

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Report of Executive Director of Adult and Communities

To

Cabinet

On

3rd November 2020

Report prepared by: Scott Dolling, Director of Culture and
Tourism

Agenda
Item
No.

Destination Southend Refresh

Relevant Scrutiny Committee(s): People
Cabinet Member: Councillor Kevin Robinson
Part 1 (Public Agenda Item)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To update Members on the refreshed tourism strategy 'Destination Southend' and share progress to date and ongoing plans.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Members note the refreshed strategy with updated content.
- 2.2 That Members note the action plan.

3. Background

- 3.1 Tourism is recognised as one of the UK's largest, most valuable and fastest growing industries. In 2018 it accounted for 7.2% of total UK GDP (£145.9 billion) and 3.9% of UK GVA (£67.8 billion). In terms of employment the industry accounts for 5% of all UK employment (2016). (Source Tourism Alliance UK 2019 stats) The Government's modern Industrial Strategy set out a long-term plan to boost the productivity and earning power of people throughout the UK. The tourism sector is recognised by the Government in having the scale and geographical reach to deliver on this ambition. Tourism is one of only ten industries to receive a Sector Deal through the Government's Industrial Strategy.
- 3.2 Tourism is equally recognised as a key economic sector for Southend employing over 7500 people and adding £470M to the local economy (source: 2019 economic impact study) providing opportunity and prosperity for our residents.
- 3.3 Destination Southend is our tourism strategy document. Its initial version was developed in 2016 for a 10 year plan. This refresh has been introduced to align the strategy with 2050 Outcomes and reflects progress since the original document was published.

- 3.4 Destination Southend was always intended to be a live strategy keeping pace with the evolving nature of the sector, progress and market conditions.
- 3.5 Destination Southend reflects many of the partnership aspirations of local tourism representatives and the Council and has been co-produced in line with 2050 outcomes.
- 3.6 The Tourism Partnership has recently strengthened its Membership participation and credentials and has been a valuable resource to the hospitality sector during the relaxation from lockdown period. Through this work it has enabled local dissemination of the changing situation with advice and guidance to the business community.
- 3.7 The hospitality sector has been one of the hardest hit by impacts from Coronavirus and given tourism's huge importance to the overall brand essence of Southend is critical to provide the confidence to consumers in the coming months and years.
- 3.8 Staycation and the domestic tourism market is a critical area for delivering economic recovery from the coronavirus. More visitors are expressing a need to be connected to the environment providing an opportunity to for Southend and the surrounding area to reach new audiences.
- 3.9 A key delivery of the strategy in the next few months is the Southend place branding project which incorporates wider 2050 Pride and Joy outcomes. This work will provide a platform far beyond tourism and supports living, investing, studying and civic pride in Southend as a place.

4. Other Options

- 4.1 The existing strategy could remain in place. This is not recommended as progress has been made and some conditions have changed and will benefit from alignment to 2050 outcomes.

5. Reasons for Recommendations

- 5.1 Progress has been made in the last few months on several objectives that were originally set out. Businesses have been increasingly engaged in the tourism partnership over recent months and in preparation for the period after coronavirus lockdown, the tourism sector will benefit from confidence in a refreshed strategy.

6. Corporate Implications

- 6.1 The tourism offer links directly to Pride and Joy outcomes. The development of events and cultural tourism supports our creative industries that feature in Pride and Joy and Opportunity and Prosperity. Tourism is a key sector in Southend's economy. The tourism partnership Members have contributed to the strategy refresh linking Active and Involved outcomes directly to the project.

6.2 Financial Implications

6.2.1 There is no specific financial ask in the report, projects referred to in the strategy will be subject to separate bids or already have Council funding agreed such as references to highways projects and place branding.

6.3 Legal Implications

6.3.1 There are no Legal implications.

6.4 People Implications

6.4.1 There are no People implications.

6.5 Property Implications

6.5.1 There are no Property implications.

6.6 Consultation

6.6.1 The strategy objectives have been co-produced with the local tourism and hospitality sector.

6.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications

6.7.1 Specific co-production work has taken place during 2019/20 to consider inclusivity and accessibility to the Southend culture and tourism offer.

6.8 Risk Assessment

6.8.1 There are no Risk Assessment implications.

6.9 Value for Money

6.9.1 There are no Value for Money implications.

6.10 Community Safety Implications

6.10.1 There are no Community Safety implications.

6.11 Environmental Impact

6.11.1 There are no Environmental Impact implications.

7. Background Papers

7.1 There are no background Papers.

8. Appendices

8.1 Destination Southend (the tourism strategy) is appended.