

**REPORT TO:** Place Scrutiny Committee  
**Date of Meeting:** 12 June 2017  
**Report of:** Tourism Manager  
**Title:** Update on the Exeter Visitor Strategy 2018 – 2020

**Is this a Key Decision?**

No

**Is this an Executive or Council Function?**

Executive. This report is for information only and gives an update on a service area.

**1. What is the report about?**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update members on progress made with developing a new visitor strategy for Exeter.

**2. Recommendations:**

- 2.1 Place Scrutiny Committee supports the adoption of the vision and priorities for the Exeter Visitor Strategy 2018 – 2020.

**3. Reasons for the recommendation:**

- 3.1 To enable the Tourism Manager to further consult with the tourism industry and business community of Exeter to develop the new visitor strategy, working towards its vision and priorities.

**4. What are the resource implications including non financial resources.**

- 4.1 The existing tourism marketing budget of £65,650 will be used to deliver activity within this report. Compared to previous years, the budget remains relatively unchanged, except for limited allowances for inflation and changes to employee costs.
- 4.2 Staffing of 2 FTE within the Growth & Enterprise Unit are dedicated to delivering actions from the Exeter Visitor Strategy, which remain unchanged from previous years.

**5. Section 151 Officer comments:**

- 5.1 There are no additional financial implications contained within this report.

**6. What are the legal aspects?**

- 6.1 None identified

**7. Monitoring Officer's comments:**

- 7.1 This report raises no issues for the Monitoring Officer.

## **8. Background**

- 8.1 The previous Visitor Strategy has been fully delivered, with annual updates being presented to Place Scrutiny Committee on the progress of actions within the previous visitor strategy.
- 8.2 With recent developments in Exeter including the opening of Queen St Dining, the regeneration of the Bus Station site, the imminent arrival of IKEA and Exeter hosting major events including Rugby World Cup 2015 and Radio 1's Big Weekend; the City Council is well placed to increase the number of visitors to the city.
- 8.3 The aim of Visit Exeter, which was recently launched to the business community of Exeter, is to increase the profile of Exeter within the UK and overseas and to increase the number of people visiting the city, by positioning the city as a high quality cultural visitor destination, to rival similar UK competitors.

## **9. Developing a new visitor strategy for Exeter**

- 9.1 The new visitor strategy is intended to be a road map to unite all those working to support the local visitor economy and to ensure that Exeter keeps pace with and indeed exceeds national growth. We aim to increase the number of people visiting the city, encourage them to stay longer and to spend more when they are here. To deliver this increase we will need a step change in the way the public, private and not for profit sectors work and plan together. We will need to maximise investment from all available sources and ensure that the overall return in investment benefits businesses dependent on the visitor economy.
- 9.2 With the recent success of Exeter Chiefs winning the Aviva Premiership final at Twickenham, we need to embrace the opportunities rugby brings to Exeter as well as the additional press and promotional in raising the awareness of the city regionally, nationally and internationally. Sandy Park's plans to become a major international conference centre, with the addition of a hotel on site and expansion of the stadium supports the vision and priority 1 of the proposed Visitor Strategy.
- 9.3 The visitor strategy and the tourism team will support the cultural and heritage economies of Exeter, working in partnership with Exeter Cultural Partnership and the heritage community. These two sectors are a vital part of why someone chooses to visit Exeter, move to Exeter and relocate their business to Exeter. The protection and development of these two sectors supports the overall growth and vibrancy of the city.
- 9.4 The following five priorities have been highlighted as the recommended pillars of the strategy, overarched by the vision. The vision and priorities have been reached after consultation and discussions with the tourism business community in the city, Visit Devon, Exeter BID, Exeter Cultural Partnership and various city key stakeholders.

**Vision** – Working in partnership with the tourism and business community, Exeter is officially recognised as the most active city in the UK by 2020.

**9.2.1 Priority 1** – Develop the visitor experience within Exeter to enable the city to attract additional conferences, meetings, exhibitions and events to support the wider economy of Exeter

**9.2.2 Priority 2** – Raise awareness and protect the city's rich heritage and cultural offer to support the promotion and visitor economy of the city

**9.2.3 Priority 3** – Develop and implement an effective local, regional, national and international visitor marketing campaign, promoting the city as cultural destination of choice

**9.2.4 Priority 4** – Build on work already undertaken to further develop Exeter's historic Quayside, to secure additional funding, implement additional marketing of the area and broaden its business development activities

**9.2.5 Priority 5** – In partnership with training providers, increase the skill level of those working in the industry and attract new people to the sector through the development of a range of skills escalators

- 9.5 Visit Exeter recently launched a regional and national marketing campaign using '8 Experiences – 1 Destination' thus allowing us to breakdown our marketing into targeted areas which will lend themselves to individual projects working in partnership with the business community, Exeter BID and Exeter Cultural Partnership. This breakdown will also allow us to set specific goals and priorities for each experience. The experiences are as follows:

#### **8 Experiences - 1 Destination**

**1. Culture** - Focused on theatre, events, music and art

**2. Heritage** - Focused on traditional Exeter and historic places & visitor attractions

**3. Nightlife** - Showcasing Exeter by night, the clubs the bars, the restaurants and live music scene

**4. Food and Drink** - The local producers of food and drink are globally renowned; let's make this a focus and a reason to visit Exeter

**5. Activity** - The amazing outdoor spaces, the sport and the fantastic range of activities you can enjoy in and surrounding Exeter

**6. Business** - Business tourism is a major sector for Exeter, let's celebrate this and encourage additional business events to be held in the city

**7. Shopping** - Shopping provides a huge draw to the city with the growing list of big high street names and independent retailers to include areas such as Magdalen Road, Topsham & Gandy Street

**8. Relaxation** - As well as a place with so much going on, Exeter also provides the perfect place to kick back and relax whether it's at the spa or in the amazing outdoor spaces

#### **10. How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?**

- 10.1 The Exeter Visitor Strategy 2018 – 2020 will support the following City Council priorities and purposes:

**Priorities:**

- *To grow Exeter's cultural and visitor economy which maximises economic benefit for the benefit of businesses and the residents of Exeter*
- *Implement/develop on and offline marketing strategies to promote the city to domestic and international markets, leisure and business to make Exeter a leading destination within the UK*

**Purposes:**

- *Help me grow a successful business*
- *Provide great things for me to see and do*
- *Help me be active*
- *Help me run a successful business*

**11 What risks are there and how can they be reduced?**

- 11.1 There could be the potential that the business community of Exeter to do engage with developing the visitor strategy further. Communicating the benefits of engaging in the process will be developed in consultation with the Director of Communications & Marketing.

**12 What is the impact of the decision on equality and diversity; health and wellbeing; safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults, community safety and the environment?**

- 12.1 The new visitor strategy will be developed to promote equality and diversity and to engage with a wide ranging community. An Equality Impact Assessment will be produced alongside the Exeter Visitor Strategy 2018 – 2020.

**13 Other Options**

- 13.1 There is the option to cease the production of a visitor strategy for the city, but it is felt this would be detrimental to the economy of Exeter.

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**Tourism Manager**

**Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)****Background papers used in compiling this report:-**

None

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