

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR, PLACE**HERITAGE TOURISM REVIEW****Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek approval for the continuation of the Heritage Tourism post and the development of future work streams.

Information and Advice

2. Tourism and the visitor economy is an important sector of the Nottinghamshire economy worth an estimated £0.91 billion to the County (source: Nottinghamshire STEAM Report 2010). The development of the County's tourism offer has, therefore, been identified as a priority for the Council, and particularly the huge potential for developing heritage based tourism.
3. In 2013, Policy Committee agreed to establish three new posts to support the Council's ambitions to promote economic growth and develop tourism potential in the County. Two of these are permanent posts within the Economic Development Team and one, the Senior Practitioner Heritage Tourism, was established as a fixed term contract within the Conservation Team.
4. The presentation given to the Committee at its meeting in February 2016 set out the work undertaken to date and the key successes that are helping to inform the future direction. As this was a new area of work for the County Council, the initial focus was on assessing the existing offer and creating a framework to co-ordinate and guide future action. This framework identified a number of broad themes offering opportunities for developing and interpreting the heritage stories of the County, including Industrial Heritage; Sporting Heritage; Rebellion and Freedom; Religious Heritage; Literary and Artistic Heritage; Customs, Traditions, and Produce; Natural Heritage; Historic Houses; Early Heritage; and, War and Remembrance. A significant amount of work has also been carried out to establish the capacity within the heritage tourism sector; identify gaps, particularly in skills and employability and develop proposed future work streams.
5. The recent creation of Marketing Nottingham and Nottinghamshire (MN&N) presents a significant opportunity for the work on heritage tourism to date to inform the developing narrative for Nottinghamshire and future collaborative work programmes to enhance both inward investment and the visitor economy.
6. In addition to developing a strong link with the emerging programmes of MN&N, it is proposed that the action plan will centre around five key areas of work, namely:

- Building knowledge and skills about heritage tourism within the tourism sector itself, within the voluntary sector and communities and through extended work with the education sector.
 - Developing a co-ordinated approach based on key themes to help create a “sense of place”.
 - Delivering existing projects and seeking further opportunities for funding and investment in a high quality heritage product.
 - Creating opportunities for increased collaboration and sharing best practise.
 - Empowering people to share, enjoy, understand and care for the County’s heritage.
7. It is envisaged that the County Council’s own sites, such as Rufford and Bestwood, will continue to provide a focus for future work, particularly with the education sector, alongside ensuring that heritage tourism is embedded across the themes of major funding bids, such as the development of the Heritage Lottery funded Sherwood Landscape Partnership Scheme.
8. In order to capitalise on the achievements to date, and to continue to develop the significant potential for heritage tourism in the County, it is recommended that the fixed term contract of the Senior Practitioner Heritage Tourism is extended for a further 2 years in the first instance from 1st April 2016 to 31st March 2018. The funding for the post is contained within the Conservation Team core budget and further reports on progress will be brought to future meetings of Culture Committee.

Other Options Considered

9. The County Council could choose not to extend the contract of the Senior Practitioner Heritage Tourism. This would, however, leave a significant gap in the County’s ability to capitalise on the tourism potential of its heritage, and to build on the large amount of development work carried out to date, including the establishment of links with many of the smaller groups and businesses operating in the County and with the education sector. The delivery of the heritage tourism aspects of the HLF funded projects would also be compromised.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

10. Heritage tourism offers significant potential to increase both visitor stay and spend in Nottinghamshire. The work carried out to date has identified key areas of focus for the future, including skills development and seeking funding opportunities. There is, however, no capacity within the Conservation Team to carry out this work if the post is not continued.

Statutory and Policy Implications

11. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, 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

12. The costs of extending the Senior Practitioner post for a period of 2 years from 1st April 2016 to 31st March 2018 are estimated at £42,230 in 2016/17 and £42,230 in 2017/18.
13. The funding for the Senior Practitioner Heritage Tourism post is contained within the Conservation Team budget.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That the extension of the fixed term contract for the Senior Practitioner Heritage Tourism post, as set out in paragraph 8 be approved, and the future work streams as set out in paragraphs 6 and 7 also be approved.

Tim Gregory
Corporate Director Place

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Constitutional Comments [SLB 18/02/2016]

Culture Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report subject to the Council's Employment Procedure Rules which require all reports proposing changes to staffing structures to include HR comments and for the recognised trade unions to be consulted.

Financial Comments [RWK 29/02/2016]

The financial implications of the proposals detailed in the report are set out in paragraphs 12 and 13.

Background Papers

None

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All