

RURAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

7 JANUARY 2015

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMUNITIES & NEIGHBOURHOODS

MELTON BLUEPRINT FOR TOURISM 2015-2018
& EVENT STRATEGY

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval from members of the Committee on the revised Melton and Area Blueprint for Tourism 2015 - 2018

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **That members of the Rural, Economic and Environmental Affairs Committee note and approve the Blueprint for Tourism 2015 – 2018.**
- 2.2 **That members note and comment on the Melton Event Strategy.**

3. KEY ISSUES/BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Melton was the first area to adopt a tourism Blueprint and the concept of the 'Rural Capital of Food & Drink' brand was a result of that. Melton now enjoys the most distinctive tourism identity of all the Leicestershire districts.

The Blueprint for Tourism 2015-2018 aims to build on the success of developing the USP for Melton – 'The Rural Capital of Food & Drink' through improving the brand, widening the offer and coordinating events.

- 3.2 There now is a need to support and develop this brand proposition with a new Blueprint.

The key issues which need to be addressed are:

1. **Strengthening the brand promise** – more quality, distinctive food outlets
2. **Widening the story** – now the Food & drink brand has been established, there is an opportunity to celebrate the wider rich heritage of the area.
3. **Future Proofing** – improve the sustainability of key strategic events
4. **Rationalisation** – a need to rationalise agencies supporting tourism (BID, MBC, Melton Promotions, Civic Society)
5. **Threats to the brand** – Locally the proposed food development centre at Everard's Brewery. Greatest threat – not delivering the brand promise

- 3.3 The revised Blueprint is Melton Promotion's operational plan for tourism and aims to deliver:-

- a) A distinctive tourism story for Melton which lies within the Leicestershire destination story
- b) 8% growth in economic activity over 3 years through increased visitor spend
- c) 75% of partner businesses promoting activity goleicestershire.com

The role of Melton Promotions is to firmly establish the Melton area within the broader context of the Leicestershire tourism 'destination' attracting staying

leisure & business visitors, maximising on the distinctive food & drink branding.

3.4 The Blueprint will focus on wealth creation in line with the Leicestershire Economic Partnership's Strategic Economic Plan.

3.5 The Blueprint will be guided by a 3 year Tourism Marketing Action Plan or 'Blueprint for Action'. This will focus on 3 strategic themes:

3.5.1 Developing the brand promise

Some of the key elements being:

- Continue to improve the appearance, cleanliness & attractiveness of Melton Town centre
- Use Planning and other powers to preserve and develop further the 'Rural Capital of Food' brand.
- Increase & improve quality dining (evening economy)
- Improve the food experiences
- Review access, parking, signage, toilets and visitor orientation
- Review coach and group travel facilities
- Use Food & Drink as the main promotional tool
- Widen the offer to include heritage, sport & leisure etc
- Target short break packages
- Improve standards of customer service
- Review literature and online promotions
- Evaluate through footfall measurement, surveys and STEAM

3.5.2 Widening the offer through 'attract & disperse' activity

Some of the key elements being:

- Review & audit stories most likely to engage visitor interest
- Look at possible improvements (blue plaques, QR codes etc)
- Ensure Melton Heritage App is maintained, developed and promoted
- Introduce sub-brands (rural leisure, sport, horse etc)

3.5.3 Better planning & coordination of events

This area is addressed within the separate 'Events Strategy'. This is currently in draft form and will be reviewed at the next Event Partnership Board meeting in January 2015.

The key elements of the Event Strategy are:

- Facilitate 'working smarter' within the events sector
- Supporting greater co-operation, cohesion and mutual support
- Improving information and communication flows
- Exploring and introducing economies of scale
- Providing a clear and strategic mechanism for using public funds
- Supporting the long term sustainability and viability of key strategic events
- Improving return on investment for public and private sector sponsorship
- Growing the contribution events make to the economy

Three Task & Finish Groups will be established to develop the three Action Plans:

1. Improved Marketing
2. Reduced Costs

3. Growth & development

4. POLICY AND CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 It accords with the Council's priority to 'Maximise the potential of Melton Mowbray Town centre' whilst also 'Meeting the economic needs of the borough'.
- 4.2 The Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) provides the framework for achieving this vision by investing in our Place, Business and People. Tourism is recognised within the SEP as a growth sector and the Growth Deal will provide resources to deliver the Place programme.
- 4.3 Tourism is one of the fastest growing sectors in the UK, responsible for 1/3 of the net increase in UK jobs between 2010 and 2012, representing 9.6% of UK employment.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Melton Borough Council contributes £18k per annum to the Melton Promotions Board to deliver the main strategic and operation activities agreed within the Blueprint.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 No legal implications have been identified

7. COMMUNITY SAFETY

- 7.1 The Blueprint for Tourism aims to create a safe and welcoming place for visitors and Melton Promotions will continue to work with key partnerships and organisations to deliver projects and initiatives that support a safer Borough.

8. EQUALITIES

- 8.1 No equality impact assessment implications.

9. RISKS

- 9.1 The impact of the economic recession saw a downturn in tourism business and spend in 2011-12 but evidence shows that the 'stay-cation' phenomenon is here to stay, seeing UK leisure breaks as a real alternative to overseas travel, and 2013 saw a positive increase in spend.

10. CONSULTATION

- 10.1 Consultation has been made with all Board Members of Melton Promotions, which included Leicester Shire Promotions, Melton Borough Council, Melton Mowbray Town Estate, Melton Mowbray Food Partnership, and the Borough's attractions and key accommodation providers.

11.0 WARDS AFFECTED

- 11.1 All wards are affected

12.0 CLIMATE CHANGE

12.1 There are no climate change implications relating to this report.

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Appendices A Blueprint for Tourism 2015-2018
 B Events Strategy

Background Papers: none

X/cttee/REEA/2014-2015/070115/HR- Tourism Blueprint