourism offerings across the City Region which are stronger through closer collaboration and shared working;
- Help build a strong network of business, sector and interest groups sharing a common purpose to grow the tourism economy;
- Increase the value of tourism; length of stay and extend the season by 'packaging' a wider City Region offering and a more memorable experience;
- More cross-referencing and cross-selling of local and regional products and event

4.4 The regional tourism strategy is closely aligned to the themes and objectives in the Lanarkshire Tourism Action Plan to 2020. The actions within the regional action plan also support our key themes of turning Lanarkshire assets into quality experiences, improving the customer journey and building our digital capabilities. The regional strategy and action plan represent a positive opportunity to connect our Lanarkshire tourism activity more effectively with wider partner activity across the city region, which will in turn increase visitor expenditure in Lanarkshire.

4.5 The tourism portfolio group lead, presented the City Region Tourism Strategy and Action plan to City Region's Chief Executive's Group on 2 August, with the recommendation that it be approved and remitted to the City Region Cabinet for approval on 14 August.

5. Employee Implications

5.1 Whilst there are no employee implications with respect to new staff resource required, in order to make a meaningful contribution to the delivery of the actions, we will need to identify personnel within Community and Enterprise Services and South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture with the most relevant knowledge, to ensure the Council is represented at each sub group meeting by the right person who can best capitalise on opportunities.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 Although there are currently no direct financial implications, regional opportunities will become available through the action plan that will require a level of budget to participate. This has not yet been quantified but the City Region Tourism Portfolio group has no existing budget in place and the group understands that individual local authority budgets will likely require to be found.

7. Other Implications

7.1 There is no risk to the Council in aligning with the City Region Tourism Strategy and Action Plan.

8. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

8.1 This report does not introduce a new policy, function for the Council but does commit the Council to aligning its tourism sector support with that of the City Region, however, no impact assessment is required.

- 8.2 Consultation has taken place with relevant partner agencies as part of the Portfolio meetings during the development of the strategy and action plan.

Michael McGlynn
Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)

31 July 2018

Link(s) to Council Objectives/Ambitions

- Promote economic growth and tackle disadvantage
- Support the local economy by providing the right conditions for inclusive growth

Previous References

- Community and Enterprise Resources Committee Business Support Annual Report, 22 May 2018
- Community and Enterprise Resources Committee Business Support Annual Report, 8 August 2017
- Executive Committee Glasgow City Region City Deal – Progress Update, 16 November 2016

List of Background Papers

None

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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