

EXETER CITY COUNCIL

**EXECUTIVE
20 SEPTEMBER 2011**

**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - ECONOMY
8 SEPTEMBER 2011**

EXETER VISITOR STRATEGY 2012 – 2015

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the attached draft Exeter Visitor Strategy 2012 – 2015 to be used for consultation with partners and agencies relevant to its delivery.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Members received a report on the new Exeter Visitor Strategy 2012 – 2015 at Scrutiny Committee on 10 March 2011. Five priorities were agreed which were to form the basis of the draft Exeter Visitor Strategy 2012 – 2015, to be further developed prior to its issue for formal consultation.
- 2.2 On the basis of a model used nationally, the 'Cambridge Economic Impact Model', it is estimated that tourism is worth in the region of £159.7 million annually to the local economy. Some 3,766 jobs are supported within hotels, attractions, cultural venues, eating out venues and transport facilities within the city. The table below illustrates the value of tourism to the Exeter economy, as well as the jobs that directly and indirectly relate to tourism.

Economic impact of tourism within Exeter, 2009

Direct actual jobs	2,882
Indirect actual jobs	884
Total actual jobs	3,766
Day visits	1,580,000
Total Day visit spend	£79.5 million
Overnight trips	361,000
Total Overnight trips spend	£71.6 million
Visits to friends & relatives spend	£8.5 million
Other tourism spend	£0.1 million
TOTAL TOURISM SPEND	£159.7 million

Source: South West Tourism

- 2.3 The new Visitor Strategy will build upon the outcomes achieved in the previous Strategy, recognise key changes within the industry, planned capital

developments and the need to adjust activities to reflect market trends. The previous Strategy covered the period 2007 – 2010. Even though the Strategy was undertaken amidst the economic downturn, there were a number of significant outcomes and development projects completed. The outcomes of the Strategy were highlighted in the report presented to Scrutiny Committee on 10 March 2011.

- 2.4 Implementation of the strategy is intended to bring many positive economic benefits to the city in sustaining and creating quality jobs within the tourism industry and increase the profile of Exeter as the regional capital of the South West through private sector investment, as detailed in the Strategy, and public sector investment, in the extension and refurbishment of the Royal Albert Memorial Museum. Actions from the Strategy will continue to raise the profile of the city and the surrounding area regionally and nationally.

3.0 EXETER VISITOR STRATEGY 2012 – 2015

- 3.1 Tourism has many positive benefits for Exeter. Implementation of the new Strategy is intended to bring positive economic and social benefits to the city in the creation and retention of jobs. It will help support tourism and business investment as well as attracting people to the area. The Strategy is just as concerned about making Exeter a desirable destination for those who live near and in the city.
- 3.2 Exeter is a key regional cultural, leisure and shopping destination and has the potential to play an even greater role in meeting the needs of visitors to Devon and the West Country. The number and scale of attractions in Exeter has been a limiting factor in attracting additional visitors. The appeal of the city for residents and visitors will be enhanced through the re-opening of the Royal Albert Memorial Museum in December 2011, the opening of John Lewis in 2012, the opening of new hotels (Chapter House Exeter – Magdalen Road 2012, Hampton by Hilton – Exeter Airport 2011), opening of the new Quay Climbing Centre and developments on the University of Exeter Streatham Campus.
- 3.3 The planned re-opening of the Royal Albert Memorial Museum late 2011, presents Exeter with an exciting and enviable opportunity to gain extensive local, regional and national exposure as a destination investing in its product to attract more day and overnight visitors, groups and conferences to the city.
- 3.4 Realising the tourism potential of the city goes hand in hand with exploiting visitor opportunities presented within the wider area. The key is to have a concerted effort to minimise duplication and maximise promotion through an integrated approach. The Heart of Devon Tourism Partnership will play an important role in raising the profile of the city regionally and nationally, through the promotion of Exeter to the short break, business tourism and conference market.
- 3.5 The City Council will continue to work in partnership with tourism businesses as well as Devon County Council, Visit Devon, the local authorities of Teignbridge, Mid Devon and East Devon to implement this strategy. It will also continue to work closely with businesses in the surrounding area and recognise the

important role other centres have in providing complimentary cultural, leisure and sporting activities.

- 3.6 Based on work already undertaken, the following aim has been identified for the Exeter Visitor Strategy 2012 – 2015:

“Further develop the visitor economy in order to create and safe guard employment, through the promotion and development of existing and new visitor facilities, including the Royal Albert Memorial Museum, focusing on the strengths of Exeter as a regional cultural centre. The intention is to increase employment and tourism activity (visitor income) by 5% within the lifetime of the strategy”

- 3.7 The following five priorities have been developed to be implemented in partnership with the tourism business community in the city and the Heart of Devon Tourism Partnership:

Priority 1 - Encourage and support market led investment in the visitor economy in Exeter; encompassing retail, food & drink, the arts, visitor attractions, accommodation and transport

Priority 2 - Develop the visitor experience within Exeter to make the most of existing assets, individually and jointly, so that the sector provides year round jobs and contributes to a vibrant economy

Priority 3 - Raise skill levels of the existing visitor workforce and prepare those with the potential for entering employment in the sector

Priority 4 - Develop more effective and targeted visitor marketing of Exeter locally, regionally and nationally

Priority 5 - Build on work already undertaken to further develop the Heart of Devon Tourism Partnership, to secure additional funding, implement additional marketing of the area and broaden its business development activities

- 3.8 Following consideration by Scrutiny Committee the Visitor Strategy will be submitted to organisations, partners and agencies relevant to its delivery for comments, further interaction and endorsement. The final version will be presented for approval in January 2012.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 City Council involvement and contribution to delivering the Exeter Visitor Strategy will be met within existing financial resources as summarised in the table below. Where considered necessary, further funding will be sought on a project-by-project basis by a bidding or application process in line with the priorities listed above.

Tourism Unit budget 2011 – 2012	Gross	Income	Net
Tourism Administration Staffing	£148,920	£0	£148,920
Tourism Marketing	£65,300	£0	£65,300
Exeter Visitor Information & Tickets	£184,530	£47,510	£137,020
Underground Passages	£151,490	£74,350	£77,140
Quay House Visitor Centre (funded by ECQT)	£59,180	£55,100	£4,080
Red Coat Guides	£20,790	£10,700	£10,090
	£630,210	£187,660	£442,550
Heart of Devon (external funding):	£89,000	£89,000	£0

5.0 RECOMMENDED that

- 5.1 Members support the attached draft Exeter Visitor Strategy for the period 2012 – 2015 being used for consultation with key industry organisations, partners and other agencies relevant to its delivery.

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Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)
Background papers used in compiling the report:

1. Report to Scrutiny Committee – Economy 10 March 2011