

**03 June 2014****Agenda Item: 7****REPORT OF GROUP MANAGER, CORPORATE STRATEGY****EXPERIENCE NOTTINGHAMSHIRE  
SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT PERFORMANCE 2013/14****Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to provide Committee with an annual performance update for 2013-14 against the targets set in the original Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the Council and Experience Nottinghamshire (EN).

**Information and Advice**

2. Members will recall that a report and presentation was received by the Committee in October 2013. This outlined:
  - a. The SLA performance over the 2012/13 period (Year 1)
  - b. Set the context of the national visitor economy and the comparative performance of the sector in the County
  - c. Wider strategic development work and
  - d. The emerging opportunities and challenges for the remainder of the SLA period.
3. The Committee will also be aware that 6 months written notice has been given to Experience Nottinghamshire in respect of the current SLA which will now cease on the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2014. This reflects decisions taken at Full Council on the 27<sup>th</sup> February 2014 to reduce the amount of funding to EN from 2014/15. This decision has resulted in the initial 3 year SLA, worth £218,000 per annum, being reduced by 7 months. A new SLA based on a £118,000 contribution (pro rata) from the County Council will be developed around the reduced funding agreed and live from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2014 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 to cover the remaining period of the original SLA.
4. Members will also be aware from the Committee Meeting held on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 that work is underway to look at the development of a single Place Marketing Organisation – unifying the marketing of place and branding activities currently undertaken separately by EN and Invest in Nottingham.

**Performance against the Service Level Agreement 2013-14**

5. The Council's financial contribution to EN in each financial year is subject to satisfactory performance against "key services rendered". The key performance indicators (KPI's) in the

SLA are themselves divided into 2 measure categories of quality and objective output measures. Attached to this report at **Appendix 1 is a detailed breakdown of performance against the KPI's for the 2013/14 period.**

6. Performance against the SLA indicators during 2013-14 has been very strong with some significant uplifts in performance from the baselines reported for the 2012/13 period.
7. EN Membership currently stands at 455 members with 53% located within the County. A Nottinghamshire Membership Marketing Toolkit has been produced to demonstrate the benefits of membership to those businesses in the county expressing an interest in joining. The following table 1 illustrates current spread of membership:

Table 1 – Membership Location by Local Authority Area		
District	Membership Numbers (May 14)	Notes
Ashfield	1	
Bassetlaw	28	
Broxtowe	16	
Gedling	19	
Mansfield	5	
Newark and Sherwood	108	The District Council contributed £10,000 in 2013/14, subsidising membership costs at a rate of 25%.
Rushcliffe	63	In 2012/13 the Borough Council supported subsidised EN membership (with a small amount carried forward to 2013/14). New businesses taking annual membership were subsidised 50% of the costs – thereby increasing membership in the relevant period with retention levels maintaining a high proportion of the uplifts thereafter.
Nottingham City	207	45% of total membership
Derbyshire	8	Included due mainly to proximity to East Midlands airport
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>455</b>	

8. A key outcome of work in 2013/14 has been the success for Nottinghamshire at the Visit England awards. In 2012/13 no businesses were shortlisted, EN has therefore prioritised activity through workshops and the local STARS awards to animate the sector and increase the number of applications nationally. This resulted in 60 STARS applications, of which 20

were then submitted to VE and the following county based businesses/activities were successful at the awards:

- a. Ezekiel Bone – Robin Hood County and Town Tours was awarded Silver for Tourism Superstar and Bronze for Tourism Experience of the year awards
  - b. Browns of Holbeck was Highly Commended for Bed and Breakfast/ Guest Accommodation of the year
  - c. Trent Bridge; The Investec Ashes Test was Highly Commended for Tourism Event of the Year and
  - d. Elemental Force: Nottinghamshire won a Bronze Award for Tourism Event of the year (with activities at Nottingham and Newark Castles).
9. Furthermore, in period, EN has sought to positively act upon feedback from the October 2013 Annual Membership Survey. This has included raising the number of member events from two in 2013/14 to ten in 2014/15. Furthermore, EN is also looking at:
  - a. improved reporting to members via year end reports highlighting the tangible benefits of their memberships over the preceding year
  - b. improvements to the speed of member information uploads to the EN iPhone app and
  - c. promotion of the county offer to local residents (where appropriate to meet the requirements of members).
10. At the October 2013 Committee it was not possible to report 2012/13 performance against:
  - a. Return on investment (RoI) or
  - b. The 5% growth in earnings from tourism targets
11. 2012/13 figures have now been confirmed against RoI. The Growing Tourism Locally Campaign was set 3 year targets of creating 136 new jobs in total and £7.1m additional spend. In year 1 (2012/13) the verified performance was:
  - a. 91 jobs (66.9% of 3 year total) and
  - b. £4.8m (66.9% of 3 year total).
12. At Committee in October 2013, members approved a revision to the KPIs for Visit England validated aspects of performance referenced in paragraphs 8a and 8b above, replacing the Return On Investment and 5% growth on tourism earnings year on year KPIs for 2013/14 and 2014/15 with the following:
  - Incremental spend and
  - jobs created
13. This data will be collected in due course as and when verified for release by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS).

## **Update on the wider objectives/requirements in the SLA**

14. The list below provides a further snapshot of specific EN activities and results to support the county's visitor economy in the period:

- a. Visit England Thematic Campaigns 2014 have focused heavily on promoting Nottinghamshire as a destination. Features on the county have been included in English Countryside, Woman, Timeout, Metro and Outdoor in March 14. Other PR highlights have included Pilgrim Fathers coverage in Choice Magazine, a feature on the Dukeries in the Around Town magazine, a county based article in Discover Britain and a major feature on DH Lawrence.
- b. 159% increase in web visits to EN's Robin Hood Festival webpage was achieved - as compared to the 3 week preceding period catalysed by the wider RGF Campaign
- c. 2014 Spring Media Campaigns have included specific support for the Robin Hood Beer Festival (Love Local) which has focused on the county's real ale trails and beer heritage stories and "Legends" has supported the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Robin Hood Festival to increase attendance and use of the event to promote increased stays and weekend breaks.
- d. The EN website has been redefined to include key landmarks. In the County this has seen specific inclusion of All Saints Church, Babworth, St Mary's Church Mansfield, Trent Bridge and the Major Oak etc.
- e. In 2013/14, Sherwood Forest and Robin Hood ranked as the 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> most visited EN web pages after "things to do" (generic), "shopping", "restaurants" etc. Nottingham ranked 10<sup>th</sup>.
- f. Nottinghamshire inclusions, by theme, appear on the re-designed Visit England web site. This includes dedicated references to outdoor art and indoor crafts at Rufford Abbey, Segway Tours at Sherwood Pines Forest, cycling along the ancient Sherwood route, discovering the hidden ice age art at Creswell Crags and brewing your own beer at the School of Artisan Food at Welbeck
- g. Work is on-going with Newark's National Civil War Centre to generate advance publicity and awareness leading up to opening in 2014/15 and
- h. EN has completed a 50,000 print run of a Visitor Guide showcasing EN's 420 members and covering key events and suggestions for visits in 2014.

15. In terms of the economic performance of the sector, there is little available update to data reported to Committee in October 2013. This will be unavailable until STEAM data is received for the 2012/13 period after funding from the D2N2 LEP secured its purchase. The absence of performance data is an issue recognised by partners and a key objective to address going forward.

16. However, recent reports anecdotally suggest that the Visitor Economy could add up to £2bn to the local economy – which suggests that there is significant spare capacity available but

that to realise this, there is a need to develop the core product in order to attract more people to visit more often.

17. In terms of individual attractions in the County Rufford Park and Sherwood Forest Country Park both remain the most visited in 2013 with the former enjoying a slight uplift in visitors and an additional 11,900 visitors at Sherwood
18. During the period officers and members have continued to work with EN's quarterly Strategic Board and Finance and General Purposes Committee and have continued to engage with wider work on the D2N2 Visitor Economy through the work of the D2N2 Visitor Economy Advisory Group and through specific projects and events. A flavour of this is given in Appendix 1.
19. Throughout 2013/14, EN has also continued to work closely with those Nottinghamshire Districts with dedicated Tourism Officers or which organise major events and has worked closely with key partners on events delivery and development.
20. EN also continues to work with key national and regional tourism bodies raising the profile of the county's visitor economy and lobbying key influencers to recognise its potential
21. During 2014/15 a number of strategic documents will be published including the Destination Management Plan for the City and County. This will be the subject of a further report to the Committee in the coming months.

### **Reason for Recommendation**

22. To support the Committee in its function to oversee the performance of the SLA and to ensure that value for money is being achieved in the commitment of the Council's funds to support the visitor economy through the activities of Experience Nottinghamshire.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

23. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, the public sector equality duty, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

### **Financial Implications**

24. None.

### **RECOMMENDATION/S**

It is recommended that Committee note Experience Nottinghamshire's performance against the SLA for 2013/14.

## **Report of the Group Manager, Corporate Strategy – Celia Morris**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact: Mandy Ramm Ext 72685**

### **Constitutional Comments**

As the report is for noting only, constitutional comments are not required.

### **Financial Comments (NR 21.05.2014)**

There are no financial implications arising directly from the report.

### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

1. Annual Membership Survey Report
2. Summary of all new/existing projects delivered or developed via EN intervention (2012/13 and YTD)
3. EN Summary of Commercial Performance split by:
  - a. Membership numbers and income 2011/12, 2012/13 and YTD 2013/14
  - b. Commercial income 2011/12, 2012/13 and YTD 2013/14
4. EN Summary of Marketing Performance split by:
  - a. Global Advertising Value Equivalent figures relating to campaign activities 2012/13 and YTD 2013/14
  - b. Unique Web Visits per month 2011/12, 2012/13 and YTD 2013/14
    - i. Google Analytics Report May 2011-31<sup>st</sup> August 2013
  - c. Social Media Growth 2012/13 and YTD 2013/14
  - d. New Consumer Records Captured 2012/13 and YTD 2013/14
  - e. I-Phone EN Guides Downloaded 2012/13 and YTD 2013/14
5. EN Summary of New Businesses Signed up to Sell Tickets and Services through EN Channels 2012/13 and YTD 2013/14
6. Finalised 2012/13 Accounts
7. EN Summary of Projects and funding source

### **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All