

Joint Commissioning Group – Economy & Housing

Held at Council Chamber, Ryedale House, Malton
on Wednesday 12 January 2011

Present

Councillors Mrs Cowling, Mrs Arnold, Mrs Cowan, Ms Warriner

In Attendance

Julian Rudd, Jos Holmes, Craig Nattress – Ryedale District Council

Invitees:

Sarah Barrowby – Scarborough Borough Council / Welcome to Yorkshire

Janet Reuben – Visit Hull and East Yorkshire / Welcome to Yorkshire

Ena Dent & Chris Parkin – Tourism Association North Yorkshire

Clea Warner – English Heritage

Lee Taylor – North Yorkshire County Council Library Services

Apologies: Janet Deacon – Scarborough Borough Council / Welcome to Yorkshire

Minutes

7 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor De Wend Fenton

8 Welcome

Councillor Mrs Cowling welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained the purpose of the meeting.

9 Progress update for the Tourism Commissioning Process

The Economy and Community Services Manager presented the minutes of the Commissioning Board held on 2 December 2010 (previously circulated) and updated the meeting in regard to the commissioning process and the progress made to date.

10 Tourism Providers Information Session

Discussions were held between Members of the JCG and each of the tourism provider sectors represented. The discussions offered Members the opportunity to hear about the relevant services that each provide and to ask questions directly. The discussions were held with the following providers:

- Visit Hull and East Yorkshire
- Welcome to Yorkshire – North Yorkshire Branch
- Tourism Association North Yorkshire
- Tourism Information Centre operators: Ryedale District Council, English Heritage and North Yorkshire County Council library service.

11 Question and Answer Session

Members were given the opportunity to ask any further questions of the representatives from the tourism providers. Cllr Mrs Cowling thanked the invitees for attending and they left the meeting.

12 **Draft Recommendations for Commissioning Board**

The Economy and Community Services Manager presented draft recommendations to the meeting for debate.

Tourism Marketing

- (i) It is not recommended to return to the marketing of Ryedale as a tourist destination as undertaken prior to the launch of the Moors and Coast Partnership, rather to commission the marketing of known brands in partnership with both the public and private sectors. This was supported.

It was proposed that Welcome to Yorkshire North Yorkshire 'branch office' based at Scarborough Borough Council tourism unit be commissioned to market Ryedale (excluding the Wolds area) nationally and internationally. This would involve sharing services of our Web and E marketing officer and consequently sharing the SBC based Business Engagement Officer and WTY Area Tourism Director (SBC's Tourism Manager). The aim is to ensure that local tourism product and information is utilised in WTY campaigns, which have proved successful to date in raising the profile of Yorkshire. We also aim to ensure WTY have every chance of succeeding in increasing the private sector membership to migrate investment in tourism marketing from public to private sector. This was supported.

- (ii) It was further proposed to commission Visit Hull and East Yorkshire (VHEY) to market the Wolds area of Ryedale. VHEY has a track record of developing and supporting this brand through engaging with accommodation and attraction businesses and through product development such as the Wolds Cycle Route. This was supported.

Members felt it was important to ensure a tiered membership system and also to ensure that businesses in more than one partnership or brand area were not paying twice for membership. In addition, discussions with 'Visit York' should be held to ascertain any potential for joint working.

Destination Management System

- (iii) It was explained that this is the database of accommodation, attractions and events which supports all the tourism websites booking on line facilities and Tourist Information Centre booking facilities. Officers advised Members that the regional contract terminates in April 2011, and it is uncertain what replacement is planned. In order to ensure a smooth transition, officers have worked in partnership with Scarborough Borough Council to extend this contract for Ryedale for a further 12 months. This includes the management of the data by SBC staff. This will be reviewed in September 2011. This was noted.

Holiday and attractions Guide

- (iv) It was proposed to commission Tourism Association North Yorkshire (TANY) to produce and distribute the annual (2012) printed holiday guide covering the Ryedale and surrounding area. This would be on the basis that the Council would share in the financial risk of this publication to a set limit, as it will be predominantly financed by private sector advertising. Members felt that TANY would require significant officer support to ensure that they could produce the guide, as they do not have any paid staff. Members were supportive of this organisation but recognised that too much responsibility should not be placed

on this volunteer group immediately. This was supported.

Product Development

- (iv) It was proposed that budgetary provision for product development be maintained. This was supported.

Tourist Information Centres

- (v) It was suggested that the TIC network is a priority for local businesses and therefore a service that should be retained. Following the cessation of the MCTP there is the opportunity to take a more commercial approach to the TIC network and engage with all accommodation businesses rather than only those that are members of the MCTP or that are quality assured. This is of particular relevance in Malton where the accommodation bed stock is currently limited by this approach. It is also essential to engage the private sector more in the operation of the TIC and it is therefore proposed to establish a TIC Working Group. In partnership with TANY, the TICs will maintain their own website www.discovernorthyorkshire.com to ensure local information is provided. This was supported.
- (vi) **Malton TIC**
It was proposed to co-locate the TIC with Malton Library from Christmas 2011. This will make a financial saving and enable the library to extend opening hours. This move must take account of any future changes in Malton library services or location. This was supported.
- (vii) **Pickering TIC**
Discussions have taken place with North Yorkshire Moors Heritage Railway as a potential partner. At this time, it is not felt appropriate to make any specific recommendations regarding relocation or changes to the TIC with a partner organisation. There is the Pickering TIC to undertake increased telephone call handling and data steward responsibilities. This was supported.
- (viii) **Helmsley TIC**
English Heritage has invested in the refurbishment of the Helmsley Castle Visitor Centre in order to improve customer through flow and service. The subsidy currently provided, £15,000p.a , has remained static for 4 years, and actually represents a saving of £5,000 on that which was originally agreed when the agreement was established. However, it is likely that EH will request an increase on the subsidy .

Members felt that the possibility of co-location with Helmsley Library be investigated.

Engagement with the private sector

- (ix) Officers explained that there is the potential to restart the 'Tourism Advisory Group' which was the forum for discussion with private sector businesses prior to the establishment of the Moors and Coast Tourism Partnership. In addition, the MCTP is now proposing to become an advisory group and would continue to facilitate joint communication with businesses outside Ryedale. It was reported that businesses responded well at the stakeholder consultation to the question of TIC management and cost reduction, with several suggestions. It was therefore proposed that a working group be established with private sector partners to identify and implement such proposals. This was supported and Members welcomed the participation of the business

sector in the commissioning process.

Resolved

It was resolved that the recommendations be supported and reported to the Commissioning Board on 27 January 2011 for approval.

The meeting closed at 7.45 p.m.