

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT TO TOWN & COMMUNITY COUNCIL FORUM

22 OCTOBER 2013

REPORT OF THE INTERIM CORPORATE DIRECTOR, COMMUNITIES

BRIDGEND DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To inform the Town & Community Council Forum about the Bridgend County Borough Destination Management Plan.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Plan

- 2.1 This proposal will contribute to the Single Integrated Plan (SIP) priorities of People in Bridgend County benefiting from a stronger and more prosperous economy and Bridgend County is a great place to live, work & visit. This proposal will also contribute to the Corporate Improvement Plan priority of developing the local economy.

3. Background

- 3.1 Tourism contributes to local prosperity and quality of life in Bridgend County Borough. Tourism injects £268m into the local economy and supports over 4,100 jobs. In addition, tourism:

- Supports cross-cutting services and infrastructure which benefit local people e.g. transport links, the range of shops and services, sports and cultural facilities; and
- Helps promote a positive image of the area to the outside world, attracting investment and improving civic pride.

- 3.2 A Destination Management Plan is a shared statement of intent to manage Bridgend County Borough as a destination in the interests of tourism, over a stated period of time. It outlines how Destination Management will take place and articulates the agreed roles of the different stakeholders. It is supported by a Destination Action Plan. The Action Plan identifies what actions will take place. In producing a Destination Management Plan and a Destination Action Plan we are setting in place processes and actions for delivering the Bridgend Tourism Strategy.

4. Current situation / proposal

4.1 Tourism is one of the Welsh Government key sectors. The Tourism Sector Panel has recently produced its recommendations for the future of tourism in Wales. Following this, Visit Wales are now consulting on a new Tourism Strategy for Wales to 2020, focusing on jobs and growth. The importance of Destination Management is emphasised in the Sector Panel's recommendations and is a priority advocated by Visit Wales and Capital Region Tourism, the Regional Tourism Partnership.

4.2 Within this context, Bridgend County Borough faces a number of challenges in retaining and growing its visitor economy. Some of these challenges are outlined below:

- Increasing competition from other destinations
- Adapting to the needs of changing market requirements
- Improving the image and profile of the County Borough
- Exploiting new media in order to communicate with visitors
- Getting all stakeholders – public, private and community - to collaborate and coordinate effort
- Meeting these challenges while facing constraints on public and private sector resources.

4.3 To respond to these challenges a Destination Management Plan (2013-2017) and a Destination Action Plan (2013-2015) have been developed in consultation with colleagues internally and external partners to support the delivery of the Bridgend Tourism Strategy. The emphasis is on supporting the economic sector of tourism and joining up services to provide the right conditions for the management of the destination.

4.4 The Destination Management Plan proposes the following vision:

To develop a thriving visitor economy in Bridgend County Borough which celebrates the unique strengths of the place, supports jobs, generates business opportunities and improves the range of amenities available for visitors and local people. It establishes the governance and performance management framework for taking forward Destination Management.

4.5 The Destination Action Plan will support the delivery of this vision by focusing action against the following priorities:

(a) *Support the development of the tourism product*

- Support better accommodation
- Support better attractions

(b) *Support the development of tourism infrastructure*

- Enhance the coastal resource
- Invest in the settlements
- Enhance the Countryside resource
- Improve transport and related infrastructure for tourism
- Develop tourism human resources

(c) *Raise the profile and attract more visitors to Bridgend County Borough*

- Promote Bridgend
- Develop a diverse portfolio of events

5. Effect Upon Policy Framework and Procedure Rules

5.1 None

6. Equalities Impact Assessment

6.1 These proposals will have no impact on equalities.

7. Financial Implications

7.1 The Tourism team will take on the lead role of coordinating and supporting the Destination Management process and structures as outlined above although the team is faced with severe budget cuts as the service is a non-statutory one. The support of partnerships and private sector providers of accommodation and products is key to enable growth in the tourism sector. The strategic ability of the County Borough to provide a coordinated approach to marketing of the large events, accommodation and the private sector businesses that provide activities is one of our key strengths.

7.2 The team will work closely with other council departments and external partners to manage the destination and promote those products that will make a difference to the tourism footfall and spend in the County Borough. Events like the British Seniors Open golf tournament and Dragon race bring in thousands of visitors who stay overnight which increases their spend. With cuts to the overall budget these priorities are difficult to set but rational in terms of value for money and return on investment.

8. Recommendations

8.1 That the report is noted by the Town & Community Council Forum

MARK SHEPHERD
Interim Corporate Director Communities
15 October 2013
Contact Officer: Satwant Pryce

Telephone: 01656 643151

E-mail: satwant.pryce@bridgend.gov.uk

Background documents: None