

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET

13 DECEMBER 2022

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN 2022-2027

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet approval of the Bridgend County Borough Council Destination Management Plan, 2022-2027, and approve the implementation of the resulting actions.

2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives / other corporate priorities

- 2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:
- **Supporting a successful sustainable economy** – taking steps to make the county borough a great place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focussed on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions for all people in the county borough.
 - **Smarter use of resources** – ensuring that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

3. Background

- 3.1 Tourism can, and does, contribute to local prosperity and quality of life in Bridgend County Borough (BCB), both of which are key goals for the Welsh Government (WG) and Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC).
- 3.2 According to the Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Model (STEAM) data the economic benefit of tourism to Bridgend County Borough in 2019 (the last full year prior to the Covid-19 Pandemic) was estimated at £363 million. Tourism injects much needed revenue into the local economy and has supported over 4,000 jobs in 2019. 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 County Borough to the outside world which, in turn, can attract investment and make people feel better about the place in which they live.

- 3.3 Tourism cannot however be left to develop unchecked. It has to be managed in a sustainable way, to maximise the benefits for long-term prosperity and reduce the negative impacts.
- 3.4 A Destination Management Plan (DMP) is a statement of intent to manage a destination in the interests of tourism, over a stated period, setting out the ways in which different stakeholders may work together to achieve a positive impact. The new DMP is a shared statement of intent to manage Bridgend County Borough as a successful visitor destination between 2022 and 2027. BCBC will work in partnership with Visit Wales, regional entities such as Cardiff Capital Region and the Valleys Regional Park, neighbouring authorities, and key stakeholders such as town and community councils, accommodation providers, tourist attractions, activity providers and other local businesses that support the visitor economy.
- 3.5 During the delivery of the previous DMP and Destination Action Plan, the value of tourism to the local economy and the number of jobs in tourism can be summarised as follows, based on STEAM data:

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Economic Impact (£million)	£345.80	£350.42	£362.69	£146.33	£225.14
Total number of visitors	3.9mn	3.7mn	3.7mn	1.4mn	2.08mn
Proportion which are day visitors	85%	84%	84%	86%	85%
Number of jobs in tourism	4,277	4,061	4,242	2,156	2,482

- 3.6 In terms of the economic impact of tourism in South East Wales, in 2019 Bridgend increased this value by 3.5% when comparing 2019 to 2018.
- 3.7 Since the last DMP was produced, significant change has taken place at global, national and local levels, with the Covid-19 pandemic, the United Kingdom's exit from the European Union and rises in the cost of living. All of these have had implications for the tourism and hospitality industries. Whilst much has changed, there is also much potential for the future.
- 3.8 BCBC has identified tourism as part of its foundational economy with a recovery response that includes additional funding streams, public amenity projects, infrastructure upgrades and support for the accommodation sector.

4. Current situation/proposal

- 4.1 The Bridgend County Borough Council Destination Management Plan, 2022-2027, is attached at **Appendix 1**. If adopted by Cabinet, this is intended to set the framework for supporting the delivery of the tourism vision to 2027. It includes the Destination Action Plan that details specific activities.

- 4.2 Given the impact achieved through the approach towards delivering the previous DMP and the level of resources available to Bridgend County Borough Council to core fund tourism work, the proposed Bridgend County Destination Management Plan, 2022-2027, evolves the governance framework to ensure it is fit for purpose in the context of National, Regional and Local governance arrangements, many of which have changed in recent years.
- 4.3 The actions contained within the Destination Action Plan, have been developed to propose the most efficient use of resources, focus on key strategic opportunities for development, maximise external funding opportunities and where possible deliver in partnership. Engagement with key stakeholders, gathering of relevant research and a need for realistic expectations of what is achievable with resources available, have been considered prior to finalising the DMP.
- 4.4 The DMP attached at **Appendix 1** proposes the following vision:
- To shape a thriving visitor economy which celebrates the unique identity of Bridgend County Borough*
- 4.5 The Destination Action Plan contained within the DMP will support the delivery of this vision by focusing action against the following priorities:
- (a) **Great products and places**
- A range of accommodation
 - Developing bookable product
 - Promoting place-making
 - Maintaining core events programme
- (b) **Quality visitor experience**
- Focus on 'Brilliant Basics'
 - Skills training for local residents
 - Local food and drink
 - Authentic experiences
- (c) **Profile Raising**
- Distinctive brand
 - Encourage TV / film industry
 - Expanded Visit Bridgend website
 - Strong messaging in key attractions
- (d) **Embedding sustainable tourism**
- Promoting active travel
 - Supporting sustainable business practices
 - Trailblazer for high environmental standards in golf
- 4.6 The vision is supported by goals aligned with those of Visit Wales, namely to:
- create economic growth that delivers benefits to people and places
 - promote environmental sustainability
 - provide social and cultural enrichment for residents and visitors alike
 - incorporate health benefits (for example through promoting active travel, physical activity or mental wellbeing associated with experiencing the natural environment)

- 4.7 Delivery of actions in relation to tourism will focus on maximising areas and opportunities that present greatest impact for the County Borough and utilising a range of external funding opportunities as and when they become available.
- 4.8 Active partnership working is critical to ensuring the implementation of actions within **Appendix 1** and the successful promotion of the County Borough as a coherent destination.
- 4.9 The main components of a refreshed partnership approach for the County Borough are considered to be:
- Encouraging business and community involvement – ensuring that people can see how growth in the visitor economy may benefit them and the role they have to play. Re-building an industry network could begin through holding regular events, each based on a clearly defined ‘real-world’ issue.
 - Collaboration with existing forums and structures with roles to play in destination management and marketing, for example the Bridgend Business Forum, the Coastal Partnership and the Valleys Regional Park.
 - That communication needs to be two-way, to enable the sharing of ideas, with open discussion on matters of interest and concern.

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules

- 5.1 There is no effect upon the Council’s policy framework or procedure rules as a result of this report.

6. Equality Act 2010 implications

- 6.1 An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening has identified that there would be no negative impact on those with one or more of the protected characteristics, on socio-economic disadvantage or the use of the Welsh language. It is therefore not necessary to carry out a full EIA on this policy or proposal at this stage.

7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 implications

- 7.1 The Bridgend County Borough Council Destination Management Plan, 2022-2027 demonstrates the sustainable development principle by ensuring that by meeting the needs of the present they do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This is evidenced through the 5 ways of working as follows:
- **Long-term:** The new DMP is a shared statement of intent to manage Bridgend County Borough as a successful visitor destination between 2022 and 2027. The vision is to shape a thriving visitor economy which celebrates the unique identity of Bridgend County Borough which will be delivered via a series of prioritised actions across the 5 year period of the plan.
 - **Prevention:** Tourism cannot be left to develop unchecked. It has to be managed in a sustainable way, to maximise the benefits for long-term prosperity and reduce the negative impacts. The approach towards supporting

that is set out in the Bridgend County Borough Council Destination Management Plan, 2022-2027.

- **Integration:** Tourism contributes to local prosperity and quality of life, both of which are key goals for WG and BCBC. The vision set out in the Bridgend County Borough Council Destination Management Plan, 2022-2027 is supported by goals aligned with those of Visit Wales.
- **Collaboration:** Active partnership working is critical to ensuring the implementation of actions within a DMP and the successful promotion of Bridgend County Borough as a coherent destination. The main components of a refreshed partnership approach are encouraging business and community involvement – ensuring that people can see how growth in the visitor economy may benefit them and the role they have to play and collaboration with existing forums and structures with roles to play in destination management.
- **Involvement:** The proposed Bridgend County Borough Council Destination Management Plan, 2022-2027 evolves the governance framework to ensure it is fit for purpose in the context of National, Regional and Local governance arrangements. Engagement with key stakeholders, gathering of relevant research and a need for realistic expectations of what is achievable with resources available, have been considered as key elements of the process in creating the proposed Bridgend County Borough Council Destination Management Plan, 2022-2027.

8. Financial implications

- 8.1 The Economy, Natural Resources and Sustainability team within the Communities Directorate will take on the lead role of coordinating and supporting the Destination Management process and structures as outlined above within existing budgets. The team will also lead on a number of the actions within the action plan working closely with other council departments and external partners will be taken forward as suitable funding becomes available.
- 8.2 If the requirements of coordination and delivery were to be modified at a future date, existing budgets would have to be reviewed to incorporate required changes.

9. Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 9.1 Approve the Bridgend County Borough Council Destination Management Plan, 2022-2027;
- 9.2 Delegate authority to the Corporate Director Communities to implement the Destination Action Plan contained within Appendix 1.

Janine Nightingale
Corporate Director, Communities

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Contact Officer: Ieuan Sherwood
Group Manager Economy, Natural Resources and Sustainability

Telephone: (01656) 815333

E-mail: ieuan.Sherwood@bridgend.gov.uk

Postal Address Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB

Background documents: None